Free assistive technology for pupils with SEND

Accessibility Features available in Windows:

In Windows, there's a central location where you can explore accessibility settings and programs that'll make your student's computer easier to use. The **Ease of Access Center** sits in the **Control Panel** and includes:

Speech Recognition - Students who have difficulty typing or reading text can successfully work on their computer by commanding and dictating to it with the use of speech recognition. To dictate text using Speech Recognition:

- Open Speech Recognition by clicking the Start button, clicking All Programs, clicking Accessories, clicking Ease of Access, and then clicking Windows Speech Recognition.
- Say "start listening" or click the Microphone button to start the listening mode.
- Open the program you want to use or select the text box you want to dictate text into.
- Say the text that you want dictate.

Magnifier - Enlarge portions of the screen making it easier to view text and images and see the whole screen more easily.

Text to Speech - Text to Speech (TTS) software speaks the text on the computer screen using a generated voice. TTS is one of the most powerful technologies for help with reading or writing. Microsoft has its own App called Windows Narrator.

1. Open control panel
2. Go to Ease of Access
3. Click on Speech Recognition
4. click on the **Text to Speech**
5. Click on English and then preview voice. Here you can choose the voice and speed of speech.
6. Now browse to any text file you want to be read aloud by your computer & Open it in Notepad. And Press Windows logo key+Ctrl+ Enter shortcut keys to turn on the Narrator.
7. A Narrator Dialog box will open up showing shortcuts for it. Click OK.
8. Now Narrator Settings will open up and you just have Click on Minimize.
9. open the text file that you want to be read by the narrator word to word. And Press Shift + Ctrl + J shortcut keys to read highlighted text aloud.

Text to Speech Online Free App – Text to speech online app are easier to use and have lots of features as compared to windows narrator.

Here I have recommended two, currently available for free.

1. NaturalReaders with natural voices

2. Google Text-to-Speech

Both the online reader apps can convert your text-to-speech easily with lots of voice support, languages and speed adjuster.

For Visual Stress - Text with low contrast can be difficult to read for people with low vision. You can change your settings to alter the colours and intensity. To turn high contrast mode on or off:

1. Select the Start button, and then select Settings > Ease of Access > High contrast.
2. To turn on high contrast mode, select the toggle button under Turn on high contrast. Windows may display a "Please wait" screen for a few seconds, after which the colors on the screen change.
3. Select the theme that works best for you from the Choose a theme dropdown menu.
4. To turn off high contrast mode, select the Turn on high contrast toggle button again. Windows may again display a "Please wait" screen for a few seconds, after which the colors on the screen change back to default.

If none of the default themes work perfectly for you, you can further customize the colors of various screen elements. For example, if you have some form of color blindness, you can swap out the affected colors.
1. After selecting a theme, select one of the colored rectangles under the Choose a theme dropdown menu. You can modify the color of the following screen elements:
   - Text: nearly all text you see in Windows or on a web page, for example.
   - Hyperlinks: all hyperlinks you see in Windows or on a web page, for example.
   - Disabled Text: text that would normally be grayed out, for example, when you cannot select a specific option or button.
   - Selected Text: any selected menu item or option. For example, the alignment of the currently selected paragraph in Word is indicated with this color on the tool ribbon.
   - Button Text: text on any buttons that contain text.
   - Background: the background of nearly all text you see in Windows or on a web page, for example.

2. Select a new color by clicking on the color picker palette, adjust the selected color's brightness using the slider under the palette, and select Done.
3. To save any color changes you have made to the theme, select Apply.