



Assistive Technology

IV

Did You Know...

that PCs and Macs have read-aloud tools as standard components? This feature on the PC is in English and on the Mac is available in both English and Spanish. Additional tools accessible on a PC in the Accessories>Accessibility program option and on a Mac in the Apple System Preferences folder are magnifiers, on-screen keyboards, sticky keys, and slow or filter keys to eliminate extra keystrokes. Additionally the Mac provides speech recognition of commands.

According to the ***Family Guide to Assistive Technology***, assistive technology includes all resources that:

- Enable an individual to perform functions that can be achieved by no other means
- Enable an individual to approximate normal fluency, rate, or standards - a level of accomplishment which could not be achieved by any other means
- Provide access for participation in programs or activities which otherwise would be closed to the individual
- Increase endurance or ability to persevere and complete tasks that otherwise are too laborious to be attempted on a routine basis
- Enable an individual to concentrate on learning or employment tasks, rather than mechanical tasks
- Provide greater access to information
- Support normal social interactions with peers and adults
- Support participation in the least restrictive educational environment

While many of the assistive technology tools are ones we would expect to be listed as technology tools, special educators include tools that they describe as low-tech technology.

Low-Tech Assistive Technology

The tools listed below provide a sampling of assistive technology that is easily useable in general education classrooms and requires little, if any, specialized training. The use of these tools should not be limited to students with special needs as there are many students who might benefit from using them.

- Pencil Grips: These can help students grip pencils and pens correctly, relieve hand and finger fatigue, and provide fine motor support.
- Paper Options
 - Raised line paper
 - Grid paper
 - Colored paper