

Resources For Creating Digital Breakouts: Ideas For Making Your Own Activities

 theliterarymaven.com/2017/04/breakout-digital-escape-room-ideas.html



Creating Your Breakout Website & Your Digital Lock

You can likely use any website creator to make a digital breakout, but Google Sites is probably the best option and it is what I use. It's free, you have access to it if you have a Gmail account, it's straightforward and simple to use, and you'll easily be able to integrate a Google Form, which acts as the digital "lock" for the breakout.

Your Google Form can have as many "locks" in it as you'd like. A "lock" is a field where students will enter a code. The code can be numbers, letters, or some combination of both.

You can find a video tutorial about how to create a Google site [here](#), how to embed items from Google Drive into your Google Site [here](#), and how to create a "locked" Google Form [here](#).

Planning Out Your Breakout

Think about the information you want to include in your breakout. What do topics do you want students to learn about? What skills would you like them to practice? Do you want them to read an article about an author's life? Do you want them to review Greek and Latin roots and their meanings? Once you have some ideas of what you want students to do, you can start to think about how you will lead students to those pieces of information and/or tasks.

In a digital breakout, you usually want to lead students to one of three places.

1. You can lead them directly to a code that will open a lock.
2. You can lead them directly to a clue that will help them figure out the code to open a lock.
3. You can lead them to another URL that will give them a clue to help them figure out the code to open a lock.

There are a few different ways to lead students to these three things.

Using Text

One way to lead students to information or a task is by using text. You can put text directly on the main page of your Google Site or create a Google Doc and link that to the main page. Be sure to make the sharing permissions of any Google Doc "View Only" so students don't accidentally edit it. You can also create a link that forces students to make a copy of the Doc which they can then edit.

You can also create fake emails, fake text message conversations, fake concert tickets or airplane tickets, fake store receipts, fake newspaper articles, or fake, signs, ransom notes, or diplomas. You can then embed an image your fake item on your Google Site.

Some ideas for manipulating text to spell out a URL, clue, or code:

1. Use capital letters
2. Use bolded text or a different color text
3. Underline certain letters
4. If it is a shorter piece of text, omit letters
5. Use the first letters of every paragraph, sentence, or line of a poem

Using Articles, Video, or Songs

Another way to lead students to information is by using resources that already exist on the internet, like articles, videos, songs, etc. Find articles, videos, or songs that relate to the topic or skill your breakout is focused on. In an article, find a key word or important number to use as a code to unlock one of the locks. In a video or song, look

or listen for a key word or important number to use as a code.

Since articles, videos, and songs are all things you cannot edit, you need to include a link to these types of resources somewhere on your breakout site. You can link text or images on Google Sites. This video shows you how to [embed a link in text](#) and the process for linking an image is similar.

If you are sharing a link to a video, you may want to run it through [SafeShare.TV](#) to remove any advertisements and comments to prevent your students from being exposed to inappropriate content. You can also edit the description of the video with SafeShare.TV to include a clue or code. Just be sure that your district does not block the site.

Using Questions

You can also lead students to information by having them answer questions about information they've read, watched, or listened to or by having them answer questions that allow them to practice a skill.

Some ideas for using questions to lead to a URL, clue, or code:

1. Have a series of multiple choice questions in a Google Doc with the answers spelling out a code (i.e. ACDBA).
2. Create a letter/number code to accompany several questions. Beneath each letter of the answer, have a corresponding number. I create a table with two rows in a Google Doc with students spelling out the answer in the top row and the corresponding numbers below. You can then give a series of numbers at the bottom of the Google Doc that will spell out a word that has no question accompanying it. Students will have to use the letter/number combinations from their other answers to figure it out.
3. Create a quiz using Google Forms. Once students have correctly answered all of the questions, you can give URLs, clues, or codes in the feedback when they view their scores.

Using Visuals

You can get creative with images and other visuals to give students a URL, clue, or code. Here's a few ways to do that:

1. Hide words in a [mandala](#) or a [snote](#).
2. Select an image to turn into a puzzle using [Jigsaw Planet](#) or using Google Drawings (here's an [example](#))

3. Link parts of an image in Google Drawings or using ThingLink
4. Have students look for something using the street view of Google Maps

There's tons of other ideas and resources shared here on the Breakout EDU site. Good luck planning and creating your own breakout!

You can find all of my breakout resources here. I'm also happy to take requests or collaborate on creating one; just send me an email.