

# Evaluating & Choosing Educational Assistive Technology

Excited to help your students reach their full potential? Use this handy Assistive Technology Evaluation checklist after you have reviewed your student body's assessments to identify needs across your learning environment. Then you're ready to dive in!

1. Determine the type of tool you need. Is it:

- For educators?** Accessibility checkers
- For students?** Screen readers, alternative input devices, text-to-speech software
- For educators AND students?** Text-to-speech software, multi-faceted LMS accessibility tools

2. Assess the relevant AT options at a high level. Evaluate:

- User experience.** See which tools are easiest to use and navigate.
- Integrations.** See which tools will mix with your existing systems, such as your learning management system, student information system, etc.
- Device compatibility.** Determine which tools work across a range of devices (desktops, tablets, phones) and operating systems.
- Vendor support.** Which vendors offer comprehensive training resources, responsive customer service, and ongoing technical assistance?
- Price point.** Which tool(s) fit within your budget?
- Human resources.** How likely is it that each of these tools will be embraced by your educators and students?

3. Investigate the best options more closely. Consider:

- Long-term value.** Is the tool robust enough to serve you well?
- Trial periods.** Take advantage of the trial period, and gather feedback from teachers and students.
- Scalability and flexibility.** Is it flexible enough to integrate with new tools and can it easily accommodate more (or fewer) students?
- Track record.** Ask for evidence of the tool's effectiveness. If possible, talk with other educators using the technologies.
- WCAG compliance.** Will it help you comply with web content accessibility guidelines?
- Data security measures.** How does it collect, store, and use student data? And does it comply with relevant data protection regulations?

- ❑ **Limitations (for free tools).** Will fewer features, limited support, or display advertisements hinder its usefulness?
  - ❑ **Pricing model.** Look for a flexible, customizable pricing model, preferably one that is licensed-based rather than volume- or usage-based.
4. Finally, ensure your chosen investment(s) will have long-term value.
- ❑ **Is it mobile-friendly?**
  - ❑ **Does it foster long-term user engagement?** (personalization, gamification elements)
  - ❑ **Does it offer numerous linguistic options?**
  - ❑ **Does the vendor have a reputation for high-quality expertise, customization options, and support?**
  - ❑ **Does it support your broader institutional goals?**

### TIP: Combine tools for maximum benefit.

Some tools are complementary. Offering the right tools in combination with one another creates a strong approach to website accessibility—one that reaches the broadest student population possible. For example, simply adding a widely applicable text-to-speech tool to the mix will extend accessibility and benefit more students.

Remember, the ultimate goal is to empower all learners with the tools they need to succeed. With that as your North Star and this checklist as your navigational map, you'll be able to give your students a powerful ecosystem of tools that offer the best learning experience possible!

ReadSpeaker is a global voice specialist that provides a comprehensive text-to-speech suite of tools designed to enhance accessibility and engagement in learning environments. To learn more about our text-to-speech technology offerings for education, visit our website, [www.readspeaker.com/sectors/education](http://www.readspeaker.com/sectors/education)

**ReadSpeaker** 

*scan for more  
information*

