



*The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*

## Review of Seesaw

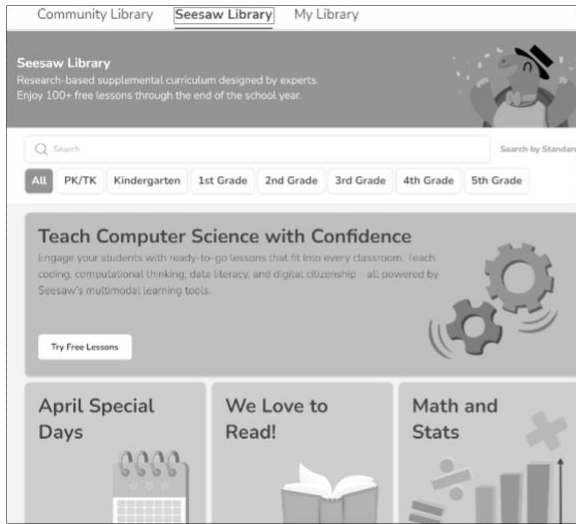
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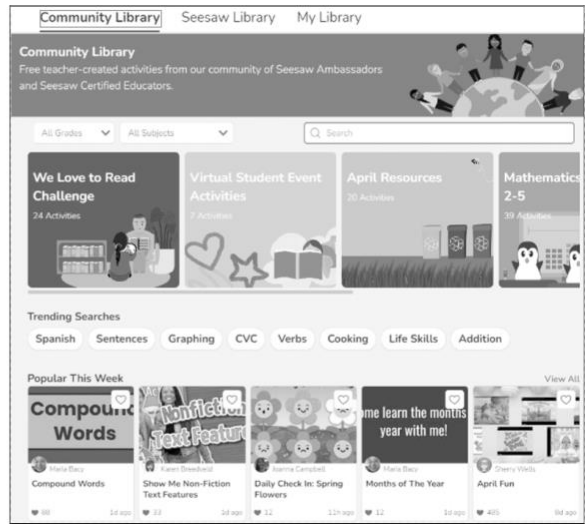
<b>Title</b>	<b>Seesaw</b>
<b>Co-founders</b>	Adrian Graham, Carl Sjogreen, and Charles Lin
<b>Contact Information</b>	548 Market Street, PMB 98963 San Francisco, CA 94104 Mail: <a href="mailto:press@seesaw.me">press@seesaw.me</a> URL: <a href="https://web.seesaw.me/">https://web.seesaw.me/</a>
<b>Type of product</b>	Learning management system (LMS) which can be used as digital portfolio and interactive learning platform for K- 12 students.
<b>Platform</b>	Web-based ( <i>desktop/laptop/computer</i> ) or Mobile ( <i>iOS/Android</i> )
<b>Minimum hardware requirements</b>	<u>Desktop/laptop/computer</u> : Windows 10/ macOS with 4GB of RAM <u>Mobile</u> : iOS 13 or later OR Android 5.0 or later
<b>Price</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free Plan</li> <li>• Paid Plans (free trial for 30-60 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seesaw for Schools or Districts from \$1200/year</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>** Offers discounts for high percentage of low-income or students who qualify for free/ reduced lunch**</i></p>

## General Description

Seesaw is a web-based platform that allows K-12 educators to create and share assignments, assessments, and different activities using various tools. With the educators having the option to create lessons in this platform, Seesaw also has premade interactive, digital lessons under “Seesaw Library” of different content areas for the educators to use as seen in Figure 1a (Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies, Motor Development, Social Emotional Learning, and etc.). Additionally, educators around the world can share the lessons that one has made with other educators through Seesaw by uploading their lessons under “Community Library,” as can be seen in Figure 1b.

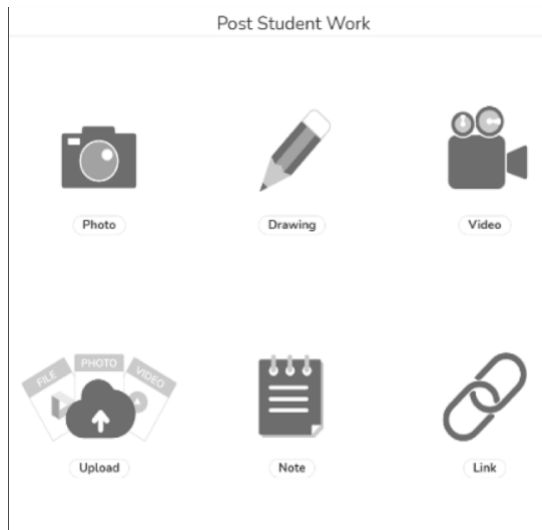


**Figure 1a. Pre-made Lessons by Seesaw**



**Figure 1b. Lessons shared by educators**

Once subscribed to the paid plan, there are more premade lesson plans made by Seesaw that are available for educators to download and to make changes depending on their students' levels, knowledge, and strengths. Educators can add, delete, and edit slides with the premade lessons. Moreover, by sharing lesson plans with educators worldwide, Seesaw can be used as a great platform to share great ideas and resources amongst teaching professionals in the educational field.

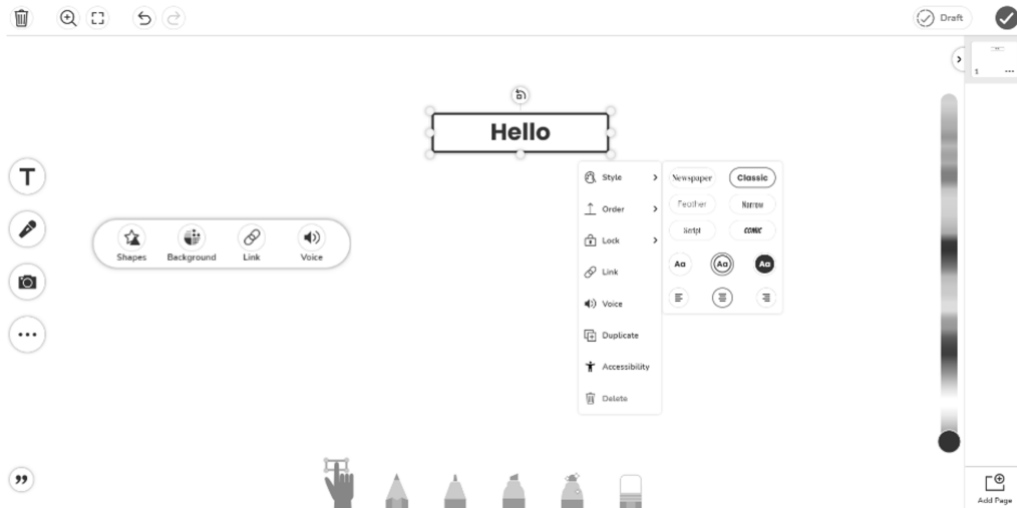


**Figure 1c. Tools for Creating Student Work**



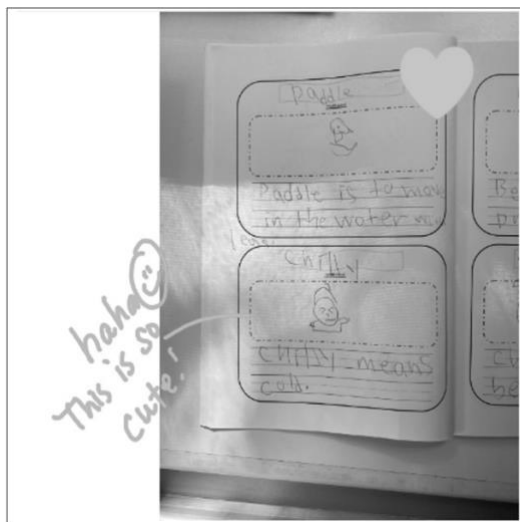
**Figure 1d. Writing tool**

Seesaw provides opportunities for teachers and students to participate and think creatively by sharing their work & learning in different ways. Figure 1c shows 6 different ways to create lessons and activities for students, and each template can support the needs of different students as it can be differentiated depending on how students are best engaged. For example, if a student is a visual and auditory learner, the teacher can choose a photo or video as a template. Figure 1d shows an example where notes can be chosen, and a prompt included if the teacher wants to help students practice typing or writing. Further below, in Figure 2, the same page can be seen if the option of drawing was chosen from Figure 1c to provide a bit of everything at once, as students can write, draw, listen, record, and even watch.

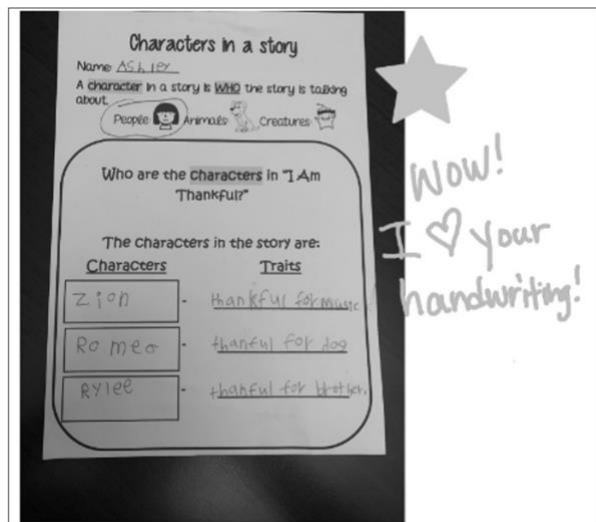


**Figure 2. Wide Range of Multimedia**

There are multiple tools that are available for students to use in Seesaw, such as submitting a video of oneself reading out loud a story book, taking a picture of a pamphlet, recording a song, or uploading a saved file from a computer device or online storage platform. These are some of the ways in which students can display their learning, their thought processes in real-time, and also become digitally literate. Figure 2 also shows different ways to present the lesson and activities to the students as the teachers can add external links, audio and voice recordings, pictures, and different colors and fonts of text that can make the task more accessible for diverse language learners. Not only can teachers incorporate the multimedia available in Seesaw, but the diverse access can be beneficial for English Language Learners to practice different domains of language. For example, students who are more comfortable in speaking than writing can consider using voice recordings in submitting their assignment or activities.



**Figure 3a. Feedback on Writing**

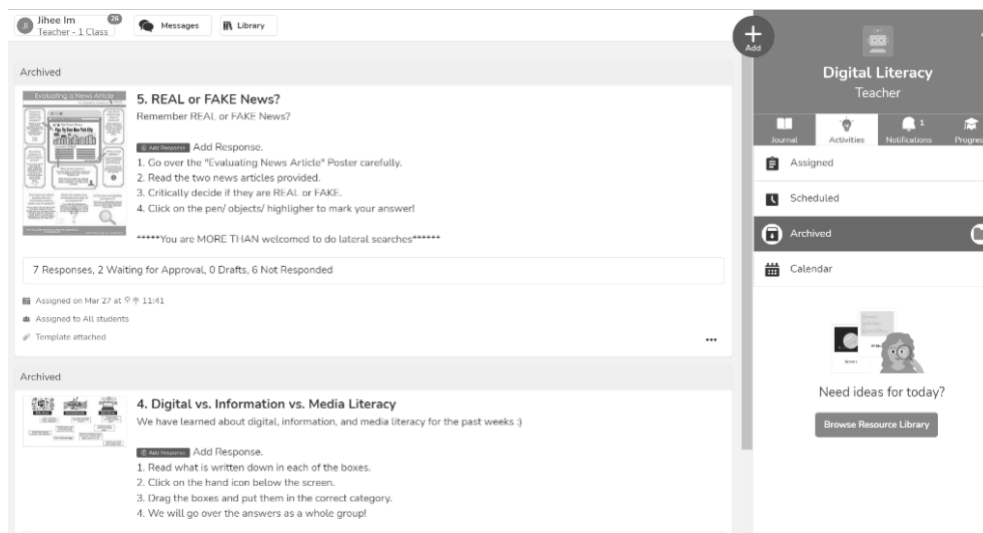


**Figure 3b. Feedback on Activity Both**

Figures 3a and 3 b show how the teacher can provide feedback on the student's work and how this can be a way of communicating to the student and even to the parents. Both figures show that the student took a picture of the completed worksheet and uploaded it directly, which is

one way among many other options for the students to submit their assignments through Seesaw.

In addition to the written feedback, providing voice feedback to students' work and communicating with the families by sharing the students' work with them is also an option. The platform does not only limit the teachers giving feedback to students, but teachers can also enable students to like, comment, and edit the content of their peers' which would lead to collaboration and also provide them the opportunities to engage in peer-to-peer feedback and social-emotional learning experience. Due to these reasons, Seesaw can be incorporated into various educational settings such as traditional, remote, hybrid, and even homeschooling. Seesaw can also be used as a portfolio for students, as all the students' uploads can be saved by archiving them to the "archive" folder, as it can be seen in Figure 4.



**Figure 4. Archive Folder**

Seesaw's content can be adapted and used differently from teacher to teacher depending on the learners' needs, as it can be used flexibly by engaging the learners by creating interactive lessons that are not only accessible inside the classroom but even outside. When used appropriately, it is a user-friendly and an interactive platform that can benefit teachers, students, and parents all at once.

Overall, Seesaw is an interactive learning platform as it: *a) allows teacher – student – parent collaboration; b) supports a variety of interactive multimedia content ; c) provides cloud-based storage space, and; d) can be used by a wide range of possible devices.* Seesaw will further be reviewed in the following sections and will be evaluated through 3 criteria adapted from the TESOL Technology Standards Framework (Healey et al., 2008) below.

## Evaluation

Seesaw is a platform that can be used by teachers, students, and parents as it offers a wide range of tools. Two out of the three criteria are based on the language teachers and the remaining one is based on the language learner. The following section will include how Seesaw is able to provide opportunities for teachers to improve communications, keep records & feedbacks for the learners, and give learners the opportunity to work collaboratively with the app. Lastly, it will conclude with the strengths and weaknesses for English Language Learner (ELL) teachers

when incorporating this platform in their classrooms. The main contents of Seesaw are (a) *creating, sharing, and storing lessons and assignments*, (b) *wide range of multimedia (visual aids and interactive content)*, (c) *audio recording option*, and (d) *feedback given between teacher – student, and student – student, communications between teacher – parents, and teacher – teacher*. Each of the content will further be elaborated with the use of the three criteria.

**1. *The app provides the opportunities for the language teachers to improve communication, collaboration, and efficiency with peers, students, administrations, and other stakeholders.***

Seesaw offers a collaborative platform for language teachers to share ideas and resources with their colleagues and connect with other teachers through groups and communities. Teachers can share resources throughout different countries such as uploading their lesson plans in the Community Library. As different language teachers have varying teaching strategies, assets, and ideas, sharing diverse lesson plans can lead to exposure of dynamic perspectives on how to approach different lessons for varying students. Through Seesaw, teachers can communicate with their students by leaving comments, sending direct messages, and also making announcements. Further, teachers can give feedback on students' work, assign tasks, and create engaging learning experiences. Seesaw enables language teachers to communicate with parents and guardians and simplifies the process of assessing and grading student work as all of the students' outcomes can be shared. Overall, Seesaw's tools and features help language teachers easily communicate with colleagues, students, and parents with the use of multimedia.

**2. *The app provides opportunities for language teachers to keep records, feedback, and assessments to aid in effective learner assessment and to enhance language instruction in learning.***

Seesaw offers language teachers the ability to maintain a digital archive of student work that includes audio, video, images, and documents. This record-keeping feature is useful in tracking student progress over time, even if some time has passed since the work was completed. Seesaw also provides teachers with a variety of feedback options, such as written comments, voice recordings, and annotations, which allow for personalized and constructive feedback to be given to students. The platform simplifies the assessment and grading process by enabling teachers to assign grades, track progress, and analyze student performance in a more structured and organized way. Seesaw further supports differentiated instruction by allowing teachers to provide personalized tasks and activities that cater to each student's interests, needs, and abilities. Finally, Seesaw's parent involvement feature provides parents with access to their child's work and progress, encouraging greater participation in their child's learning and facilitating areas for improvement.

**3. *Language learners use technology-based productivity tools collaboratively and individually in order to enhance their language learning competence.***

Seesaw provides language learners with access to digital tools, including audio and video recording, drawing, and annotation, which can help them to communicate more effectively in the target language. The platform encourages collaboration among learners, allowing them to work together on projects and provide feedback to one another. Additionally, personalized tasks and activities are also offered based on individual students' interests, needs, and abilities, increasing their motivation and engagement. Through Seesaw's feedback feature, it enables students to receive customized feedback from their teachers, which can help them to identify

areas for improvement and enhance their language learning. Lastly, Seesaw's digital record-keeping feature enables students to monitor their progress over time, providing a sense of accomplishment and facilitating reflection on their language learning experience

## Conclusion

Seesaw has multiple strong assets for teachers, students, and parents. It can be incorporated into a wide range of educational activities and can meet the needs of the diverse learners. It is high in **versatility**, as activities can vary from reading, writing, and math to science or social studies, depending on how the teacher decides to create the activities with the various templates. It is easily **accessible** because it can be accessed on multiple devices both inside and outside of the classroom at the most convenient time for the individual. Seesaw is also a platform to consider when differentiating lessons and prioritizing the students' personalized learning needs. Teachers can assign different forms and content in the assignments depending on the student's progress and support needs. Lastly, it is a great platform to use to **communicate** and to provide feedback to students and to the parents as well. Students can also share their work with their peers, which is a great advantage when doing group projects.

One of Seesaw's downsides is that some might find it complex and **overwhelming** to incorporate a digital platform into learning. This might be especially true for families and students who come from cultures where using technology in education is not as common. Using Seesaw also might be a challenge for younger students who do not have digital literacies such as typing or uploading pictures. In this case, teachers should be more attentive and explicit in teaching the step-by-step process of accessing the multimedia so that they can be digitally literate in navigating and making use of the platform.

Overall, Seesaw provides many more strengths and affordances for teachers, students, and parents than weaknesses. Teachers' ability to create interactive activities and personalized lessons, provide feedback, and engage in constant communication are some of the positive contributions Seesaw brings to the educational setting.

## About the Reviewer

**Jihee Im** is a Ph.D. student in the Language, Literacy, and Technology program at Washington State University. She has a B.S. in TESOL and a minor in Linguistics from SUNY Oswego, and a master's degree from Arizona State University in TESOL. In the process of her studies, she taught MLLs for 5 years in New York and South Korea. She is interested in researching more about the trauma-informed instructions for pre-service teachers whose students are mainly marginalized refugee MLLs.

## To Cite this Review

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