

Google Lens to let students snap pics of equations to get help

18 August 2020, by Bob Yirka

Credit: Google

Google Inc. has announced that the company will soon be rolling out a new educational tool called Lens. Its purpose is to help students (and their home-teaching parents) solve and use math equations. The company made the announcement on a recent blog post outlining the wide variety of applications the company has been developing to help parents who have suddenly found themselves teaching their kids at home.

The Lens tool will be part of a suite of applications provided through Socratic, which Google bought last year. Currently, Socratic supports Math, Science, Literature, Social Studies and several other subjects. Its purpose is to serve as an online tutor, helping students learn on their own. But it also has modules that were designed to be used in conjunction with work from school—though due to the pandemic, it is now being used by parents.

To use the Lens tool, a student takes a picture of a formula or equation with their Android or iOS device. From there, assistance to the [student](#) depends on the nature of the formula or equation. In some cases, step-by-step instructions or guides will outline ways to solve problems. The tool will

also provide explanations where applicable to help students understand why certain steps need to be taken or work carried out. Socratic already has optical character recognition capabilities; thus, repurposing some of its functionality to work directly as a Lens tool should make it easier for students to get help with equations and formulas. The company could not yet offer a release date for Lens, but hinted that it might be ready for this year's school term.

Google notes that the Lens [tool](#) is just one of the many resources the [company](#) is developing to make online learning easier. They have also created and made available a Tech Toolkit for Families and Guardians, which includes a [video series](#) designed to answer questions parents and students might have regarding online educational resources. They also note that Google Search has a host of helpful detailed explanations of education-based concepts. Among them is 3-D content providing visual assistance with STEM concepts. Another is Read Along, which was designed not only to help kids learn to read, but to show them that they might also enjoy it.

More information: blog.google/outreach-initiatives/become-teachers/

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