



A Quick Overview

Welcome to EduTalk, the classroom website tool that allows you to customize a webpage for your classes without ever having to learn HTML, Dreamweaver or any related web-building software. Your new site will allow you to create classroom pages, administer quizzes, upload multimedia files and communicate with students and parents outside of the classroom, extending the learning day and enhancing instruction. Let's get started:

Register Your Page: Before you begin there are preliminary steps to registering your page. You must first contact your technology administrator for a **Passkey** to create your site. Once you have this, you may move forward with the registration process. Generally, registration is accomplished through a special URL provided by your district (individual users will be emailed this URL by Edutalk.) When you get there, click on the "Register" tab, then type in your name and click "Find." Select your name and enter the passkey, then click "Submit." Create a username and password you will remember, then click "Complete." You will receive a notice of confirmation via email. Once you get this, you are ready to proceed. Note: If this is a district solution, every page is uniform in functionality and contains the district homepage branding and navigation at the top of the page for easy access to other district pages. If this is an individually-purchased page, you may not see district navigation on top.

Create a Profile: This is very similar to establishing a profile in any Internet community (LinkedIn, Facebook). You can customize with a photo, your name and your URL for students and parents to identify you and access your page. After logging in, you will first access a **Classroom Manager** page. This allows you to begin, and will be the place you will always return to make changes to your pages. As you will see, there are various areas for which you can add content and edit; you begin by imputing your basic info (name, URL, uploaded photo, and the email address you wish others to use – generally the district-assigned address).

- **Important!** When creating your profile or any element of your site, always remember to click on the "Save" button at the bottom of the page you are working in. Fields do not save automatically.

ADDING CONTENT TO YOUR PAGES

1. Your Profile Photo: Begin by uploading your profile photo. This can be changed at any time. Start by clicking on the 'dummy' image that will appear in your Classroom Manager the first time you log in. Move the cursor over this image and click. You will be brought to the Asset Manager. Now follow the steps regarding the **Asset Manager** (Item 5 below) to import the photo of your choice. Photos can be altered within the Asset Manager via the **Image Editor**. This enables you to resize, crop, flip, rotate, or lighten photos before posting. When clicking on an image for upload it automatically appears at right. The Image Editor toolbar appears immediately above which will launch a menu of functions to alter your photo. Note: Allowable photo file extensions include .gif, .png, .jpg, and .jpeg.

2. Your Classes: You can add an individual page for each of the classes and/or subject areas you teach. A section titled "Classes" appears in your Classroom Manager page immediately following your basic info, with a link to "Add a Class." Every class page you create includes navigation (at left), which lists links to your other Class pages, as well as Topics, Quizzes, and Multimedia. Each page allows you to create introductory content, generally designed to provide visitors with a basic narrative of the class (this is always updatable).

Note: You can also add or delete class pages on your own whenever needed on your own by simply going back to your Classroom Manager (click "Back to Profile").

Begin by writing the Class name in the title bar initially entitled “My New Notebook.” For example, if the class page you are creating is World History, type in World History in the headline by clicking on the pencil icon to the immediate right of the headline. Then click on the edit area below to write a brief introduction of the class to your visitors. You can also add an audio file or two to your Class introduction (see the Uploading Multimedia section of this overview).

3. Your Topics: Every page includes the ability to add content and address different topics. The “Topics” navigation appears just under the “Classes” list to the left. Click on the “Manage Topics” link seen there to add topics. A Topics Manager page will open. Create as many Topics as you like by adding fields in this page. Every topic you add there will always appear to the left until you delete it. Delete Topics by going back into the Topics Editor through the “Manage Topics” link.

4. Creating Notes: Once you create a Topic you can create multiple “Notes” or bulletins (they look like colorful sticky notes on the page). You can write information in them, as well as upload photos, audio files and video to enhance the posting. You can continually update these notes or add new ones, archive old notes and restore and update them again. These notes are great for assigning homework, extra credit projects, or merely reviewing what was covered in class. You can choose from a handful of different colors to help differentiate postings from one another and the viewing field is expanded beyond what is seen on the webpage when the user clicks on the view (book) icon at the top right of the note.

Once you click on a Topic, under the Topic heading (which appears below your photo and Class intro) there are three buttons, one to “Add a Note,” “Add a Topic” and “Restore a Note.” When you click on “Add a Note” the note will appear. Click on the note to begin creating the content for the note. (You can also edit the note by clicking on the pencil icon that appears in the top right of the note, or archive by clicking on the filing cabinet icon on the far right of the note. The open book view allows you to “View this Note” in the form visitors will see it on your page. The icon that looks like two sheets of paper is the “Copy this Note” function.).

5. Understanding the Asset Manager and how it works: Before uploading files onto your site, they must first be uploaded into an Asset Manager, which is simply a folder system that stores the files you wish to place on your site. When you attempt to upload a file, the Asset Manager will be prompted—opening a window in which you establish your own folders for the different media you wish to upload. A toolbar will appear at the top of this window, which allows you to create folders and upload files. The green “Upload” button prompts you to browse your computer for files to place in the Asset Manager. Three browsing fields will appear at once (at the right of the window), but you can add more to upload additional files simultaneously. Once files are in your Asset Manager folder(s), they are ready to be posted on your site.

6. Uploading Multimedia: When you are in edit mode, a tool bar will appear above the field you are creating or editing content for your Class intro or a Note. This tool bar includes a palette of Word-like editing functions that allow you to style text, copy and paste text, conduct a spellcheck, find and replace text as well as some other useful options. Within the toolbar are icons to upload various media: upload photos using the icon of two mountains and the sun; videos and audio files using the multimedia icon which looks like a play button. Once a multimedia file is uploaded into a Note, sound, video or photo icons appear in the Note to alert the viewer. Once the visitor clicks on the appropriate icon, they can view or listen to that file. You can even copy and paste video links (from YouTube and other appropriate sites) directly into the note field using the html button under the editing window. Note: Your Asset Manager allows you to upload most common media file formats. Also note that the current upload file limit is 50 mb, so if you are attempting to load files that are higher, you may get an error message.

Multimedia: Every Class page contains a Multimedia area to which you can also upload video and create **Slideshows**. In this mode, when adding images for your show, you will be prompted back to Asset Manager (remember, your images must be there in order to upload them into the presentation you are creating – refer to the Asset Manager section for a refresher). You can incorporate video footage into a Slideshow as well. You may also

add text to accompany each slide. Click on the “Save” button every time you add a slide. Once you have created your Slideshow and you are done, click on the icon in the upper left of the Slideshow editor (looks like a floppy disk) to save the presentation. **Note:** The slideshow tool typically automatically resizes photos for incorporation in the Slideshow. In some instances when uploading photos, you may need to adjust sizes in the Image Editor to fit to the Slideshow player screen.

7. Quizzes and Surveys: You can create quizzes for your students to complete online as study aids and extra credit. There is a section entitled “Quizzes” on the left of every Class page. Click on the “Add a Quiz” link below that header and begin. This takes you to a “Quiz Manager” page that allows you to develop single word or phrase-answer quizzes, long-form answer quizzes, and multiple-choice. You can include a brief description under the quiz header. You can also use this tool to create a survey to garner opinions on topical issues for discussion in class or just to gauge class sentiment about a topical issue.

There is a field to write a description and instructions. The next field allows you to enter questions and even a subtitle. You can format question and answer fields differently, and integrate long form, short form and multiple choice answer fields. These options appear at the top left of the Quiz Manager page. You can add or delete questions (there is a “Remove” button under each) in edit mode. You can view this Quiz as it appears to your students by clicking on the “View Mode” link above the Quiz header. Once your students have typed in or clicked on all of their answers, there is a “Submit Answers” button at the end of the quiz.

8. Classroom Calendars: This feature allows you to post your individual class activities including exams, projects or homework due dates, topics to be covered during a given week, or even an actual period-by-period, or hour-by-hour schedule to give parents and students a look at what’s ahead. Anyone who wishes to view your calendar can click on the Calendar icon that appears under your photo under every one of your Class pages. You can create or edit calendars for each class (in edit mode) by clicking on this icon. Once you click on this you can enter information either using daily, weekly or monthly views (menu at the top right of page, above the monthly grid). Adding information is as easy as highlighting and double-clicking a field. You can even set tasks to recur on an hourly, daily, weekly, monthly or annual basis by clicking on the “Options” button which appears when you double click, to enter dates or edit a field. You can set a start and end date for this. You can also view or edit previous or future days, weeks, and months using the arrow keys at the top left of the calendar grid to get to a particular day, week or month. **Note:** No matter how you input your information in this tool, it will always be pulled into a monthly grid for easy viewing.

* **Important!** Always refer to your Classroom Manager page (back to profile on top right of your Class page) to edit, delete, preview, activate or deactivate a Class, Quiz or Multimedia file. You can also access the Calendars for your different classes in Classroom Manager.

We hope this brief overview of EduTalk is helpful. If you have additional specific questions, please email the Edutalk helpline at to edutalkhelp@syntaxcom.com.