

Using Technology to Enhance the Learning of English Language Learners with Disabilities

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Rationale and background:

The integrated features on the iPad along with the range of available learning resources make it a prized device for supporting English-language learners (ELLs). iPad permits students to instantly and self-sufficiently start taking charge of their learning—at their own pace and personalized to their specific needs. It can become almost any instrument students need—a camera, a translator, a book, a drawing canvas, a voice recorder—and so much more. iPad is both highly individual and unobtrusive—ELLs who carry iPad devices feel as though they fit into the learning environment and not ostracized. They can practice language verbally on a device that’s intimate and custom-made for them, leveraging the power of language skill development through duplication. English learners can instantaneously generate with iPad—they can draw, record audio, take pictures, and shoot video. Built-in imagination tools, as well as many third-party apps, provide diverse and realistic choices for ELLs to develop and increase their language skills, practice oral language, and communicate in a multiplicity of ways. The iPad supports ELLs where they are in their learning journeys to meet their individual proficiencies, interests, levels, and learning styles.

List of iPad APPs which will be discussed (but not limited to):

Apple Built-in loaded APPs.

Speech Selection – Spoken text: With Speak Selection, students can highlight text and use the Speak option to have the text read aloud, helping them to learn correct pronunciation. Learners can also use Speak Screen to read the entire contents on a screen. This both increases their exposure to language and helps them proofread text they’ve written. With the typing feedback feature, students can have a word spoken back to them once they’ve typed it, which confirms they’ve correctly spelled and written the word. This also reinforces English pronunciation of the word at the time of typing it.

Dictation: Dictation uses the built-in microphone and Dictation, learners are no longer limited by having to write or type their thoughts. Allowing students to talk instead of type helps them practice speaking, enunciating, and pronouncing words in English more effectively. Dictation works offline and doesn’t require an Internet connection, which is great for the mobile learner. Additionally, when students dictate in their native languages, teachers are better able to assess

student thinking on the curricular topic—not just on language development. And teachers can use a translation app to convert the native language to English.

Communication tools

English learners can use iPad to practice language acquisition skills and interact with written text in a variety of formats—audio, visual, emoji, and video. Here are a few examples:



FaceTime. Great for getting students conversing and using language authentically, FaceTime supports visual verbal communication through video chats.



Messages. Communicating via text chats using emojis, pictures, and video engages learners and enhances communication. Students can type in two languages at the same time without having to switch between keyboards to ensure they get their messages across effectively.



Camera. Building fluency is fun for students when they capture video of themselves practicing their speaking skills, listen to their pronunciation, reflect on areas of improvement, and then rerecord.



Notes. Writing in the Notes app—using Speak Selection, predictive text, and Dictation—can help students practice speaking and listening and enhance their written language. They can add images or draw a sketch of what they’re trying to say, then share it in real time with their teachers or classmates.

Content creation

Students often demonstrate their thinking and understanding of content in ways that don’t rely solely on the written English language. The built-in content creation apps on iPad help them scaffold through visuals, text, and other media, and provide them with opportunities for authentic use of language and academic vocabulary. And these apps allow teachers and students to author culturally relevant materials, especially in languages for which purchased content is not widely available. Here are a few ideas for using Apple creation apps with English learners:



Keynote. Create visual vocabulary cards with images, animations, and video.

Pages. Use built-in templates to create “talking” book reports with video and text.



Numbers. Document the writing process on individual sheets for prewriting, writing, and revisions.



GarageBand. Record reading to improve reading fluency or capture students singing songs to learn language and patterns.



iMovie. Build video versions of picture books using titles, images, voiceovers, images, and sound effects.



Pages using Speak Selection, predictive text, and Dictation—can help students practice speaking and listening and enhance their written language. They can add images or draw a sketch of what they’re trying to say, then share it in real time with their teachers or classmates.



iTunesU



iBook

Third Party APPs



Drops. Provides a visual way to learn English vocabulary in just five minutes a day. Offers a fun approach to language learning in a game-like format. Includes a strategic vocabulary selection with over a thousand practical words.



Duolingo. This fun and simple app for learning grammar allows students to build their own sentences in “free-form” mode using a dynamic, grammar-based tree structure. In “challenge” mode, they work in the opposite direction, analyzing sentences and figuring out the underlying grammar.

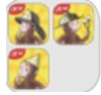


Endless Reader. Students have fun learning sight words along with their context and usage with the adorable Endless monsters. As they place each word in a

sentence and watch a character act out its meaning, they gain early word-recognition and reading skills.



Explain Everything. Turns iPad into an interactive video whiteboard that allows students to demonstrate what they've learned by combining interactive visuals and recorded narration. Teachers can create instructional tutorials for students and use it for formative student assessments.



iRead with Curious George. Part of the iRead With shared-reading program, these stories foster language development and help students get ready to read. The stories are designed to make students talk and participate in the shared-reading activity.



Milly, Molly & the Bike Ride. Learners can touch the text in this engaging story to have it read aloud. The app also translates text in a variety of languages. After learners gain context and comprehend the story, they can record themselves reading and play it back to practice fluency.



Newsela. Builds reading comprehension by delivering daily news and nonfiction at a reading level that's just right for each student. Articles are published at five reading levels, and most are available in English and Spanish.



Puppet Pals HD Director's Pass. This playful app lets students choose characters and settings to create or retell stories in any language. Using a variety of literacy skills—engagement with text, oral language fluency, and even hand-eye coordination—students move the puppets on the screen while speaking.



Quizlet. Make flashcards in any language to practice spelling and vocabulary, play learning games, test knowledge, and more. Students can add images and audio to their flashcards and listen to pronunciations in 18 languages.



Vocabulary.com. This app helps students master words through a fun game. It personalizes the learning experience and teaches students by exposing them to a wide array of question types and activities that help them understand all the meanings and nuances of every word they're learning.



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