Using CYPHER for
blended learning

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Introduction

Each student is unique and with so much diversity in the classroom, the traditional one-size-fits-all approach to education is bound to fail. But technology can help. If we take into account EdTech and the increasingly important role it plays in education, blended learning seems like a feasible — maybe perfect? — solution. **Blended learning is a great way to start integrating technology in the classroom without eliminating the human component** that is still needed in educational interactions. A blended learning approach is **more engaging** for students and helps **cater to the individual needs** of each student compared to a traditional classroom teaching experience.

What is blended learning?

Blended learning is usually defined as **a formal education program** in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction with **some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace** and at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home.

In other words, **blended learning promotes the use of technology and face-to-face instruction in a seamless and blended way** that introduces both students and teachers to the benefits of technology in the classroom without the shock of going "fully online".

Benefits of blended learning

Flexibility

Blended learning enables students to **access class materials from anywhere, at any time**. Teachers also have flexibility in delivering content and can choose to present complex topics in the classroom, while other subjects can be made available online.

Personalization

Blended learning allows teachers to **personalize content to the specific needs** of their students, to provide a seamless transition from classroom to online and vice-versa. **Students can learn at their own pace** through a variety of activities that apply to many different learning styles.

Efficiency

With blended learning, **most class materials are hosted online, which saves teachers a lot of time** that would be otherwise spent on copying, collecting, stapling and so on. Teachers can also **efficiently deliver content to a broad audience** and reuse content and resources at any time.

Engagement

When technology is integrated into school lessons, students are more engaged and excited about the subjects they are studying. Having access to a **variety of interactive online tools and resources increases their level of participation** and focus in classes.

Costs

There is no need to buy as many books, notebooks, pencils, and other similar items. **All class materials are conveniently gathered online in one place**, available to download, read, edit, and share at any time.

Better communication

E-learning allows **more effective interactions** between students and their teachers through the use of tools such as **web conferencing**, **groups**, **blogs**, **chat rooms**, and **forums**. Collaboration in classes is enhanced and it's not limited to the inside of a physical classroom.

Types of blended learning

There are various models of blended learning. Deciding on **the best one depends on the level of technology that you wish to integrate in your classroom** and the students' needs.

A successful blended learning strategy must have **the perfect balance between face-to-face human interaction and technology**.

This balance is unique in each classroom and for each teacher. Some things are done exclusively by technology, others by the teachers; and at the end of the day, **technology complements and enhances the work of the teacher**. Here are some of the most common types of blended learning:

The face-to-face driver model

In this model technology is **used alongside traditional teaching** to increase success in educational outcomes. Face-to-face classroom teaching is the main mode of delivery, but technology is used to supplement learning.

The rotation model

This means **the modes of learning are rotated on a fixed schedule**. The modes range from group work, online work, and tutoring to pen and pencil work, assessments, lectures, or project assignments.

The flex model

Here students experience **a blend of modalities, but in a flexible, rather than fixed schedule**. Content is delivered primarily online, yet students remain within the campus, moving fluidly from group instructions, face-to-face interventions, small breakaway rooms, and lectures enhanced by on-site teacher intervention and recommendations.

The self-blended model

Students who want to **supplement their course with an elective online module** are supported by the school, and **the online content is delivered and managed by their teacher**. The online courses are not compulsory, and students may choose if, when and where to do them.

The online lab model

The online lab model **delivers most, if not all, content remotely**. Students gather in a traditional setting to access the computers; however, no face-to-face teachers are required. This model allows for differentiation in education because each student in the classroom can be learning different things at different levels. Students have access to nearly unlimited options in learning and staff are limited to those needed to supervise the facility.

The enriched virtual model

Very often these models begin exclusively as **online learning environments** that have built brick-and-mortar environments to **supplement and assist students with face-to-face instruction**, however should students wish to, they can complete the entire semester exclusively online.

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How CYPHER supports blended learning

CYPHER is a learning management system that helps schools and universities manage all classroom activities, such as creating and delivering educational content, assessing students, tracking student achievement, and promoting communication and collaboration between students and faculty. CYPHER is a great platform for implementing blended learning in any class and **can be easily adapted to the technology level that teachers require**, the grade level, age, and needs of the students.

Using CYPHER for various types of blended learning

Here are some examples of how CYPHER can be used to support each type of blended learning:

The face-to-face driver model

In this type of blended learning **CYPHER could be used to substitute or enhance some class activities**. For example, most of the educational content is taught in class, but CYPHER could be used at the beginning to share some resources at a class level or submit assignments. Instead of having students submit homework on pieces of paper, they could upload it in CYPHER. If the teacher is using a Powerpoint presentation in class, the teacher can upload the presentation after the class in CYPHER, where students can access it at all times and share it with other students that maybe didn't attend class that day.
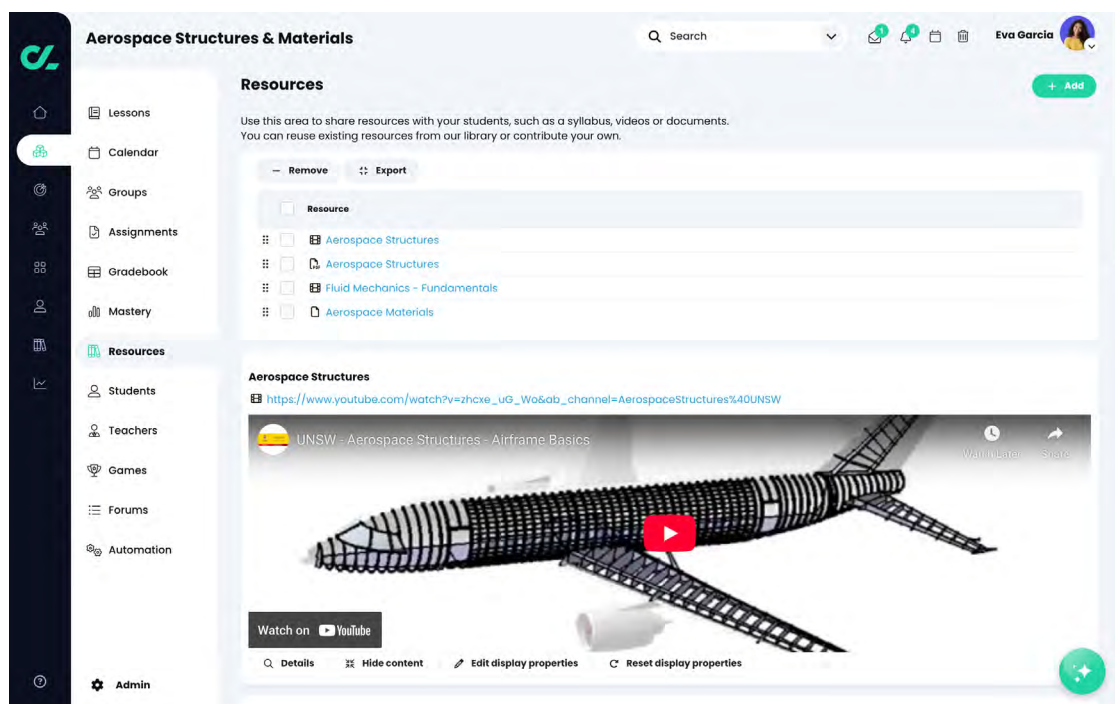
The rotation model

"Students rotate between face-to-face sessions and online interactions." In the first phase, an online interaction could be to use CYPHER to debate a class subject or lesson. Using the debate assignment feature, the teacher can post the topic that is up for debate, and students can add arguments for or against the proposition of the teacher. They can also challenge arguments from other students and vote for arguments. **This is a great way to spark interaction on a lesson topic.**
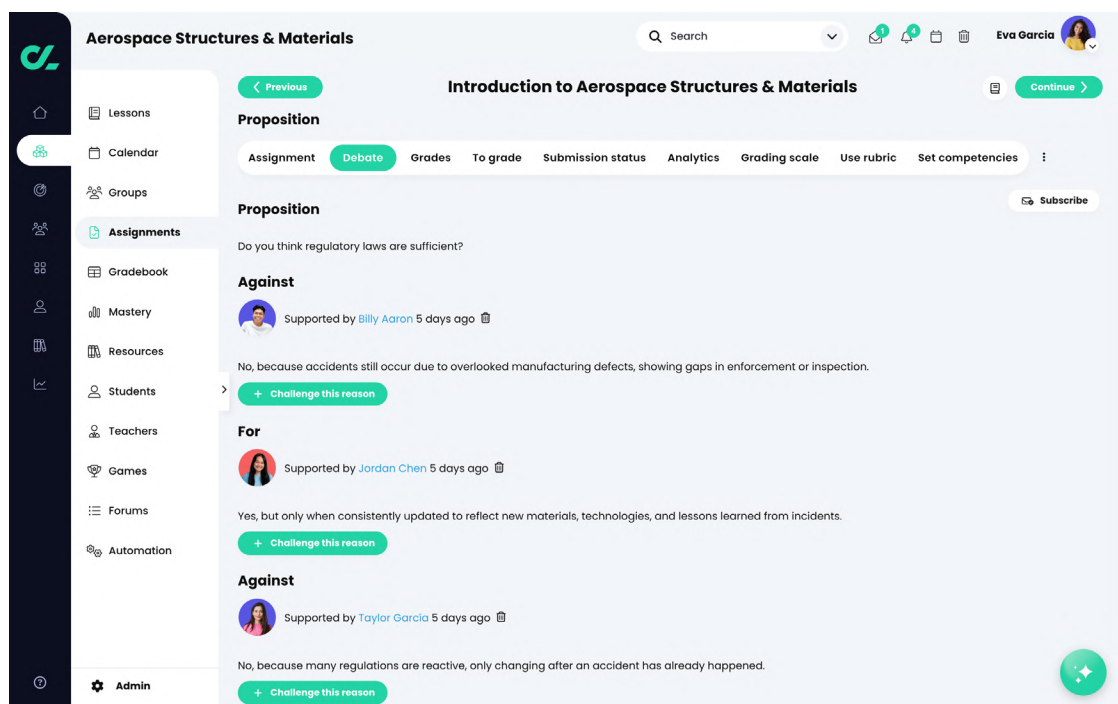
For teachers that are looking to incorporate more technology in the classroom, **CYPHER can be used to split the number of lessons delivered between online and face-to-face sessions.** All activities can be easily planned using the calendar feature and most of the lesson content and assignments can be hosted in CYPHER, but teachers can still schedule face-to-face sessions with students. **CYPHER can also be used for a flipped classroom model,** where most class content is hosted in CYPHER and students do individual work at home, while face-to-face sessions are used to discuss the lessons and how students are understanding the concepts.

The flex model

In this model most of the **classroom activity is done in CYPHER, but students remain on campus** and don't do work at home. Students have the flexibility to move between interactions, such as discussions, group instructions, collaboration activities, and face-to-face instruction. **While students work** **through various activities in CYPHER, they can communicate with teachers** and other students through collaboration tools such as groups, web conferencing, chats, forums, blogs, and more.

The self-blended model

In this model teachers can use CYPHER to create **online modules that are available for students who wish to take them**. These can be additional modules to an existing class or teachers can use CYPHER to create an entirely new online class for this purpose. **Teachers can deliver this content using a self-paced** **model and the drip content feature**, where students get access to bits of content as they advance through it. Teachers can also choose to deliver the content through online instruction using web conferencing or other tools, and allow students to go through class activities and assessments on their own using CYPHER.
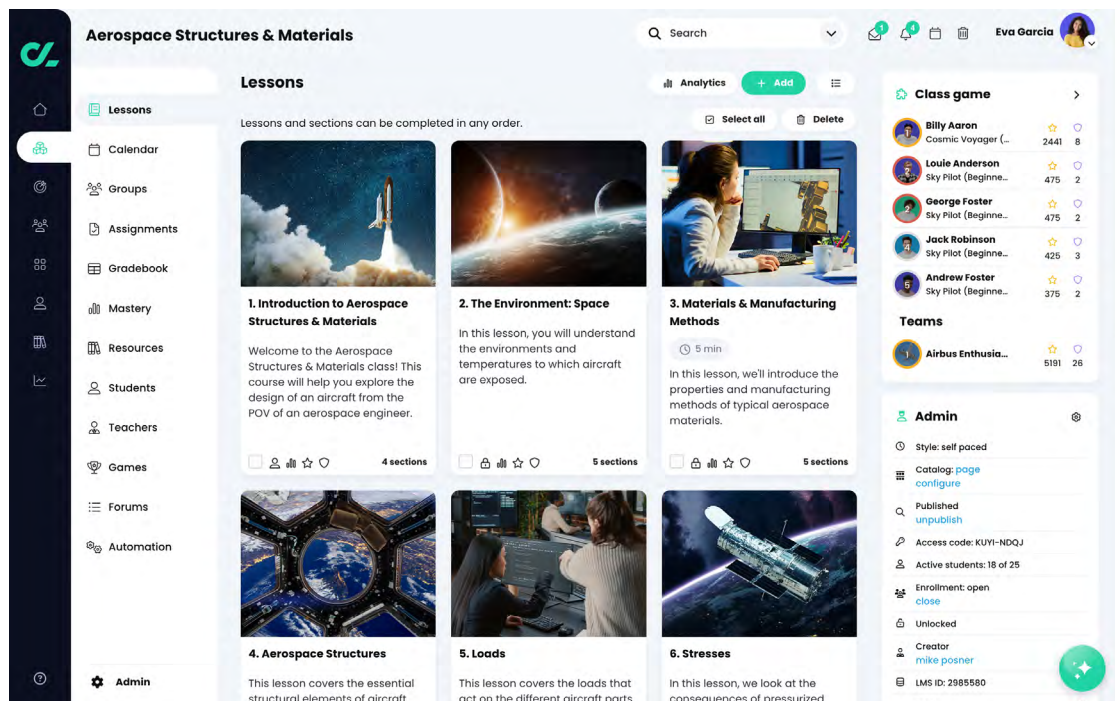
The online lab model

In this model **CYPHER can be used to deliver all class content and assessments**, and there is no need for face-to-face instruction. Self-paced classes in CYPHER are a great feature to use for this, as students can **advance through content at their own pace**.

Learning paths can also be used so that students master a topic by completing a set of predefined goals. **Assistance from teachers can be provided online through collaboration features** and achievement is easy to track using competencies, analytics, and reports.
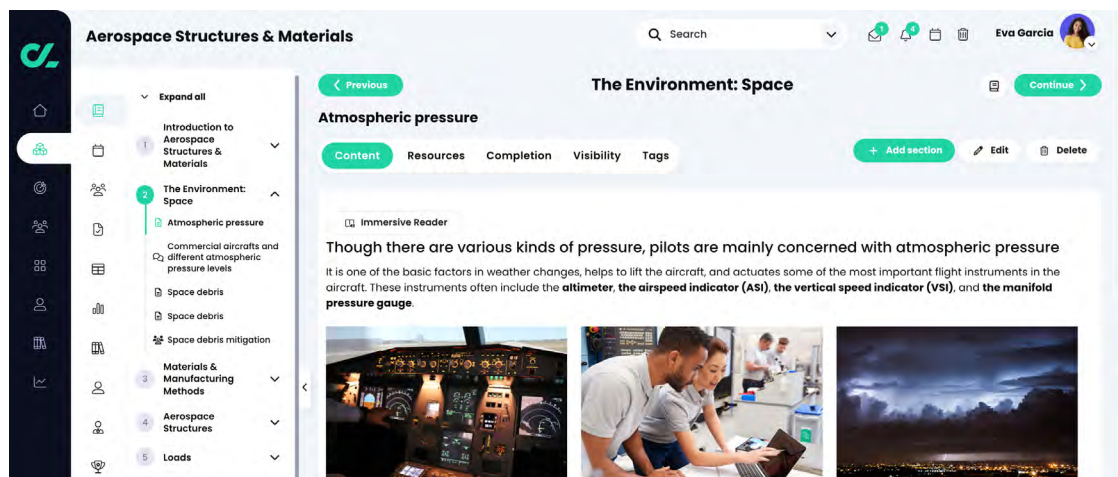
The enriched virtual model

In this model **all teaching and learning activities are done in CYPHER**, but students can **participate in face-to-face instructions when needed**. In this case, the teaching and learning activity is from the start built in CYPHER and students can complete all learning online if desired.
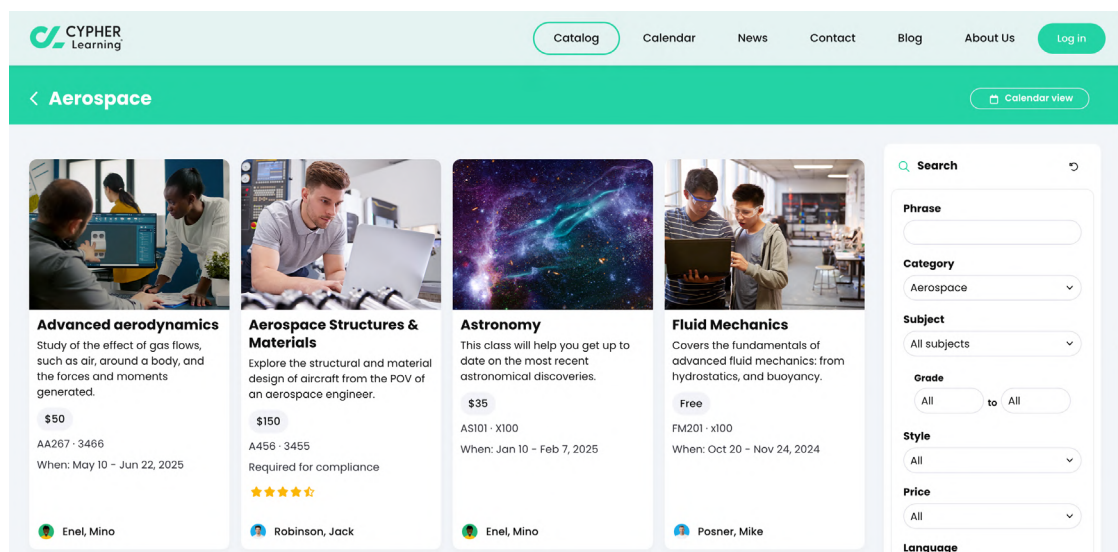
CYPHER features that support blended learning

CYPHER includes a variety of features that can be used to support blended learning and **enhance teaching and learning activities**, regardless of the technology level used in a classroom.
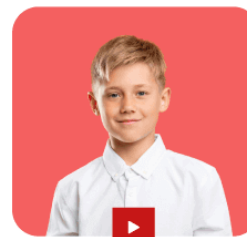
Class styles

Teachers can **choose from instructor-led, self-paced, blended, or micro learning**, depending on what type of blended learning they wish to do. Instructor-led classes are a good fit for face-to-face or rotation models, while self-paced classes are great for self blend models and online labs.

Instructor-led
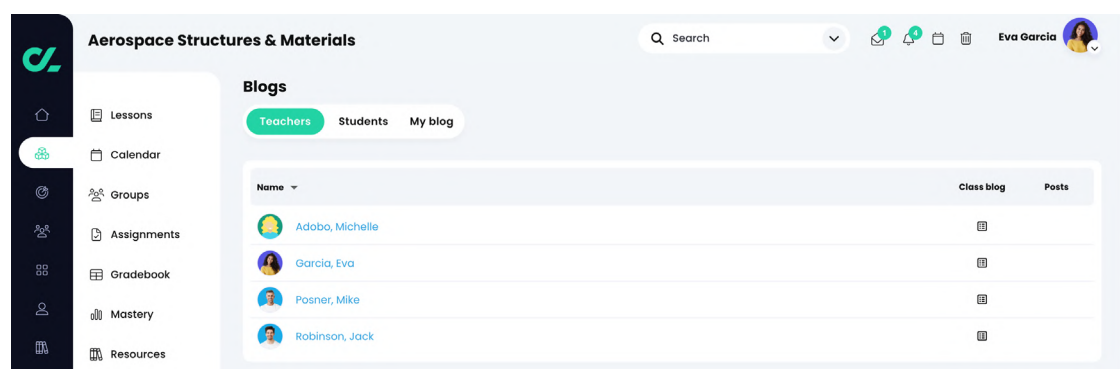
Blended

Micro learning

Self-paced

Collaboration tools

Enhance collaboration using tools such as **groups, forums, blogs, chats, and wikis**. These tools are **great to facilitate communication and interaction** when students are doing work

on their own in a flipped classroom setting or when they require assistance from teachers in a flex or self-blended model.

Various types of assignments

Whether you're using CYPHER to enhance face-to-face instructions or the entire class content is delivered online, you can choose from **16 assignment types** depending on what you need: **quizzes, essays, debates, team, Dropbox, discussion, surveys, LTI, and more**.
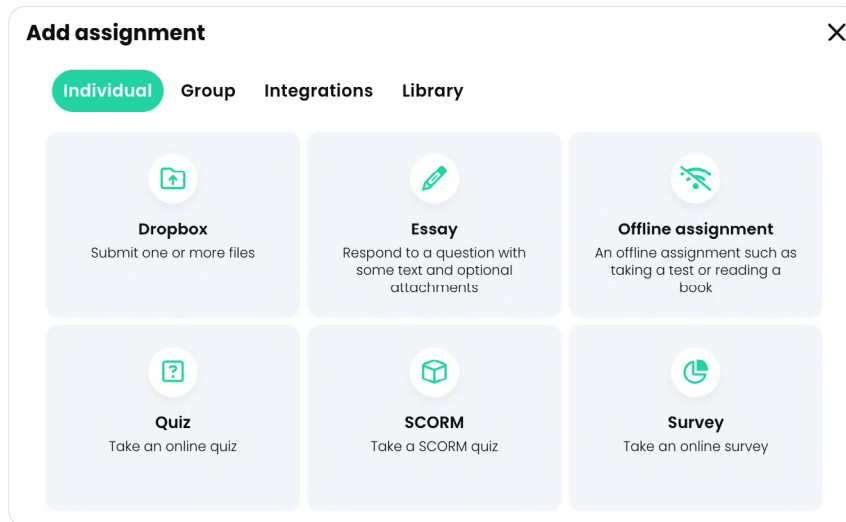
Access to content anytime, everywhere

In most blended learning models, **remote access for students and teachers is very important**. CYPHER offers **mobile apps for iOS and Android** so all users can have a great teaching and learning experience anytime, everywhere.
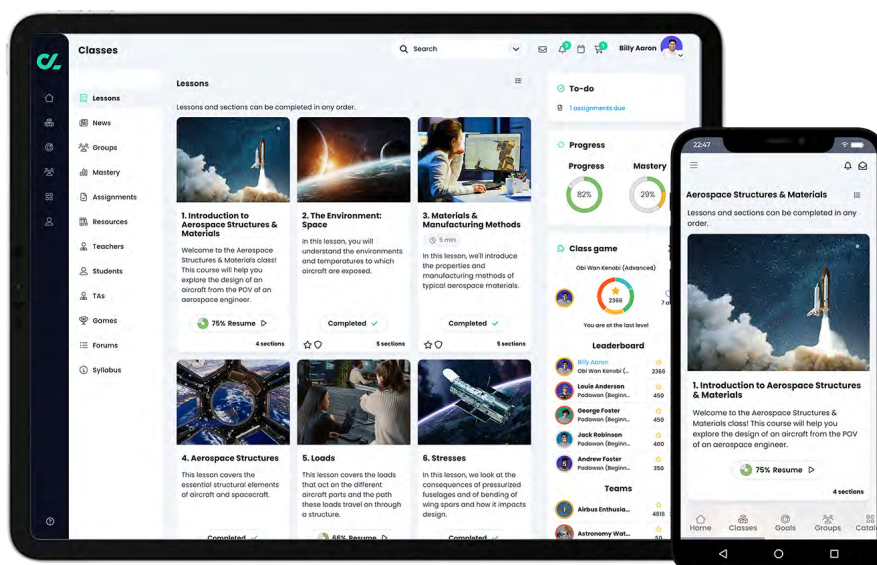
Schedule class interactions

**Using the calendar**, teachers can easily schedule face-to-face interactions or use our web-conferencing tools to plan online teaching sessions.
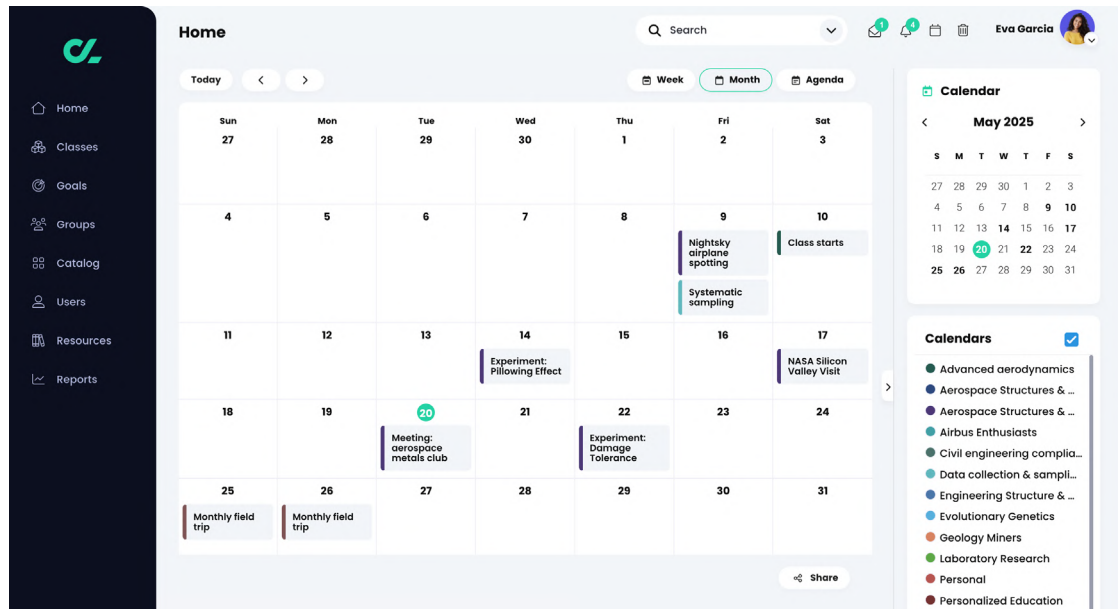
Store all resources in a centralized location

Whether you're using CYPHER to enhance face-to-face instructions or delivering all content online, you need to **keep all class material and resources in a centralized location**. You can store everything in CYPHER using the resources catalog and **easily share resources with the entire school**.
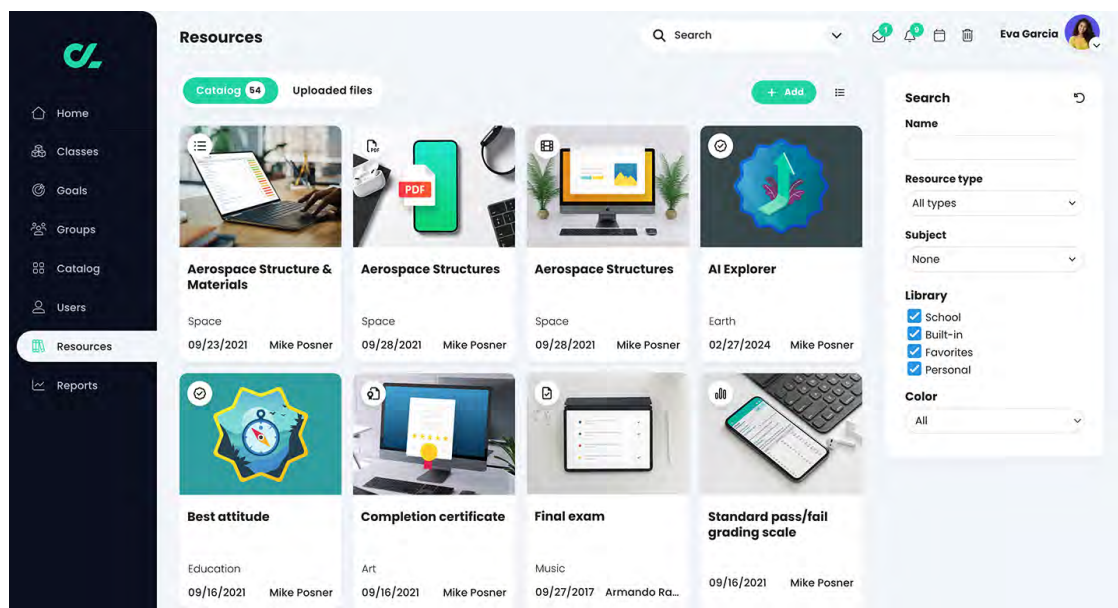
Learning paths

In blended learning models where students have to do work on their own, learning paths can be used to **help them master a topic step by step**. In a learning path, each class, certificate or another path can **represent a goal that students must complete to achieve mastery**.

Automation and adaptive learning

You might think it's hard to personalize the learning experience for students in blended learning models that require less teacher intervention. This is not the case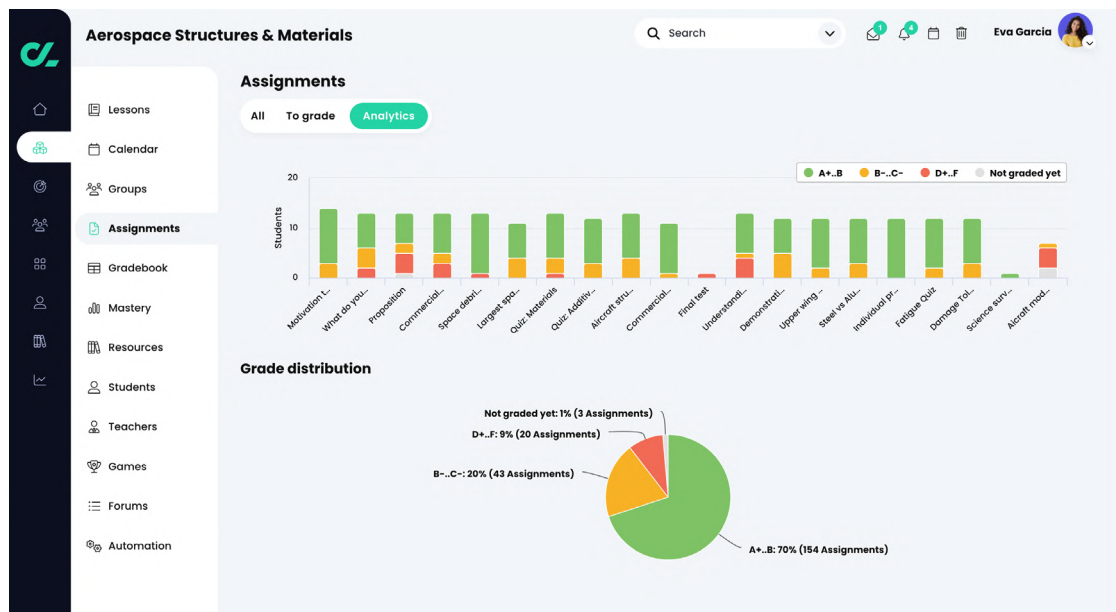 when using CYPHER's features, such as automation, drip content, and adaptive learning. Teachers can **schedule student access** to lessons, **trigger actions** when certain conditions are met, and **adjust learning content** based on the student's progress.

Tracking progress

It's easy to keep track of students' progress, even in blended learning models that include a mix between face-to-face sessions and online interactions. Using **CYPHER's gradebook you can keep track of all grades**, whether it's from assignments done in CYPHER or offline assignments such as reading a book. In models where students work at their own pace, **teachers can check student progress at all times and generate analytics and reports**.

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About CYPHER Learning

CYPHER Learning exists to give learners the power to succeed in a rapidly changing world. Trainers, learning and development (L&D) pros, HR pros, and educators get everything they need in one platform to deliver faster, more personalized, and better learning outcomes. We provide the only all-in-one AI-powered learning platform that is easy-to-use, beautifully designed, and built to power billions of learning moments every day. Create courses faster. Train and teach better. Learn even quicker. Experience our "just in time, just for you, just the way you want to learn" approach that puts people first.

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