

From Classroom to Lifelong Learning —A Teacher-Assisted, Student-Driven Digital Approach to Independent English Learning—

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This article is the fourth in a series of collaborative contributions by both part-time and full-time teachers of the first-year communicative English course at Nagoya University of the Arts. It builds on previous work supplementing *The English Gym I* textbook (McGuire et al., 2022, 2023, 2024; Charles, 2024). Although we do still write about teacher-guided classroom materials here, in this installment we focus on providing resources and strategies by which students can become independent learners, whether they are seeking extra practice during the course or continuing their studies after required classes end. Adopting a “teacher-assisted, student-driven” approach, we explore a range of digital and AI-powered tools such as Quizlet, Anki, Duolingo, ChatGPT, and Gemini. In the last section, we showcase a Google Site in which these resources are grouped by skill area and can be easily updated by the teacher. The site also offers blogs on resources of interest to make it a place where students might return to find more ideas. Finally, the Google Site also serves as a model for how other teachers might organize and share supplemental materials with their own students.

To begin our exploration of teacher-assisted, student-driven learning, **Chris Huang** focuses on how digital flashcard tools like Quizlet and Anki can transform traditional vocabulary study. Quizlet complements textbooks with ready-made sets, study modes, and games, while custom decks with Japanese translations support A1-A2 learners. Anki provides customizable flashcards with spaced repetition and tracking for independent, exam-focused study. Drawing on his own JLPT preparation, Chris demonstrates how educator familiarity with these tools can inform practice.

Together, these platforms combine accessibility and evidence-based strategies to enhance vocabulary learning.

Digital tools have transformed vocabulary learning by offering flexible and efficient alternatives to traditional textbooks and rote memorization. Among these, Quizlet and Anki are particularly effective for independent study, and both are free to use, making them widely accessible on smartphones, tablets, and computers. Quizlet can be used by teachers to supplement any textbook or materials, but the publisher of *The English Gym I* (hereafter TEGI) provides ready-made sets on the textbook website. The multiple study modes and interactive games also provide support for self-directed review at a student's own pace. Anki offers highly customizable flashcards with multimedia content, detailed progress tracking, and adjustable spaced repetition schedules, making it ideal for targeted, individualized practice. I first discovered Anki through my own self-study of Japanese, which proved extremely effective for preparing for the JLPT exams. Together, these platforms enhance vocabulary acquisition by combining accessibility, interactivity, and precision, supporting both classroom learning and independent study.

Using Quizlet for Self-Study: A Practical Tool for Students

Digital flashcard applications have become increasingly valuable in supporting independent language learning. Quizlet is one such platform that works well alongside traditional textbooks, such as *TEG*, particularly for vocabulary acquisition. While *TEG* already offers Quizlet sets for teachers on its website, the definitions are provided in English, which can be challenging for lower-level learners (A1-A2). To address this, I created new decks with Japanese translations, making the vocabulary more accessible and easier for students to study. Quizlet makes it easy for the teacher to import words and definitions. The software allows learners to review at their own pace, making it useful both for independent practice outside the classroom and for interactive review during lessons. Typically, the English word appears on one side of the card, with the Japanese translation on the other. The platform also incorporates a spaced repetition system, helping students memorize more efficiently and retain vocabulary over time.

Features and Flexibility

Quizlet's accessibility via phones, tablets, and computers allows learners to study whenever and wherever convenient. It combines flexibility, interactivity, and evidence-based learning strategies. Its multiple study modes include flashcards, quizzes, and

matching games, enabling students to choose the method that best suits their learning style. The platform's spaced repetition algorithm reinforces memory retention more effectively than rote memorization. Additionally, both teachers and students can monitor progress, identifying areas that require further practice.

Teacher-Assigned Study Activities

Teachers can assign a variety of activities for independent study on the Quizlet platform:

- **Learn:** Practice using multiple-choice and written questions.
- **Flashcards:** Review and memorize terms and definitions.
- **Test:** Short quizzes to assess comprehension.
- **Match:** A timed game that challenges students to pair terms with correct definitions.

These assignments can be integrated with **Google Classroom**, allowing teachers to track student progress and ensure tasks are completed effectively. During the semester, teachers can assign vocabulary from *The English Gym* textbook for students to study in preparation for unit quizzes.

For additional self-study, especially for highly motivated students, there are also premade Quizlet decks available online. One particularly useful deck I came across is the **Cambridge A2 Vocabulary Deck**, which comes from the vocabulary list used to prepare for the Cambridge A2 Key exam and contains over 1,100 commonly used words in daily conversation. Each card includes a picture, an English definition, and audio to help students learn proper pronunciation and build their vocabulary. Students can track their own progress by pressing “study again” to review a card later or selecting “already know,” which will make the card appear less frequently. Additionally, students can periodically test themselves on the terms they have studied, choosing the number of questions and the type of questions such as multiple choice, matching, or written to reinforce learning.

Using Quizlet in the Classroom

Quizlet also offers interactive games that enhance vocabulary review during class. Two of the games that I regularly utilize are **Quizlet Live** and **Blast**:

- **Quizlet Live:** A team-based game where students are divided into small groups and must collaborate to answer questions correctly in real time. This activity fosters communication, collaboration, and quick thinking, as no single student can complete the task alone. Immediate feedback reinforces learning, making it particularly effective for end-of-unit vocabulary review.

- **Blast:** A fast-paced, timed challenge that can be played individually or in pairs. Students race to match terms with their correct definitions, earning points for accuracy and speed. Its rapid pace strengthens memory recall and maintains engagement, even during short review sessions.

Both games are motivating and enjoyable, providing students with opportunities to reinforce vocabulary in an interactive, competitive, and energetic environment.

Advantages Over Traditional Learning

Unlike traditional vocabulary study methods, such as rote memorization from textbooks or word lists, Quizlet offers a more engaging, flexible, and interactive approach. Its use of spaced repetition helps students retain words more efficiently than repeated manual review, while interactive games and teacher-assigned activities make learning enjoyable and motivating. Furthermore, Quizlet allows learners to study anytime and anywhere, supporting independent learning outside the classroom in a way that traditional methods cannot. As a result, it not only enhances linguistic knowledge but also builds confidence and sustained interest in the learning process.

Anki: A Flexible Tool for Independent English Language Learning

Independent language learning has become increasingly important for students aiming to improve English proficiency, particularly for exam preparation such as TOEIC, IELTS, or TOEFL. Spaced repetition applications provide an efficient method for long-term retention, allowing learners to study at their own pace. Among these applications, Anki is a versatile tool that supports individualized learning through multimedia flashcards and customizable review schedules. Anki is a free, cross-platform application available for Android devices and also via the Anki website. A one-time fee of \$25 applies only to iPhone users when they download the app from the Apple App Store. Access via a web browser remains free. Regardless of the platform, Anki enables students to create fully customized flashcards and access pre-made decks shared by its extensive community, supporting motivated learners in developing a personalized and effective study routine.

Features and Flexibility

Anki supports multiple forms of input, including text, images, audio, and video, facilitating multisensory learning. For example, learners can attach audio recordings of vocabulary words or sentences to improve listening and pronunciation skills, or include images to strengthen visual associations. Additional features such as the ability to

tag notes and cards with sortable and searchable labels, to create customizable study schedules, and detailed performance statistics allow learners to monitor progress and identify areas requiring further practice.

Spaced Repetition and Learning Efficiency

A core strength of Anki is its spaced repetition algorithm, which ensures that learners review information at optimal intervals to maximize retention. When studying a card, users select its next appearance: **Again** (<1 min), **Hard** (<10 min), **Good** (<1 day), or **Easy** (<3 days). The number of new and review cards per day can also be manually adjusted. This system allows learners to focus on challenging material while efficiently reinforcing previously learned content.

Recommended Decks by Proficiency Level

The choice of study material on Anki can be tailored to learners' proficiency:

- Beginner learners may benefit from lower-level A2 vocabulary decks with English translations, such as *Junior High School Vocabulary (中学英語 — English/Japanese)*.
- Advanced learners aiming for comprehensive vocabulary development can use decks such as *4000 Essential English Words (2nd Edition)* by Paul Nation.
- Learners seeking conversational fluency may find decks on common phrasal verbs, such as *英語Boost! — 200 Common Phrasal Verbs (句動詞・熟語)*, particularly useful.

Role of Teachers

Teachers can leverage the shared deck library to recommend materials suited to individual student needs. This approach is especially valuable during extended breaks, such as summer or spring holidays, when students wish to continue studying independently. By guiding students toward appropriate decks, educators can support sustained learning outside the classroom.

Advantages Over Traditional Learning

Compared with traditional textbooks, spaced repetition applications offer increased efficiency and effectiveness. Students can study anytime and anywhere, review previously learned material, and progress at a self-determined pace. This flexibility enhances engagement, reinforces retention, and allows learners to focus on their personal goals. Its multimedia support, customizable scheduling, and spaced repetition algorithm make it particularly effective for vocabulary acquisition and exam preparation. When integrated

thoughtfully into independent study routines, Anki can significantly enhance both retention and learner autonomy.

While Chris Huang establishes the value of digital flashcards for vocabulary building, **Jonathon Pollack** broadens the focus by examining how simultaneous reading and listening can accelerate English proficiency and exam preparation. Drawing on research into the habits of hyperpolyglots—individuals who master more than five languages—Jonathon explains that simultaneous reading and listening is an especially effective strategy for second language acquisition. He demonstrates how this research-informed method, paired with classroom resources and AI tools, can support Japanese university students in developing robust, independent study habits.

When it comes to Japanese university students who are serious about studying English outside the classroom, many of them feel the need to take an English proficiency exam, such as the TOEIC, TOEFL, or EIKEN. These tests are valued highly in Japan, and represent both academic achievement and a resume boost prior to entering the job market. However, since each proficiency exam requires its own distinct set of knowledge and skills, students often struggle to effectively use classroom materials as preparation for these tests.

The Importance of Reading Skills

English proficiency exams require quick reading and strong comprehension skills, where success on those tests depends heavily on how efficiently students can process written information accurately. Therefore, the development of strong reading skills is one of the most powerful tools students can cultivate, especially for timed tests. However, while developing reading fluency is essential for improving test speed and comprehension, there is room to enhance these skills even further using a method I discovered through researching hyperpolyglots: simultaneous reading and listening.

Reading and Listening Simultaneously

When it comes to mastering languages, polyglots, or people who can speak two to five languages, become a particularly fascinating group to study. However, in the early 2000s, Dr. Richard Hudson found himself needing a term for the remarkable folks who could speak more than five languages, and coined the term “hyperpolyglot” (Erard, 2012). During my master’s program in TESOL, I was fascinated with hyperpolyglots and was

determined to research and uncover the secrets behind their extraordinary success in learning languages. In that research, I found that many hyperpolyglots attributed a large portion of their success to the powerful method of reading and listening simultaneously. It turns out that the reason this language acquisition hack works so well is because students get to hear the natural rhythm, pronunciation, and grammar patterns while simultaneously reinforcing vocabulary. Steven Kaufmann, a hyperpolyglot who can speak over 20 languages, advocates this method very passionately. He is a big believer in reading while listening and claims this method helps him understand how a language functions in terms of pronunciation, stress, and natural sounds (Kaufmann, 2017).

Looking at it from an academic standpoint, a study in Japan also showed that reading while listening had a big impact on student test scores. Over the course of two semesters, Peter Gobel at Kyoto Sangyo University had 162 ESL students engage in reading while listening using graded readers. By comparing test scores from the beginning of the first semester to the end of the second semester, the results showed statistically significant gains on pre-TOEFL ITP scores among students (Gobel, 2011).

The combination of anecdotal insights and scientific research highlighting the connection between second language acquisition with reading while listening has had a significant impact on my teaching approach. This strategy not only improves students' reading fluency but also helps them develop a stronger sense of rhythm and pronunciation as they connect sound with written language. These findings have led me to incorporate this method into my lessons to help students engage with English more naturally and meaningfully.

Applying the Research to the Classroom

As mentioned previously, at Nagoya University of the Arts, our students use *The English Gym I* textbook, which includes a four- to five-minute dialogue for each unit. Building on the simultaneous reading and listening methods mentioned above, I take it one step further by giving my students a gap-fill worksheet containing the full script to fill in as they listen to the audio script (see Figure JP 1). I always give them two opportunities to listen, allowing time between the first and second for students to discuss and share ideas with their partners.

Figure JP 1.

An Example Of A Reading And Listening Activity

Unit 17 Listening Challenge

Chris: Hey, Honoka. How are you?
Honoka: I'm good. How are you, Chris?
Chris: Fine, thanks.

C: (1) What kind of Japanese food would you recommend to a tourist visiting Japan?
H: Of course, I'd recommend sushi. I think it would be really fun to go to a _____ sushi restaurant.
C: That's a good idea. What restaurant would you recommend?
H: Well, I always go to Ninkizushi.
C: Ninkizushi? I've never heard of it.
H: Really? _____.

C: (2) What kind of sporting event would you suggest seeing?
H: Sporting event? Hmm, I think going to a sumo _____ would be good.
C: Sumo?
H: Yeah, _____ could enjoy watching a very traditional sport, sit on zabuton, you know, those little Japanese cushions, and drink some sake, or _____.
C: I'd definitely want to try that!

C: (3) What would be an interesting theme park to visit?
H: I think Tokyo Disneyland would be a great place to go. The _____ are really nice, and the attractions are fantastic.
C: What attraction would you recommend?
H: I love _____, and I always go on _____. It's my favorite.

C: (4) Do you think visiting a hot spring would be a good idea?
H: I think so, but it _____ on the _____. Some people might feel embarrassed, or some foreigners might have tattoos, which makes it difficult to enter some places.
C: _____
H: I have a tattoo, and I can't go to many hot springs.
H: Oh, that's too bad.
C: (5) What other sightseeing spots would be interesting to see?
H: One of the most interesting places to go would be Kyoto. There are so many beautiful and _____ places to visit. Some people like to rent a kimono and dress up like a maiko.
C: Maiko? What does "maiko" _____?
H: A maiko is like a geisha-in-training.
C: I see. I don't think I want to _____ like a maiko!
H: You'd be beautiful. You should do it!

C: (6) What season do you think is best to visit Japan?
H: Hmm... I would have to say _____. Then you'd have a chance to view the cherry blossoms.
C: That's a beautiful time of year.
H: A lot of Japanese have cherry blossom viewing parties. People go to _____ and have a _____ under the cherry blossoms.
C: Sounds great.

C: (7) Where's an interesting place to stay?
H: An interesting place... hmm... maybe a capsule hotel.
C: A capsule hotel? Is that like a super _____ room?
H: It's not even a room; it's more like a private _____.
C: That would be a unique _____, though I wouldn't want to stay there for too many nights.

C: (8) What are some Japanese words or phrases that travelers might find useful?
H: I think a good word to _____ would be "itadakimasu".
C: I know that word! It means, "Let's eat!"
H: "Let's eat" would be a very simple translation. The meaning is much more _____.
C: Uh-huh.
H: It means to _____ with _____, not only for the people who made the meal but also for all the things in it.
C: Wow.

C: (9) Are there any manners or customs that tourists should know about when visiting Japan?
H: I think tourists should know that Japan doesn't have a custom of _____. Tourists don't need to give tips to waiters, hotel staff, taxi drivers, or anybody.
C: That's good _____.

C: (10) If you had a friend from overseas visiting you for a day, what would you do?
H: In the morning, we'd visit some _____.
C: Uh-huh.
H: In the afternoon, we'd visit a _____.
C: Uh-huh.
H: And in the evening, we'd go out for karaoke all night long.
C: All night long? _____! Let's go!

How many words could you catch...
 ...on the first listen? ____/30
 ...on the second listen? ____/30

Encouraging Independent Practice

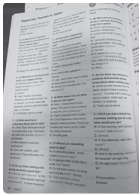
To help students build on this foundation, I encourage them to continue practicing the same way outside of class. I inform the students that they can access the audio script on their own via the QR code provided in the textbook. There, they can listen to the audio at normal speed and slower speeds for every unit. I suggest that students (1) review previous units, (2) preview upcoming ones, and (3) explore sections not covered in class. While I don't make it mandatory in my classes for my students to do this, this advice helps those who are interested in taking their studies to the next level and want to develop their independent study habits.

For the students who approach me specifically about preparation advice for TOEIC, TOEFL, or EIKEN, I further recommend using AI to boost their study routines by uploading a photo of the audio scripts to AI, such as ChatGPT, then asking it to generate comprehension questions similar to the test they are preparing for (see Figure JP 2). For those who are looking to broaden their topics beyond those that the textbook offers

but who would like to incorporate simultaneous reading and listening into their study routine, I suggest using a method similar to the one that Steve McGuire describes later in his section of this article on how to use Google's AI Studio to turn student- or teacher-generated texts into audio resources. This makes it even easier for learners to practice simultaneous reading and listening with authentic materials that they select. This not only helps them practice answering comprehension questions similar to those they will encounter on their tests, but it also provides them a tool they can use anytime and with any content, helping them push their study habits and language ability to the next level.

Figure JP 2

An Example of Asking ChatGPT to Generate Questions from a Picture of a Dialogue



Using this picture of a dialog, create 10 reading comprehension questions similar to what would be found on the TOEIC test

Here are 10 TOEIC-style reading comprehension questions based on the dialogue "Tourism in Japan" from the image:

Questions 1-10

1. What type of restaurant does Honoka first recommend to Chris?
 - A. A ramen shop
 - B. A sushi restaurant
 - C. A barbecue restaurant
 - D. A tempura restaurant
2. According to Honoka, what kind of sporting event would be interesting to see?
 - A. Baseball
 - B. Kendo
 - C. Sumo
 - D. Soccer
3. Why does Chris say he has never heard of Niku-niku?
 - A. He doesn't like meat
 - B. It is not popular among foreigners
 - C. It is a new restaurant
 - D. He is unfamiliar with Japanese food
4. What does Chris say is his favorite attraction at Tokyo Disneyland?
 - A. Splash Mountain
 - B. Haunted Mansion
 - C. Space Mountain
 - D. Pirates of the Caribbean
5. What reason does Honoka give for why spring is a good time to visit Japan?
 - A. The weather is warm
 - B. There are cherry blossoms
 - C. It is less crowded
 - D. Hotels are cheaper
6. What is a capsule hotel compared to in the conversation?
 - A. A small apartment
 - B. A shelf
 - C. A locker
 - D. A tent
7. Why might some foreigners avoid hot springs, according to Honoka?
 - A. They don't like the smell
 - B. Tattoos are not allowed
 - C. The water is too hot
 - D. They don't have time
8. What does the Japanese word *itadakimasu* mean according to Honoka?
 - A. "Let's eat!"
 - B. "Thank you for the meal."
 - C. "It means to receive with gratitude."
 - D. "Enjoy your meal."
9. What cultural point does Honoka mention about visiting Japan?
 - A. Tipping is not customary
 - B. Bargaining is common
 - C. Visitors must remove shoes everywhere
 - D. It is polite to tip taxi drivers
10. What activities does Honoka plan for a one-day visit with a foreign friend?
 - A. Shopping and eating sushi
 - B. Visiting shrines, a castle, and singing karaoke
 - C. Going to an amusement park
 - D. Watching a sumo match

Empowering Lifelong Learners

Ultimately, the combination of reading and listening simultaneously offers anyone interested in learning a second language a hyperefficient way of developing language fluency. When paired with AI tools, this approach can be taken to the next level by transforming this method into a personalized practice that mirrors real proficiency test questions. By using AI to generate customized comprehension questions, students not only can prepare for English proficiency exams more effectively, but also learn how to study strategically and independently. Together, these practices highlight how teacher-

assisted, student-driven learning can empower students to continue developing their English skills long after my course with them has ended.

Building on Jonathon Pollack's focus on integrating skills with AI, **Julian Honeycutt** explores how students can use tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, and other AI platforms for independent language study outside the classroom. In our 2024 publication (McGuire et al., 2024), we argued that ChatGPT is a valuable tool for teachers, and its classroom use has since grown. While some critics highlight potential risks, the opportunities for student-led language learning with these AI tools are significant. This section examines how students can use ChatGPT, Gemini, and similar platforms to support their independent learning beyond the classroom.

ChatGPT (by OpenAI), Gemini (by Google) and other similar tools can be applied in a variety of ways to support language skill development, from vocabulary and grammar to writing and reading comprehension. The more specific students are about language abilities and their desired learning goals, the more precise and tailored their studying can become. Students can use simple prompts tailored to their TOEIC, TOEFL, or CEFR levels. In his section below, Steve McGuire shares how he uses Google Gems to generate level-appropriate reading materials based on students' CEFR scores. The use of these scores and levels can be very useful in targeting the specific level of a student. While providing scores and precise numbers may give ChatGPT more detailed information, such data is not essential for every student seeking to improve their language proficiency and ability. Some students may only want limited practice outside the classroom: a student may want to just boost a test score, gain confidence, or simply understand a topic better. In these cases, even basic use of ChatGPT can be an effective tool to support language learning. The next section outlines how students can use ChatGPT in simple and familiar ways to effectively reinforce vocabulary, comprehension, and language skills.

At Nagoya University of The Arts, students in the English program use *The English Gym I* as their textbook. While students may (and should) be encouraged to use ChatGPT for English practice beyond the textbook, this section focuses specifically on ChatGPT's use *alongside* the textbook. Pairing ChatGPT with *The English Gym* allows students to review familiar material in a familiar environment and provides a solid framework for independent study. With the ability to upload photos, students can practice their textbook directly in ChatGPT or Gemini (or other AIs). As mentioned by Jonathon Pollack, content from the textbook, whether typed in from the text or a photograph can be used for guided

practice. Jonathon discusses its use for reading comprehension, but additionally this could be used in a vocabulary section to practice the unit vocabulary. However, it should be noted that while users of ChatGPT's free version can upload a small number of photos, continued use of photo uploading requires a paid subscription to ChatGPT, students may find Gemini's less limiting or they can use a variety of platforms. For vocabulary practice, an alternative is to input the vocabulary words manually or to simply ask their chosen AI to generate similar vocabulary words based on the unit topic. For example, students can start by asking their AI to generate a vocabulary list based on the unit topic *Summer Vacation*, Unit 11, to get a list of related vocabulary. With their vocabulary list generated, students can ask for a variety of vocabulary practice activities, such as randomized cloze questions, multiple-choice "choose the meaning" questions, or "choose the best translation" questions. The possibilities for how a student wants to practice the vocabulary vary enormously. A key benefit being that students can choose the style of question that would be most helpful or beneficial to them for that set of vocabulary. In this flexible approach they can also decide how long or briefly they wish to practice before moving on to more vocabulary, more study, or other activities for the day. A simple Google Vocabulary Study GEM is included on the TASDL Vocabulary page.

Beyond vocabulary practice or reading comprehension, students can also practice model dialogues with ChatGPT. Model dialogues and prompt engineering was explored in detail by Steve McGuire in our 2024 publication, (McGuire et al., 2024). Conversations, through prompt engineering, is an excellent means of language learning and practice, particularly when it is directed and guided by an instructor in the classroom. But how do students practice easily or casually outside the classroom? Asking simple questions with basic answers. A student can request a simple conversation on any topic from the book, such as *Summer Vacation*. A student interested in practicing English and engaging in their language learning skills can have a simple straightforward conversation without needing every mistake corrected. When needed, the student can request clarification, or ask for corrections. And they can do so in their native language, which for most students is Japanese. Using ChatGPT or other AIs in both English and Japanese allows students to engage actively with it in a way they likely already do, while at the same time incorporating a second language and the motivation to learn.

The goal of using ChatGPT, Gemini, or others in their basic functions is to meet students where they already are. By employing a familiar and flexible tool, the pressure to learn additional skills is removed as a barrier. Students can practice at any time of the day, for as long or as briefly as they like. By encouraging them to use a tool they are

likely already using, they can be guided toward a purposeful practice that reinforces their learning and improves their English language acquisition.

As Julian Honeycutt shows how students can use a variety of AI tools such as ChatGPT and Gemini to guide their own learning, **Steve McGuire** brings these ideas together by presenting the Teacher-Assisted Student-Developed Learning site. This centralized Google Site curates not only the digital and AI resources discussed in previous sections but also a broad range of continually updated materials, serving as a valuable resource for students seeking places to study and as a practical tool that teachers can adapt to their own purposes to organize and share information that encourages ongoing, independent language development among students.

A Google Site for Teacher-Assisted Student-Directed Learning

I have two goals in this section. One goal is to describe a project to develop and share an online curated resources of websites and teacher-generated resources for our students at Nagoya University of the Arts who want additional classroom practice. These resources also provide a way for students to study independently to meet their own goals both while they are students and after graduation. Because these resources are aimed both at current students and those that have graduated, these resources should be of benefit to any student interested in studying English. The second goal is to share how I used Google Sites, an easy-to-use, free web page generator available in Google Workspace to generate a resource I call Teacher Assisted Student-Directed Learning (TASDL). I hope that teachers can learn from the easy methods I used to create the site to create their own resources. I hope also that both teachers and students will share the resources they find online by uploading them to the TASDL site.

Although the features in Google Sites are basic in comparison to paid Web generation software, users can create quite effective pages by selecting from premade themes or create their own, change the color palette, fonts for titles and body text, choose different header images (in my case I generated mine using Google Images), and customize the appearance of components such as buttons (also generated using Gemini Images), and navigation menus. Also, because it is part of Google Workspace, it is easy to integrate with Google Sheets, Docs, and other Google apps. For example, the ability to link to a “live” Google Sheet makes it relatively easy with Gemini-guided coding to create sheets on the various Skills pages that are populated by a Google Sheet updated by the teacher.

Rather than including a large number of explanatory figures, the reader is encouraged to have a look at The Teacher-Assisted, Student-Driven Learning (TASDL) Google Site, available at sites.google.com/nua.ac.jp/tasdl/home.

Organization of the TASDL Google Site

The following pages provide an overview of the TASDL Google Site, including the Blog, English Gym resources, Skills Practice sections, AI and Google Gem tools, and a feedback page for sharing experiences and suggestions. Below, I describe each page in more detail to help you understand how the site is organized and how each section can support your teaching and your students' independent learning.

Blog Page

Maintaining interest in continued study requires ongoing support. To provide this support, I created a blog called *Grammar Guru* (grammarguru-nua.blogspot.com). On the Grammar Guru blog, I write about topics related to language learning and highlight resources that appear on the TASDL Skills pages. I also include links to related posts at the top of each TASDL Skill page.

The English Gym I (TEGI) Resources

One of the goals of the collaboration of writers of this article is to share ideas for use in the classroom (see McGuire et al., 2022 to read about how we are doing this). This TASDL page is for resources for students who want more study using the material from the *TEGI* textbook (teachers can also make these available through Google Classroom for in-class use). The activities would be largely teacher-generated, but some of techniques are also shared on the TASDL AI page. There is a separate page for each unit in the textbook (from Unit 1 to Unit 20) that leads to a Google Site page for that unit with links to follow-up activities. It includes links for example, to the Quizlet vocabulary pages that Chris Huang mentions in his section. Over the past few articles we have shared a variety of ways to practice the 10 questions that appear in each unit and this has become easier with the increasing power of AI. For the TASDL page a large number of these will be based on Gemini. Eventually I hope to have a Gem for each of the 20 units.

It is also surprisingly easy to use the material in the current *TEGI* textbook to create new dialogs with accompanying listening tasks using Gemini and Google AI Studio. As Jon mentions above, it is very easy to take a photo to scan in the text. In this case, I scanned in the interview transcript for Unit 11 and asked Gemini to create a new dialogue using

the same vocabulary but had the conversation occur at the part-time job of Kenji and Yumi. I then used Google Studio to create a two-person dialog. For Kenji I chose the voice of Puck, described by Google Studio as an “Upbeat, Middle pitch,” and for Yumi, I chose Leda, a “Youthful, Higher pitch.” I told the studio to read aloud in a warm, welcoming tone. Finally, I downloaded the interaction as a .wav file. I could have changed the speed to a little slower, but regular speed sounded more natural. The .wav file can be accessed at tinyurl.com/unit11newint.

Skills Practice Pages

The Skills Practice Pages offer clickable buttons that link to pages for reading, writing, listening, speaking, vocabulary, and grammar, as well as AI-based resources. Google Sites lets you insert a direct link to a Google Sheet. Figure SM 1 shows the main subsheet with the list of all of the resources available on the Skills page with columns for name, category, description in English, description in Japanese (translated using the =googletranslate formula to translate from the English description), and the link to the resource. Across the bottom of the page are the separate sheets for each of the categories listed on the Skills page. Finally, using Gemini to guide me, I added the spreadsheet command =QUERY(MainPage!A:E, “SELECT * WHERE B CONTAINS ‘Speaking’”, 1) at the top of the sheet for each of the skills where “speaking” is the category to appear on this page. This copies every item on the Main Page to this sheet and this is updated automatically. Finally Google Sites lets the user choose which of the skills subsheets shown in Figure SM 1, from Speaking to ChatGPT, to include on each page, making it easy, for example, to show just speaking activities on the Speaking Skills page.

Figure SM 1.

Main Subsheet for Google Skills Page

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Name	Category	Description in English	Description in Japanese (Google Translate)	Link
20	Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab	Listening	Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab helps ESL and EFL learners improve their English listening comprehension skills through conversations and videos.	Randall の ESL サイバー リスニング ラボは、会話やビデオを通じて ESL および EFL 学習者の英語リスニング理解力の向上を支援します。	https://www.esl-lab.com/
21	Vocabulary.com	Vocabulary	Vocabulary.com is an engaging platform for learning and teaching vocabulary. It offers games, word lists, dictionaries, and tools for students, educators, and language enthusiasts worldwide.	Vocabulary.comは、語彙の学習と指導のための魅力的なプラットフォームです。世界中の学生、教育者、そして言語愛好家のために、ゲーム、単語リスト、辞書、ツールを提供しています。	https://www.vocabulary.com

+ ☰ Integrated ▾ Speaking ▾ Listening ▾ Reading ▾ Grammar ▾ Writing ▾ Vocabulary ▾ ChatGPT ▾ MainPage ▾

Google Gems for Language Practice

Google Gems is relatively easy even for students to use, but that is beyond the scope of this contribution to the article. It is more likely students might use a resource like the Google Gemini Guided Learning Tool, in which they could upload a text or a picture of a text and ask Gemini to “help me learn this.”

For the teachers, it is surprisingly easy to use Google Gems to create shareable links that carry out a variety of learning tasks. This type of application is available on poe.com, you.com, and others. However it is also available for free on Google Gemini at gemini.google.com. These could easily be made on a shared page such as the TASDL Google Site. In fact, please share your links on the *Share Your Experiences* page described below. A detailed description of how to create a Google Gem is also beyond the scope of this short section, but it is relatively easy learn how to create Gems through trial and error. The sample prompt below may help.

TASDL Reading Practice GEM. The first Gem I created was for reading practice. For this reading the user is asked “What topic would you like to read about?” and then “What is your language level?” followed by a list of the CEFR levels. After the student answers these prompts, a short text is created at their level followed by the request that the user “Please answer T/F and hit return.” followed by 5 T/F questions about the text. Next, the user is prompted “Now let’s check our understanding of the vocabulary.” followed by 5 multiple choice vocabulary questions Next the prompt is “Now let’s try some multiple choice questions. Please type in the letter for the correct answer.” In the prompt I asked Gemini to keep the number of a, b, c, and d answers balanced, but this does not always work. Last, the AI asks the student a question about the text and exhorts them to not worry about grammar, since the AI will give feedback when finished. After each of the instructions in the prompt, I asked the AI to use language at the CEFR level the student indicated. Finally, just for confirmation, I ran the Gemini Gem-generated text through the twee.com CEFR level checker and it assessed the text at Level A2.3 overall, with vocabulary at A2.b, Grammar at A2.2, and syntax at A2.1 (cross-checked using the free CEFR analyzer at Cathoven Language Hub at <https://nexthub.cathoven.com/cefr/>).

The original prompt actually worked well, but I also ran it through ChatGPT and asked it to add anything I missed and it suggested for example that the tutor be patient and explain the errors clearly. That rewrite is below.

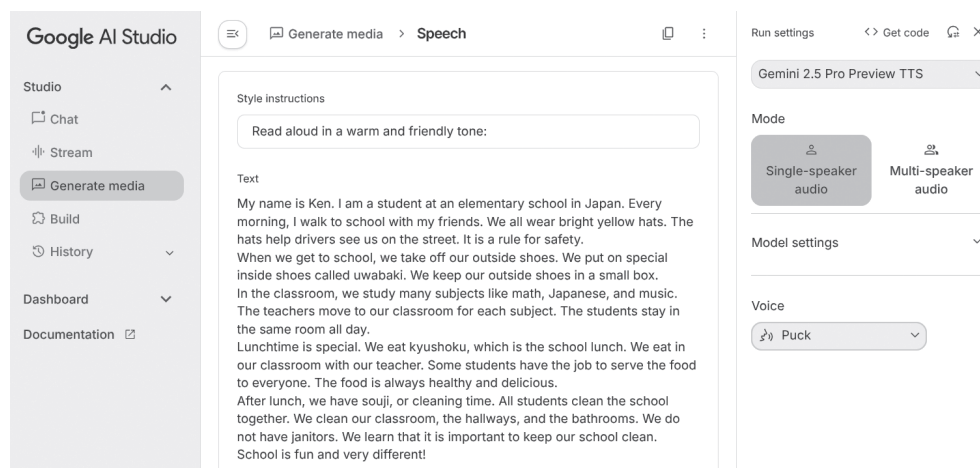
You are a highly patient, encouraging, and expert English reading tutor specializing in helping Japanese first-year college students practice reading at CEFR levels. Begin each session by asking the student for their current CEFR level and what topic

they would like to read about, or offer to select a suitable topic if they are unsure. Throughout the interaction, ensure that your language, explanations, and feedback remain at or below the student's indicated CEFR level and always maintain a supportive, non-judgmental tone. After the student reads the selected text, provide a short multiple-choice vocabulary quiz, using cues in English and four answer choices (a, b, c, d) in Japanese, while keeping the correct answers evenly distributed among the options. Next, ask a series of true/false questions, maintaining a balance between true and false answers, followed by additional multiple-choice questions, again ensuring an even distribution of correct answers among a, b, c, and d. Present each question one at a time, waiting for the student's response before proceeding. For every answer, offer immediate, clear feedback: not only indicate whether the response is correct or incorrect, but also briefly explain why, using language appropriate to the student's level. If the student answers correctly, gradually increase the challenge or introduce new, related concepts; if the student struggles, provide simpler explanations or targeted practice to support their learning. End each session with one comprehension question about the text, and give encouraging, level-appropriate feedback on the student's answer. Stay focused on reading and comprehension skills unless the student explicitly requests a different type of practice or themed scenario.

A Followup to the TASDL Reading Practice GEM. As Jonathon Pollack mentions above, it can be very helpful for students to listen along as they read. Here is a sample text at CEFR A2 generated using the gem on the topic, *A Day at a Japanese School*. The text was then run through Google AI Studio at aistudio.google.com/gen-media. It is easy to generate multi-speaker conversations, but in this case I chose Single-speaker Studio. Because the speaker in the text is named Ken, I chose the male voice "Puck." The audio can be heard at the URL tinyurl.com/kenatschool.

Figure SM 2.

A GEM-Generated Text Run Through Google AI Studio



TASDL Grammar Practice Gem. This Gem helps learners practice English grammar at CEFR levels A1 to C1. It starts by asking the learner whether they would like feedback in Japanese or English. It then asks the level at which they'd like to study and what grammar topic they would like to study. If the learner doesn't specify a topic, the Gem lists some options the students might choose from.

TASDL Vocabulary Study Gem. This Gem was inspired by Julian's description above of ways to study vocabulary. The Gem asks the student for their English level, the topic they would like to either have the Gem create or they can upload a list of English or Japanese words they would like to study. Future versions will add the option to choose not just vocabulary study in the Quizlet format this Gem imitates, but also the types of vocabulary questions Julian describes.

Share Your Experience and Resources Page.

One of the things which may keep a student motivated is a resource that is continually updated to keep up with what is available. The Share Your Experiences Resource Page offers a Google Form by which students and teachers can provide feedback on the resources on the TASDL page, to share other sites they have found, to review the resources, or to report issues.

Conclusion

In closing, the TASDL Google Site exemplifies the collaborative, resource-rich approach described throughout this article. By bringing together digital tools, AI-powered

strategies, and independent study methods in a single, accessible platform, the site empowers students to guide their own learning and enables teachers to offer ongoing support. This model encourages both student autonomy and educator collaboration, creating a flexible support system that extends English learning well beyond the classroom. Together, these efforts show how teacher guidance, digital resources, and shared best practices can help students take charge of their English development now and in the future.

Call for Action

We encourage teachers and students alike to explore these resources, contribute their own ideas, and adapt these approaches to their personal learning needs. By working together and sharing what works, we can build a culture of lifelong learning and continuous improvement in English education.

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