30 Top Tips for Accessibility in Education

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Click or tap any tip to view the project description or use your camera and the QR code to navigate to a 'How to' video recording.

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#1 Dark / Light Mode

Turn on Light or Dark mode to improve the viewing experience. You could set this to change with the surrounding light conditions or to best suit your needs.
Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Display and Brightness. Select either one option or the other to meet your preference. Alternatively, you may wish to set to Automatically, so it changes for you or on a schedule.

#2 Dynamic Text

Add Text size to Control Centre and change the text size to suit. This may be larger, or it could be smaller, so more text can be seen on one screen.
Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility and then to Display and Text size. Turn on Larger Text and swipe to select the size that works for you.

#3 Bold Text

Make your text bold so that it is easier to read and distinguish against any type of background.
Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility. Find Display and Text Size and tap beside Bold text to turn the option on.

#4 Background Sounds

Noise can be a very distracting factor for many users. Not only can you turn off your keyboard clicks you can also set a background sound to assist to minimise distractions, help you to focus, be calm or rest.
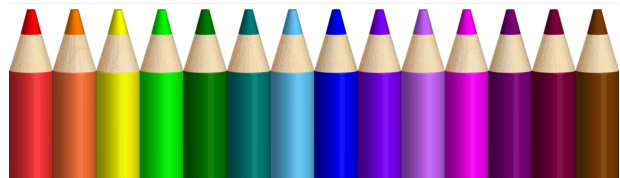Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility. Scroll down to the Hearing section and find Audio/Visual and tap Background Sounds. Turn the sounds on, and select your Sounds preference and the volume.

#5 Reduce Motion

iPad uses screen movement to add a 3D effect to what you see. If you are sensitive to these effects you can turn them off using Reduce Motion.
Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility. Find Reduce Motion and tap the toggle to remove the parallax effect and reduce motion.

#6 Colour Filters

Colour Filters can be useful for you if you struggle to focus on the text on the display, or if you are colour-blind.
Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility and then to Display and Text size. Scroll down to find Colour Filters and Turn on. Select the option that best suits your needs.

#7 Transparency

You can improve the contrast and increase legibility by reducing the transparency and reducing the blurs on some backgrounds.
Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility and then to Display and Text size. Scroll down to find Transparency and Turn it on. Select the option that best suits your needs.

#8 Set up Siri
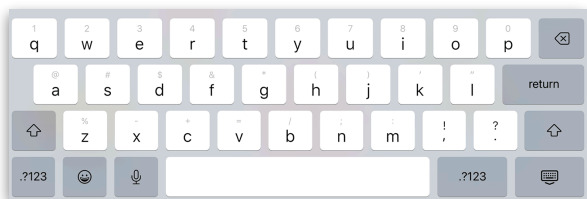
Siri is your virtual assistant.
Siri can look things up for you, open apps for you, tell you how to spell a word, describe what a word means and so much more.
Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Siri and Search. Customise your Siri preferences select the voice, and language and how Siri responds

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#9 Keyboards

Your device allows you to select multiple keyboards. This allows you to use emoji, plus keyboards for other languages.

Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to General and then Keyboard. Tap on Keyboards and select which ones you'd like to add.

#10 Text Replacement

Text replacement allows your device to automatically change the text to suit you. If you always type a word incorrectly then set up text replacement to fix it. If you have long words or names to type, set up this as a shortcut. This is excellent for students with dyslexia.

Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to General and then Keyboard. Tap on Text Replacement and then tap the Add button in the top right-hand corner. The Phrase is what you wish to be written and the shortcut is what you type when you are composing text.

#11 Typing Feedback

You can set up Typing Feedback on your device so that it reads text out to you as you are typing. This could be Words, Auto-text Predictions or even individual characters.

Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility and then to Spoken Content. Tap on Typing Feedback and then tap the options you wish to utilise.

#12 Lookup

You can hold your finger on a word and one of the options that show in the pop-up menu is Look-up. Your device will show you several options including the meaning of the word in the dictionary.

Get Started: Open a document or webpage. Hold your finger on a word and select the Look-up option in the menu that shows above. Scroll down and select the option you require.

#13 Dictation

Once you have activated dictation you can add text using your voice anywhere you can type it. It may be to search or to create a document or message. Dictation can also be used in a wide variety of languages. You can dictate any length of text, but it will stop when you are quiet for more than 30 seconds.

Get Started: Open General Settings, then Keyboard and scroll down to find the Dictation settings. Activate dictation. You can also select which language you wish to allow dictation to use.

#14 Voices

Your device can speak to you using a wide variety of voices - specific to the language you have selected. Alex knows words in context and also uses 49 different breath sounds which help with understanding, punctuation and editing when you are listening back to text you have written.

Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility and then to Spoken Content. Tap on Voices and then tap the options you wish to utilise.

#15 Translate

You can use your iPad to translate from one language to another. You can type or dictate what you wish to say. This text can be copied out to a document or else you can undertake a conversation.

Get Started: Open the Translate App and select the language you wish to begin with and the language you wish to translate into. You can type to enter text or speak your text in. Press the play button to hear the translation.

#16 Speak Selection

Tap on a word or a piece of text and your device will read it out to you using your selected voice. This is great to hear what you have typed with dictation repeated back to you, or for hearing what the text you are reading should sound like.

Get Started: Open Settings and Navigate to Accessibility and then to Spoken Content. Tap to turn on Speak Selection.

#17 Speak Screen

Swipe down from the top of the screen and your device will read out to you whatever is on the page using your selected voice. This is useful for reading a book or document out loud. It's great for hearing the speech you have written as though you were the audience.
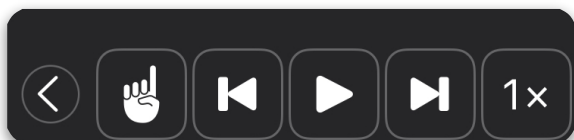
Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility and then to Spoken Content. Tap to turn on Speak Screen.

#18 Highlight Content

As your device reads text to you it can be highlighted. This may be a colour highlight or an underline, it may be just a word or a sentence or both that are shown.

Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility and then to Spoken Content. TapHighlight Content and customise your settings.

#19 Speech Controller

The speech Controller gives you quick access to Speak screen and Speak on touch. This allows you to easily have a page or word read to you at any given moment. So much quicker!

Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility and then to Spoken Content. Tap Speech Controller and customise your settings.

#20 Safari Reader

When you ask your device to read a whole page to you on Safari, it will often read all the adverts and the menus and everything else as well. There is often so much visual clutter on a page it can be overwhelming. Safari Reader allows you to customise how you view the page.

Get Started: Open a web page on Safari and tap the AA text that shows in the left-hand side of the URL bar. Customise the size, font and colours to suit your preferences.

#21 Magnifier

Sometimes seeing things around you can be a challenge. Magnifier is a great tool that allows you to zoom into an object or text with ease. Being able to see the detail, capture it, and even have it read to you is often very useful.

Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Control Centre. Find the Magnifier icon and tap the green add symbol.

Now swipe down from the top right-hand corner of your screen and tap the Magnifier symbol. You can select the size that works for you.

#22 Live Text

Your Camera will pick up the text in the images you take. Then, you can have the text selected and you can do a number of things with it - like Look it up, copy and paste it, speak it, or translate it.

Get Started: Open your Camera and hold it over something that includes text. Tap the text tool in the bottom right-hand corner.

#23 Live Listen

With Live Listen, your device becomes a remote microphone that can send sound directly to your hearing aid or your AirPods. This can help you hear things in a noisy room or what someone is saying across the room.

Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Control Centre. Find the Live Listen icon and tap the green add symbol. Connect your AirPods or Made for iPhone Hearing Aid.

Now swipe down from the top right-hand corner of your screen and tap the Live Listen symbol. Put your device in front of the speaker and sit back and listen.

#24 Screenshots

Being able to take an image of what is on your screen can be very useful to refer back to. Capture content as a movie, pdf or image plus annotate it afterwards.

Get Started Screen Shots: Open a webpage or image. swipe up from the corner of your device with your Apple pencil. Select image or page and annotate your capture. Save in an appropriate format.

#25 Screen Recording

Being able to take a recording of what is happening on your screen and the potential to record your voice-over is a powerful tool. Fantastic for instructional Video or capturing reflections.

Get Started Screen Recording: Open Settings and navigate to Control centre. Find the Screen Recording icon and tap the green add symbol.

#26 Notes

Notes is the best place to jot down quick thoughts or to save longer notes filled with checklists, images, web links, scanned documents, handwritten notes or sketches.

Get Started: Open Notes and tap the square with the pencil coming into it to make a new note. Investigate the options across the top to make checklists, drawings, handwritten text, tables etc.

#27 Reminders

You can set reminders that are based on time, location or all

sorts of other triggers. You can make lists, add actions, sublists and share with others. You can add icons for your reminders too.

Get Started: Open Reminders and tap the orange add button in the bottom left to create your first reminder. Decide if it is a date or time or location that will trigger the reminder.

#28 Guided Access

At times students may need some encouragement to stay in one app. Guided Access allows you to lock the student into one app until you release it - even if the device is turned off and on again.

Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility and then to Guided Access. Tap to turn on Guided Access. Create a passcode or use Face ID. Set time limits and decide if the device will make a sound or speak when the time is up.

#29 Accessibility Shortcuts

Depending on your needs, you may end up with a lot of accessibility features turned on. You can select which you activate by using Accessibility Shortcut.

Get Started: Open Settings and navigate to Accessibility and then right down the bottom to Accessibility Shortcut. Tap to open and select which options will show when you triple-click the top button on your iPad.

#30 Accessibility Assistant

The Accessibility Assistant will walk you through settings to personalise your device. It will assist you to customise settings to match your needs.

Get Started: Open Shortcuts and open the Gallery. Tap on the Accessibility section, and launch the iPad Accessibility Assistant. Add the shortcut. Now go to All Shortcuts and run the Accessibility Assistant and select conditions that are relevant to you. Approve any access requests.

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