

# Tools and Technologies Overview

At Great Hearts Online, our teachers use a combination of timeless pedagogical techniques and state of the art technology to educate your child. Our goal is never to use technology for technology's sake, or simply to rely on novelty to increase short-term engagement. Rather, we've thoughtfully curated a cohesive set of technological tools to replicate classical classroom experiences or augment teacher and student abilities.

Not wanting to overwhelm students, teachers will introduce new tools gradually, and before they're introduced, we'll provide more detailed guidance to help you support your child. To prepare you for the start of school however, we want to provide a brief overview of the major technologies we'll be using this year.

## Canvas

By now, you should have received an introduction to Canvas, our Learning Management System, and hopefully you've begun to explore it. Canvas is the website scholars will use to access their live web conferences with teachers and the various materials and activities they'll interact with independently.

Assignments in Canvas can take a number of forms and involve both online and offline work. Students will participate in moderated discussion boards, responding to questions and sharing ideas with their classmates. Scholars will also watch interactive videos, answering comprehension questions at key points. Handwritten work will be photographed using document cameras (see below) and uploaded into Canvas. Assignments that include recitation, singing, and other performances will be submitted via videos recorded using Canvas Studio, a simple to use video recording app.

## Zoom

Zoom is the web conferencing tool students will use during live class time. Zoom includes a number of tools that enhance teaching and learning online. During class, students will use the chat feature, like group texting, to answer questions, respond to quick polls, and ask questions. They'll also enter virtual breakout rooms, allowing them to participate in small group work as the teacher circulates to provide individual guidance. Finally, Zoom has a whiteboard feature, allowing the class to view what the teacher writes on screen.

## Nearpod

Nearpod is a website that integrates with Canvas and Zoom to help teachers create interactive lessons and conduct quick authentic assessments to understand student thinking. It has a variety of features that make online lessons more fun, engaging, and educational.

## **Document Camera**

The document camera is a unique innovation Great Hearts Online is using that will allow teachers and students to connect in new ways. Among other things, it will allow teachers to clearly observe student handwriting, pencil grip, and other non-digital work that we highly value. It will take time for students to master the routines of quickly switching from their laptop's web camera to the document camera during Zoom sessions, but as this grows easier, it will become an integral part of every class. At the beginning of each day, students may need your help setting up their document cameras correctly, and In the coming weeks, we'll provide guidance to you and teachers will help students learn to use the camera.