

Tips and tools using technology

Over the past few years, changes to technology have made it easier and more accessible than ever for our students.

As you get started with these tools, there are a few tips to keep in mind:

- Like any new skill, comfort with using these tools independently takes time. Plan to spend some time exploring things together—play with the features, try out different voices/speeds etc., and have some fun before trying to use it to complete a specific task.
- In the beginning, many students find that using these tools at home is more comfortable than using them at school—especially within classrooms that use them less often. We do our best to support our students, but there isn't always an adult available to assist, so the more independent kids are in using them, the more successful they will be.
- If you are curious about which tools your child has access to at school, or know they have been practicing something at home that could be helpful in school — reach out to your child's teacher. The more we work together, the more successful the students will be!



Read and Write for Google

The school district has invested in Read and Write for Google for all of our staff and students, and it can be accessed from any computer with Google Chrome, once the student logs into their school district Google Chrome account. Once your child clicks on the “purple puzzle piece” on their toolbar, a floating toolbar will appear, and give them access to a range of tools.

Read and Write for Google

Thinglink has a website with short video tutorials for all of the features listed below. ([Video Tutorials Available Here](#))

FROM LEFT-TO-RIGHT, THE TOOLS ARE:

- Text Prediction: Use this to have words predicted as you write.
- Hover Speech:
- Dictionary: Look up words. Program will read the definition to you.
- Picture Dictionary: Look up words with an image as assistance.
- Play: Read selection aloud. Voices can be changed in settings.
- Pause: Pause reading.
- Stop: Stop reading.
- Screenshot Reader: a screenshot of text will convert it to a format that can be read out loud
- Audio maker: converts text into an audio file which will be automatically downloaded
- Screen mask: Allows the user to focus on a specific area of the screen, reducing distractions
- Talk and Type: Allows user to talk to the microphone and have it typed onto the screen
- Translator: Select a word and it will be translated to Spanish or French- Adjust in settings.
- Highlighters: Highlights selected words in a variety of colors.
- Erase Highlighting: Removes all highlighting within selection.
- Collect Highlights: Creates new document of just the highlights.
- Vocabulary: Creates document of words highlighted and includes a pictures of many of the words for reference
- Simplify Page: remove clutter from webpage and place simplified text on a new webpage
- Practice Reading Out Loud: To practice and record yourself, using selected texts, and send it to the teacher for feedback



What can you do with a phone?

There are a variety of tools built right into phones that can assist with literacy tasks. Check the device settings for Accessibility Options to enable features. Most of these tools will work on both Android and Apple devices.

If you're not sure how to get going—do a quick YouTube search, there are lots of tutorial videos available!



Dictation: iPhones have a built-in micro-phone and Dictation, allows students to speak instead of typing their thoughts.

Speak Screen: Students can use Speak Screen to follow along as highlighted words or sentences are read aloud, making it easier for them to comprehend the meaning of the text and its proper pronunciation.

Dictionary: definitions and commonly used phrases are integrated to help with spelling, pronunciation, and grammar.

Typing Feedback: when activated, students can hear a letter or word spoken back to them as they type it. This confirms they've selected the right letter or correctly written a word.

Predictive Text: suggests options for words that students can listen to and choose from, which helps them develop vocabulary and check their spelling

Camera: Pointing a camera at pictures of text will have them read aloud. This varies with android devices. Use the “live text” feature on an iPhone with iOS 15.

Other helpful tools for intermediate and secondary students

Summarize This is a tool that helps you summarize any piece of text into shortened, simplified content. It is used by copy-pasting the text into a box onscreen. www.summarizethis.com

Rewordify simplifies difficult English, and help build student vocabulary. Reworded words are highlighted to help the reader see what was changed. <https://rewordify.com/>

Learning Tools for OneNote are available free for Microsoft users.

- One Note is a “digital file folder” which helps students stay organized. It can hold notes, screen shots, audio notes. It can also be shared between users.
- Immersive Reader is free tool that allows students to read text out loud, increase spacing between lines and letters, and support reading fluency. <https://www.onenote.com/learningtools>

Common Lit is a source for digital versions of fiction and non-fiction text. It includes text-to-speech and highlighting tools to support comprehension. <https://www.commonlit.org/>

