

Increase access to information

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Using digital technologies' from the Guide:

[Technology tools for learning](#)

Includes:

Utilise built-in features

Text-to-speech

Turn on the closed captions

Use audio books

Personalise the reading experience

Useful resources

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Suggestion: [Increase access to information](#)

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Utilise built-in features

Most digital devices have built-in accessibility tools.

Start by identifying what is already available on your school devices and platforms.

Common features and tools

Windows accessibility features

- Screen magnifier
- Speech recognition
- Screen reader (narrator)
- High screen contrast
- Change size and colour of mouse pointer
- Word prediction

iOS accessibility features

- Voice control
- VoiceOver (screen reader)
- Dictation (write using your voice)
- Hover text (increases size of text)
- Cursor magnifier
- Invert colours or enable colour filter

Chromebook accessibility features

- Screen reader
- ChromeVox (spoken feedback)
- Select-to-speak
- Voice typing
- Cursor magnifier
- Screen magnifier
- Highlight text
- Large cursor
- Dictation

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Text-to-speech

Text-to-speech (TTS) reads digital text aloud.

TTS removes barriers to decoding and understanding printed words.

Encourage the use of TTS across the curriculum, providing learners with opportunities to:

- listen and read along with unfamiliar texts
- access texts beyond their reading level
- listen to audio while doing another activity, such as exercising or travelling
- select sections of text and listen back for errors and fluency when editing their writing.

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Turn on the closed captions

Build in learning supports by selecting videos that have closed captions (accurate subtitles, not those guessed by YouTube).

By turning on the closed captions, you are providing choice for learners so they can:

- watch the video
- read the closed captions
- access the interactive transcript available below the video.

For more information, view these weblinks:

- [How to search for closed captioned videos on YouTube](#) (video)
- [How to manage subtitle settings](#) (video)
- [Use captions in a video meeting | Google Meet](#)

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Use audio books

Audio books support learners to access information and develop comprehension skills.

Audio books can be used to:

- increase engagement and motivation and prevent frustration
- introduce learners to books above their reading level
- model fluent reading
- introduce new genre that might not otherwise be considered
- support new vocab
- customise books (by speeding up or slowing down narration).

For audio resources, explore:

- [Sign language e-books](#)
- [Ready to Read Instructional Series](#)
- [Junior Journal Instructional Series](#)
- [School Journal Story Library](#)
- [Overdrive](#) access to audio books from your local library
- [Sunshine online e-books](#).

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Personalise the reading experience

Support students to personalise reading settings.

Adjustable fonts and spacing allows the user to customise text to the size and shape that suits their needs.

Settings can include:

- adjustable line spacing
- adjustable letter spacing
- adjustable text size
- font choice
- colour and contrast options
- having text read aloud.

Use [Clusive](#) to get a sense of how this could look and feel to your learners.

Explore [Immersive Reader](#), a Google Chrome extension.

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Useful resources



Text-to-Speech technology: What it is and how it works

Read time: 3 min

Information explaining how text-to-speech (TTS) works and types of TTS tools.

Publisher: Understood

[Visit website](#)



Ready to Read

This is an example of how to create an online page where learners and whānau can access audio recordings from the Ready to Read series.

Publisher: Kauri Park School

[Visit website](#)



3 ways to support your students with Immersive Reader

Read time: 4 min

This article explains the features of Immersive Reader and includes a brief overview video.

Publisher: Ditch That Textbook

[Visit website](#)

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