



Reading Tools Guide

This is a brief overview of various reading supports that anyone can use. This guide should be used as a starting point and not a comprehensive guide for any of the listed options nor an exhaustive list of all reading supports available.

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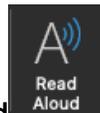
- Built-in reading tools
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- Resources for non-school-related reading and entertainment

Built-In Reading Tools

Built-ins are accessibility tools that are free and available to you through your operating system or the software you are using. Popular built-in reading tools for various platforms are described below.

Microsoft Word

Microsoft Word and other Microsoft Office products have Read Aloud functionality, though this may look slightly different depending on what version of Microsoft you have, and whether you are using the desktop or Office 365 version of Word. Check to see if you already have the Read Aloud button in your



'Review' ribbon by going to **Review** → **Read Aloud**. If you do not have this option available, you can add it to your Quick Access Toolbar at the top of your window. Click the Customize Quick Access

Toolbar ( for Mac, or right-click and select "Customize Quick Access" toolbar for PC) and select More Commands. Under the 'Choose commands from' dropdown menu, select 'All Commands', then scroll through the list of alphabetized commands to find 'Speak'. Click 'Speak' then click 'Add > >', then

click 'Ok'. The speak icon  should appear in your Quick Access Tool bar at the top of your window. Simply Highlight text you want read aloud then click either the 'Speak' icon or the 'Read Aloud' icon to have highlighted text read aloud. This can be a super helpful feature if you need to proofread a paper you've written!

PDF Readers

There are several built-in options for reading PDFs aloud, depending on which PDF reader you use. If you use Adobe Acrobat Reader DC, you can activate Read Out Loud by going to **View** → **Read Out Loud** → **Activate Read Out Loud**. Once activated, return to that same menu to select whether you want to read a single page or the entire document. If you don't already have it, you can download Adobe Acrobat Reader DC for free here: [Adobe Download Website \(https://get.adobe.com/reader/\)](https://get.adobe.com/reader/). Adobe has other helpful reading tools such as highlighting and annotation. If you use a different PDF reader, look for similar functionality built-in, as your PDF reader may have an analogous feature. If you use Google Chrome to read PDFs, see the Chrome Extension section below for options for reading PDFs aloud in Chrome.

Mac System

If you are a Mac user, you can have text read aloud in almost any document/file format (as long as it is accessible) without any add-ons or additional software needed. Go to **System Preferences** → **Accessibility** → **Speech** → Check **Speak selected text when the key is pressed**. The keyboard shortcut listed next can be used to speak aloud any highlighted text. This can even be used when reading a PDF in Canvas without downloading it. You can change the keyboard shortcut that activates spoken text by clicking 'Change Key...'. The Windows 10 system has an accessibility feature called Narrator, which is a screen reader that reads the entire screen. Unfortunately, Windows does not have a feature analogous to Mac's 'Speak selected text' feature at this time, but other operating systems might – check your system's accessibility menu if you run a different operating system!

Computer-Based Reading Tools and Software

If you need additional support than built-ins offer, there are several tools you can use to read on your computer. Which tool you choose to use will depend on what you need to read (PDF, Word doc, textbook, etc.) and which features are important to you. The following is an overview of reading supports available for reading various file types on your computer.

VitalSource Online Textbooks

VitalSource is a library of online textbooks. CSU students can check out up to 7 books for free until May 25, 2020. Visit [CSU's Keep Learning Website \(https://www.acns.colostate.edu/keep-learning/\)](https://www.acns.colostate.edu/keep-learning/) for more information. To access VitalSource, go to [VitalSource Bookshelf \(https://bookshelf.vitalsource.com/#/user/signin\)](https://bookshelf.vitalsource.com/#/user/signin) and create an account if you do not already have one. **Make sure to use your colostate.edu email.** Download the app associated with the device you plan to read on from [The VitalSource App Download Page \(https://support.vitalsource.com/hc/en-us/articles/201344733-Bookshelf-Download-Options\)](https://support.vitalsource.com/hc/en-us/articles/201344733-Bookshelf-Download-Options) and follow the prompts to complete the download. Open the VitalSource Bookshelf App on your device, click Explore, and search for your texts. Click 'Borrow' to check out books (remember, you only have 7 free check-outs and they cannot be returned early). You can search your book or use the table of contents to navigate to various sections of your textbook. Use the Play button at the bottom of the screen to read text aloud. Use study features in the toolbar on the left side of the screen, such as highlighting, annotating, bookmarks and flashcards.

Chrome Extension

The Chrome extension 'Read Aloud' allows the user to read Websites, Google Docs, and PDFs in Chrome. It is a free and relatively simple add on for the Chrome Browser. To get this extension, go (in the Chrome browser) to [The Chrome Webstore \(https://chrome.google.com/webstore/category/extensions\)](https://chrome.google.com/webstore/category/extensions) and search 'Read Aloud'. Follow the prompts to add the extension 'Read Aloud: A Text to Speech Voice



Reader' to your Chrome browser. Once this extension has been added you can click on its icon found in the upper right hand portion of your browser window, to begin reading. Voices and settings can be changed by right clicking on the Read Aloud icon and selecting options.

Snap & Read

Snap & Read was designed for use with the Google Chrome browser as a Chrome extension. It also works with iPad, Microsoft Edge, PDFs, Kindle, Bookshare, and more. Snap & Read can read text aloud, simplify text to make it easier to understand, translate to 100+ languages, remove distractions while you read, provide screen modification and reading ruler, annotate, help you take notes and create outlines/study tools, and more. For more information on the functionality of Snap & Read, visit [The Snap & Read Website \(https://learningtools.donjohnston.com/product/snap-read/\)](https://learningtools.donjohnston.com/product/snap-read/). You can try Snap & Read for free for 7 days (no credit card info required). If you want to continue using Snap & Read after that, it costs \$4.99/month for personal use. Once you have created a Snap & Read account, add the Snap &



Read extension to your Chrome browser. Click this icon when you want to use Snap & Read and a vertical toolbar will appear on the right side of your screen. (Sometimes you may need to refresh the



website before the toolbar will appear.) Click the speak button then click anywhere there is text on the page to have it read aloud. Snap & Read will highlight text as it reads:

Snap&Read is the Next-Generation reading tool for Google Chrome, iPad and more, that **can** cover the most diverse reading needs. It reads both accessible and inaccessible text aloud, it levels vocabulary, and it translates, delivering usage data to teachers who then can more easily assess students' reading needs individually.

Voice and color scheme settings can be adjusted by clicking the **Snap & Read Icon** → **Options**. Snap & Read can also read PDFs in Google Chrome. To read a PDF, click the **Snap & Read icon** → **'Open PDF From...'**. If you come across text that Snap & Read is not able to read using the speak button, try using



the Screenshot Reader then drawing a box around the text. This will OCR inaccessible text so that Snap & Read can read it to you. After creating your Snap & Read account, make sure to complete their helpful tutorial for details on how to use the rest of Snap & Read's focus and comprehension features!

Natural Reader

Natural Reader is an online reader that can read many document file types, including PDF, Word, txt files, pages, EPUBs, and more. It can be used online or you can download the desktop or smartphone app. Natural Reader's basic features can be used for free, including unlimited reading with select voices, reading 20 minutes/day with premium (natural sounding) voices, dyslexic font, and pronunciation editor. Premium plans (starting at \$9.99/month) allow the reader access to additional features, including unlimited reading with premium voices, MP3 creation, OCR capabilities to read inaccessible text, and the ability to read additional file types. To learn more or use Natural Reader Online, go to [The Natural Reader Website \(https://www.naturalreaders.com/webapp.html\)](https://www.naturalreaders.com/webapp.html). Drag and drop files or open files from your file finder to start reading in the Online Reader. You can adjust voice settings using the menu bar at the top of the Online Reader window.

Mobile/Tablet Apps

There are several apps that will read various file types aloud. Most are even free! The nice thing about reading articles/documents in an app is that you can turn off the screen and just listen. This way you can listen to your readings while you are doing other things like going for a walk or cleaning your house!

ClaroPDF

ClaroPDF is a free app available for both iPhone and Android devices to read accessible PDF documents. You can share PDF documents from the Canvas app, Google Drive, Files, etc. to ClaroPDF. Then tap anywhere in the document, press play, and ClaroPDF will read text aloud and highlight the text it is reading as it goes.

Voice Aloud Reader

Open and read multiple file types including PDF, Word doc, TXT, HTML, and more. Share documents from Canvas, Drive, or Files. You can even export messages from Whatsapp to Voice Aloud Reader to be read to you. Using the google chrome extension you can send articles on your computer to your Voice Aloud Reader app reading list to be read in your app.

Voice Dream Reader (iOS Only)

Voice Dream Reader (\$14.99) is an iOS application with many great reading tools. Voice Dream Reader can read most file types including PDF, EPUB, DAISY, Word Doc, PowerPoint, Websites, TXT, and more. Read aloud with over 60 different natural-sounding voices to choose from, use focus features such as highlighting while speaking, reading ruler, and screen masking, highlight and annotate in readings, scan in physical documents to read using your documents camera/VDR OCR Scanner, and play readings offline through your device or an apple watch. For more information, go to [The Voice Dream Website \(https://www.voicedream.com/reader/\)](https://www.voicedream.com/reader/) or search for Voice Dream Reader in the App Store.

Speed Reading Apps

Flash Reader (iOS) and Speed Reader (Android) are speed reading apps. You can upload the document you need to read and set your reading speed, then the app will flash one word at a time, allowing you to get through your reading more quickly. Some users find this increases their focus as well. Watch this video for a preview: [Speed Reading Demo \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8dIVNDMA_0\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8dIVNDMA_0).

Resources for Non-School-Related Reading and Entertainment

It's important to take a break from school and do something you enjoy! Most public libraries have online resources for accessing books, music, and movies. You will likely need a library card to checkout materials but many libraries are issuing online digital library cards. For most of these resources, you'll need to download the accompanying app to listen, view, or read your checkouts. This guide lists resources available through Poudre River Library District but most libraries offer similar resources and services. Check your local library's website for more information on which digital platforms they use and how you can access them!

Poudre River Public Library District

OverDrive: checkout digital and audiobooks through the OverDrive app. You'll need a Poudre River Library card but you can apply for an instant digital library card. Instantly borrow or place a hold on any book in their library.

RB Digital: similar to OverDrive, but this online library has audiobooks only.

Odilo: an online library where you can check out books, audiobooks, and movies in Spanish.

Flipster: digital magazines.

Films on Demand: streaming movies and videos.

Naxos: an online music library where you can instantly stream music from many genres and artists.