

## **Accessibility**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for all of the ways that you are supporting the children at home with their learning. The move to remote working has been sudden and certainly has been a steep curve for the teachers as well as you and the children.

Some of the feedback we have received has been around children needing help to read the tasks that have been set for them. As many of you who have worked with me before will know, I am a big fan of assistive technology for our children to help “level the playing field” and so Mr Denney and I thought it would be useful to share with you some of the options to make elearning more accessible, with things like “read aloud” technology and use of “voice to text” for recording.

If you are working from home yourself, this may also make your life a little easier!

## **Read & Write for Google Chrome**

This is a very helpful extension for Google Chrome that will read aloud text from webpages, PDF files and eBooks

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/readwrite-for-google-chro/inoeonmfapjbbkmdafoankkfajkcphgd>

It runs a 30 day trial which allows you to use its premium features. After the trial, it will still support reading aloud from webpages and Google Docs.

Install the plugin to Chrome and it will appear in the top right-hand corner of the window. It is



the purple jigsaw piece with RW in it.

Click on this icon to activate Read and Write.

This will provide you with a new toolbar.



To start reading aloud, press the play button. If you only want it to read a small selection, select your text first and then press play.

Once the text has been read to your child, the words can be highlighted and you can use the spoken dictionary if you are not certain about the meaning of what you have heard, increasing

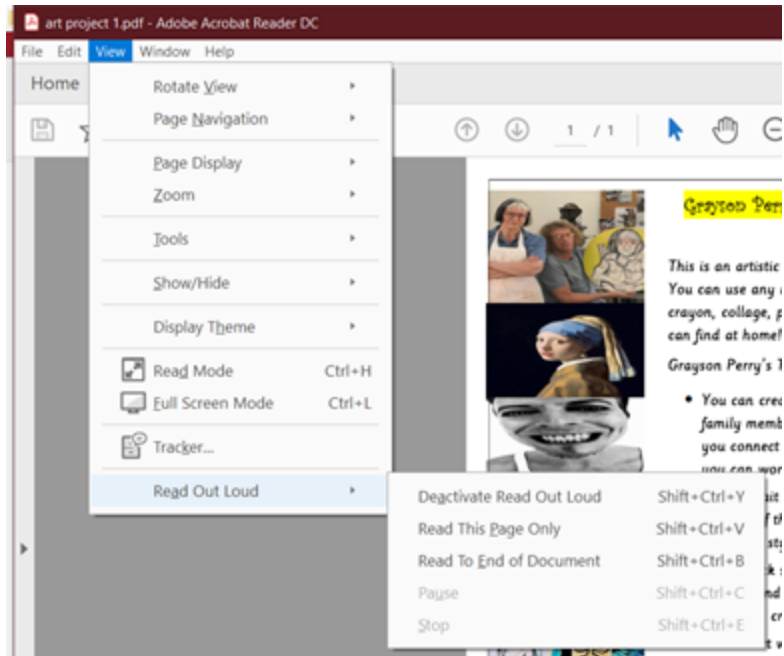
independence. It allows for coloured filters, voice recordings, talk and type, screen masks and so much more.

Read Write is an amazing assistive tool and like its market competitor “Claro”, full functionality can be purchased by families should you feel the many additional benefits are worth having.

## **Adobe Reader**

<https://get.adobe.com/uk/reader/>

If you have the latest version of Adobe Reader installed on your device, it has the capability to read aloud text based PDF files (this does not work if text has been copied in as an image).

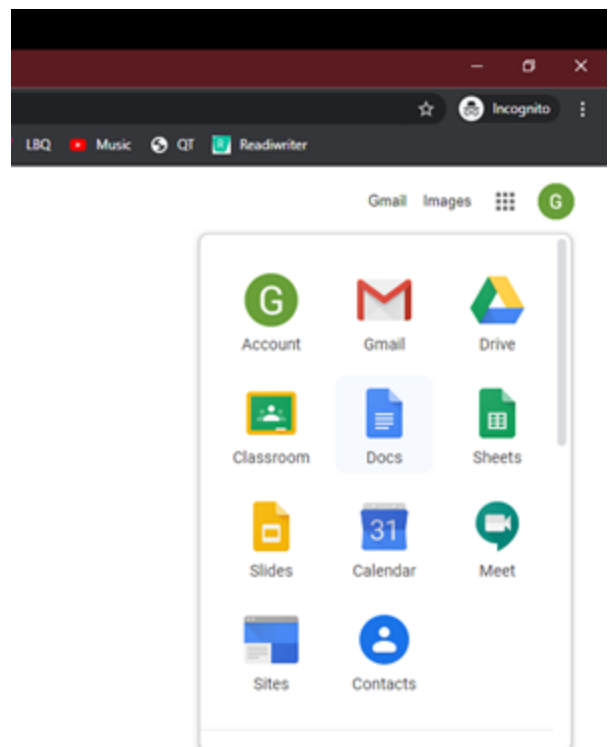


## **Google Docs Voice Typing**

<https://docs.google.com>

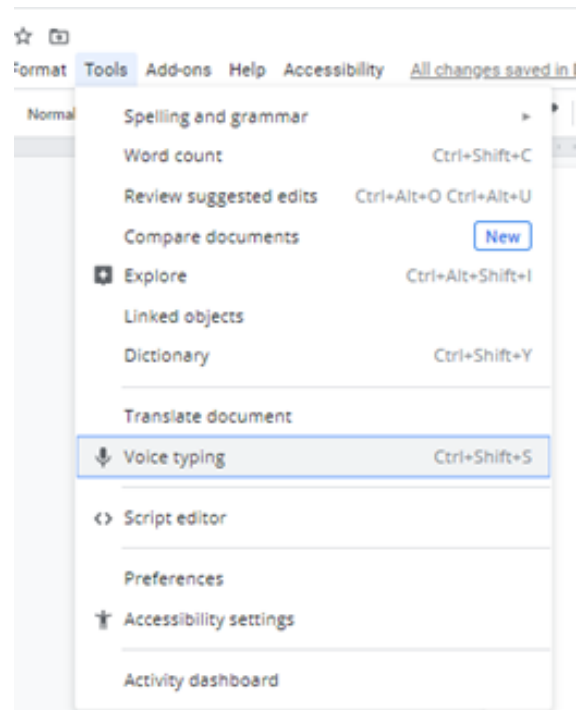
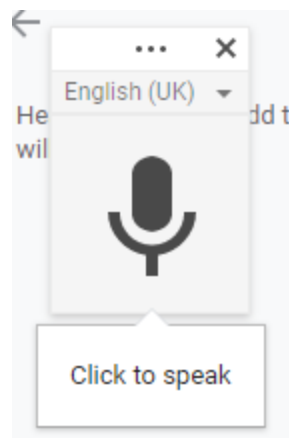
As part of our access to Google Classroom, we also have access to Google’s suite of ‘Microsoft Office’ style products.

Once signed into Google, Docs can be found by going to the Google menu (the one that looks like a waffle).

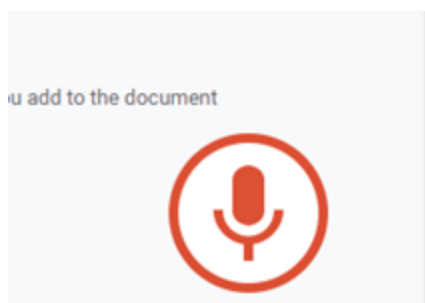


Once you are in Google Docs, start a new or open a document. Go to the 'Tools' menu and select 'Voice typing'.

This will make an image of a microphone appear with the instructions 'Click to speak'. When you click on it, Google will ask for permission to access your device's microphone.



Once you have granted permission, click the microphone icon and it will turn red. This tells you that it is listening. Now speak clearly. The graphic will change when it hears a voice and you will see your words appear on the document. They may change and become more accurate as the system hears more of your sentence. If you ask for punctuation, it will insert it. It will also put in new lines.



Hello. I am now dictating to my computer.

It is not always 100% accurate, but most of the time it does a very good job. It will require some editing afterwards to correct any mismatched words or missing punctuation.

When you want to stop recording, just press the microphone icon.

**Word online** has the same feature.

## **Microsoft**

Microsoft has a lot of in-built assistive technology that is free. A good way to understand how to apply these things on your device at home would be to watch this short webinar. You need to sign up in order to watch it but then will have access to the 50 minute talk. It was a real eye-opener to me!

Microsoft empowering potential:

[https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/6647146330143017219?assets=true&ct=t\(EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_4\\_7\\_2020\\_12\\_1\)&mc\\_cid=d3cd303c6b&mc\\_eid=7ec33b68ae](https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/6647146330143017219?assets=true&ct=t(EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_4_7_2020_12_1)&mc_cid=d3cd303c6b&mc_eid=7ec33b68ae)

## **Apple**

Those of you with Apple products such as Ipads can go to settings/accessibility where there are a host of options, depending on your iOs. Read aloud, reader view, magnification and so much more that many of us never know we can use.

<https://www.apple.com/uk/accessibility/>

While we are on technology to support learning, here are two more currently free things you might like to access,

## **Clicker software**

“Clicker” are currently offering a free 6 weeks to their software that allows children to build stories in a simple and accessible way.

The school code is: **Whitehill Junior School: 8WEEF 2LYWX 7PRR6 5CW37** if you would like to play with this!

## **Widgit**

Widgit is also running a free 30 day trial. This might be of interest if your child responds well to visuals and uses a timetable.

Mr Denney and I hope that some of this becomes useful to you all when working at home. If nothing else, take a little time just to experiment with some of the accessibility tools out there!

Good Luck!

Mrs McConnell Smith