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how to harness the power of personalised learning: a guide for busy teachers

by Texthelp with guest contributors
Tracey Catling and Nick Brierley

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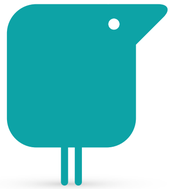
Lesson planning, resource making, teacher training, parent reporting, nurturing student development... the list goes on. We know how busy teachers can be, and understand that your everyday involves a mix of unexpected events, lack of resources and being pulled in twenty plus directions as you balance your time between students.

We also know that the success of your students is the motivation driving you to achieve it all. So, we have teamed up with experienced educators Tracey Catling and Nick Brierley, to bring to you a guide that will help you to balance your workload, and embed a personalised learning approach into your everyday teaching strategies, seamlessly.

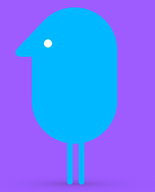
Personalised learning supports the teacher desire for every student to excel and achieve their best.

It invites adaptive learning into the classroom, so that teachers are equipped to cater to different student needs, and students are enabled to learn in a way that suits them best - after all, every student is unique and each will learn, comprehend and express in their own diverse way.



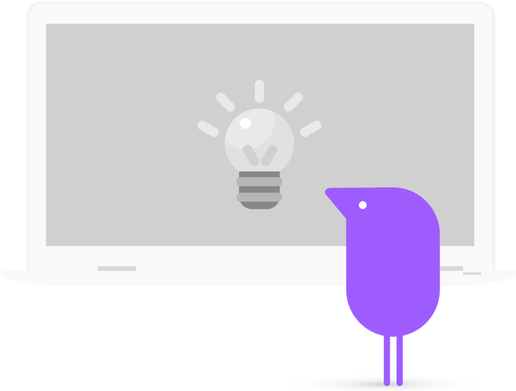
foreword by tracey catling

Leader of Learning - Curriculum Support
St Augustine's Primary School



"I have always had a love for technology from the first time I sat down in front of a computer in the computer lab at 12 years old and programmed it to present a letter on the screen. Fast forward twenty or so years later and in my ten years of teaching, I have seen a change in education with the rapid advancement in technology. For most schools, the computer lab is a thing of the past, now replaced with laptops and Ipads in each classroom. There are many debates about the benefit of having devices readily available for student use, but from the beginning I was excited to experiment and use edtech with students.

As with every other busy teacher, I manage to multitask every day - from planning lessons which will inspire and engage students, to creating resources differentiated for every student. But it's safe to say that edtech has been my saving grace, helping me to reflect on how my students learn. Differentiation comes easy when students are able to have a choice and can articulate their needs. I have seen reluctant writers become excited to write and publish writing, and I have listened to struggling readers reflect on and explain their understanding of their learning. With the right tools and applications, my students are able to take ownership of their learning, and are eager to learn with conversations that are rich and relevant."



foreword by nick brierley

eLearning Coordinator
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

"I often wonder how different my schooling might have been, had my school, teachers and classmates had access to the educational technology that is widely available today. Shared access between classes, to a single computer and printer was astounding and profoundly exciting to me as a student. The prospect of getting to word process my drafted work, and having it printed with the classic dot matrix printer was a pure joy. In high school, access to a computer lab once or twice a fortnight for research gave me an exciting glimpse of future possibilities. I felt engaged and I loved my experience growing up in Catholic schools in Sydney, but having taught in the same system of schools, I do often wonder if given the opportunities that students are given today, just how far could I have achieved? And because our achievements are founded on our goals and dreams, just how high could I have aimed?

The ability today, for each student to read, draft, copy, calculate, research, edit, re-edit, summarise, make and design using technology in schools has made all the difference to my teaching, and the learning of my students. The day I was introduced to what was then Google Apps for Education, was the single most exciting day of development in my profession. We as teachers, were being given permission to hand our students a set of keys to their learning. Where would they go? What would they see? What would they feel? And importantly, what exactly would they learn? Technology allows us to essentially multiply ourselves across the room to personalise learning for our students. Not as a replacement, but as a support to allow each of the 5, 10, 20, 30 or even more students in our class to be engaged, learn and achieve."

in this guide...

Education technology is at the core of an inclusive classroom, with tools such as Read&Write and EquatIO from Texthelp being used to engage learners, personally. Supportive software helps teachers to adapt to the diverse needs of students in the classroom, and empowers students to be in control of their own learning.

Read&Write is a literacy support toolbar with features that help students to read and digest content, focus on and organise information, and complete written work with confidence.

EquatIO extends edtech to maths and STEM, so students can benefit from software across the curriculum - making maths digital, EquatIO transforms mathematics, science and technology subjects into a richer, more rewarding experience for students and teachers alike.

In this guide, we outline five areas in which our tools can benefit day to day teaching and learning, and illustrate the versatility of our product features. We have also thrown in some of our other favourite edtech solutions from fellow tech creators in the industry.

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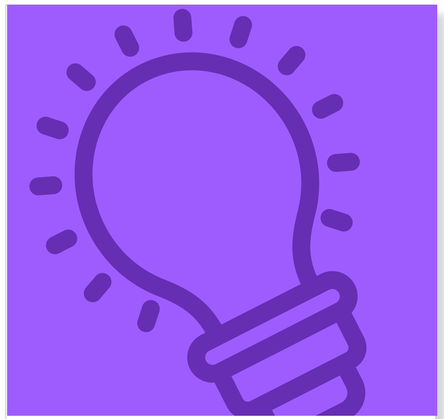
Simple student resources, that won't take you forever to create

take me there



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take me there

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take me there

1. simple student resources, that won't take you forever to create

1. simple student resources, that won't take you forever to create

Great resources don't need to take forever to create. With just a few clicks, you can build your own collection of resources that you can keep for use again and again. What's more, you can customise materials to suit your students, differentiating between formats quickly and easily using Read&Write and EquatIO.

"Edtech tools enable personalisation and differentiation of materials, makes it easy to get resources out to students, reduces photocopying costs, and saves time preparing and creating resources. I am able to create resources that are relevant to each individual student. When I am teaching, I often find myself changing up a lesson based on the conversations I am having with my students and their feedback on content. Edtech enables me to be reactive, changing resources to meet their learning needs effectively and in real time."

Tracey Catling **@Zyatica**

1. simple student resources, that won't take you forever to create

"When we assess our students, we are given not just a page of words, or problems or answers. We are given a road map for future learning for our students. What is interesting is that each of those 'road maps' are different for each student in our class. So, why would we give them each the same materials, and have the same expectations of each student?

Building resources using Read&Write and EquatIO allows me to quickly and efficiently design a learning program for my students. It is imperative that each student is given an opportunity to achieve through personalisation."

Nick Brierley **@mythsysizer**

Research[1] has found that "digital differentiation" has a significant effect on student performance. Providing students with differentiation of materials digitally, allowed the large classroom of students partaking in the study, to work at three different levels. The research results found this had a significant impact on their posttest scores, with the researchers stating that differentiation was possible and beneficial to the degree that it was, due to the integration of digital tools.

read&write

using read&write to create resources:

Vocabulary list builder

This feature allows you to build your own creative resources, which help develop student word familiarity and comprehension. Simply highlight words within a document, to instantly collate the chosen words with images and word/audio definitions into a separate document. You can then adjust the vocabulary list to create your own activities.

- Add an additional column and ask the student to provide the synonym or antonym, or use the given word in a sentence
- Adjust the format to create visual prompts for the classroom, to support comprehension - this is particularly beneficial for EAL students
- Create topic specific lists for students to use as study guides, where they can insert their own notes for revision

Audio maker

Differentiate learning resources quickly and easily with the Audio Maker feature, to create MP3 files from PDF or Word documents, or information from the web. Simply highlight the text you want to convert into audio, and click the feature's icon to create an MP3 file.

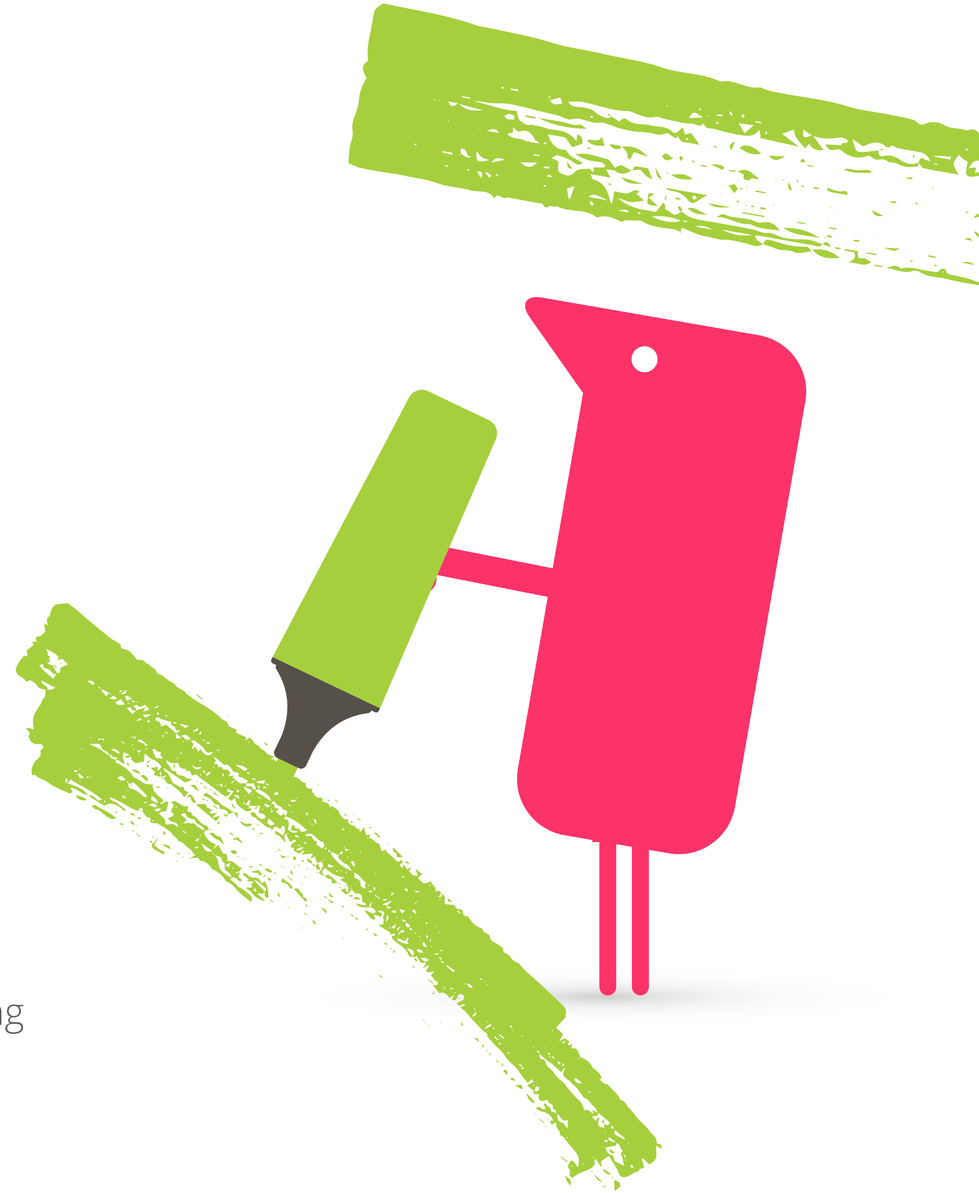
- Use the feature to provide learning materials in both Word and audio format, to cater to different learning styles
- Complement class lessons by providing additional information via MP3 files, to expand student learning and allow them the option to listen again and again - use online sources to quickly collect additional information, selecting the relevant content you want to share and converting to audio files for easy digestion
- Create activities to change it up from traditional written worksheets or homework textbook reading - ask students to listen and provide their own take on what they have heard, or to listen and take notes of the most relevant points

Highlighters

The highlighter tool allows information to be highlighted using any colour/s of choice, and then be collected in a separate document. This feature can be used to create useful resources, and used as a tool to complete some fun activities.

- Create useful resources for extended reading by highlighting information on the web and collecting the content in a document, which you can share with students - the highlight and collect feature automatically pulls in the webpage from which the information was taken, so students can view the source for further reading

- Use this feature to change up existing activities - for example, ask students to read a piece of text and highlight all verbs in green and adjectives in yellow; ask students to highlight what character said which quotes, or to sort the statements into relevant themes, in a book reading exercise; or, ask students to highlight points in their written work which strengthen their argument or sympathise with the opposition etc.



Scanning (Windows only)

Repurpose existing physical resources with the scanning feature, to turn them into accessible digital files which you can use as PDF or Word handouts, or adapt to create something new. This saves you time from having to recreate something that already exists, whilst also providing you with a foundation to build upon.

- Once scanned and digitised, existing content becomes accessible - make use of Read&Write's other features as illustrated above, to repurpose
- Build on existing resources by adding in updated information or making more specific to the upcoming lesson you have planned
- Adapt existing resources by changing up the format or content, to create new concepts of existing activities

snapverter®

Digitise paper resources with Snapverter

Snapverter is an easy to use add-on for Read&Write for Google Chrome, that transforms paper documents into readable PDF files. Simply take a picture of the document using your smartphone, save to your Snapverter folder in Google Drive, and share the newly digitally accessible resources with your students.

EquatIO®
make math digital

using equatIO to create resources:

Mathspace
Mathspace is more than a feature, it's a central storage space that allows you to create and save maths activities, which you can share directly with your students. Think of it as a giant digital whiteboard, where you can present a mathematical problem to every student at once, and have them work through it at their own pace before submitting their answers - just like a virtual classroom. Using EquatIO Mathspace, there are a number of ways to create engaging maths tasks.

- Use **EquatIO Shapes** to create maths manipulatives instantly on your mathspace board - choose from ready-made visuals such as fraction bars, coins and cars to ask your students to solve anything from simple division to working through economic scenarios or physics concepts
- Create interactive activities using **EquatIO Smart Shapes,** which include grids, fraction circles and number lines along with digital protractors for students to use to solve mathematical problems
- Choose from **multiple input options** to create worksheets in a way that is convenient to you - handwrite, type or dictate maths

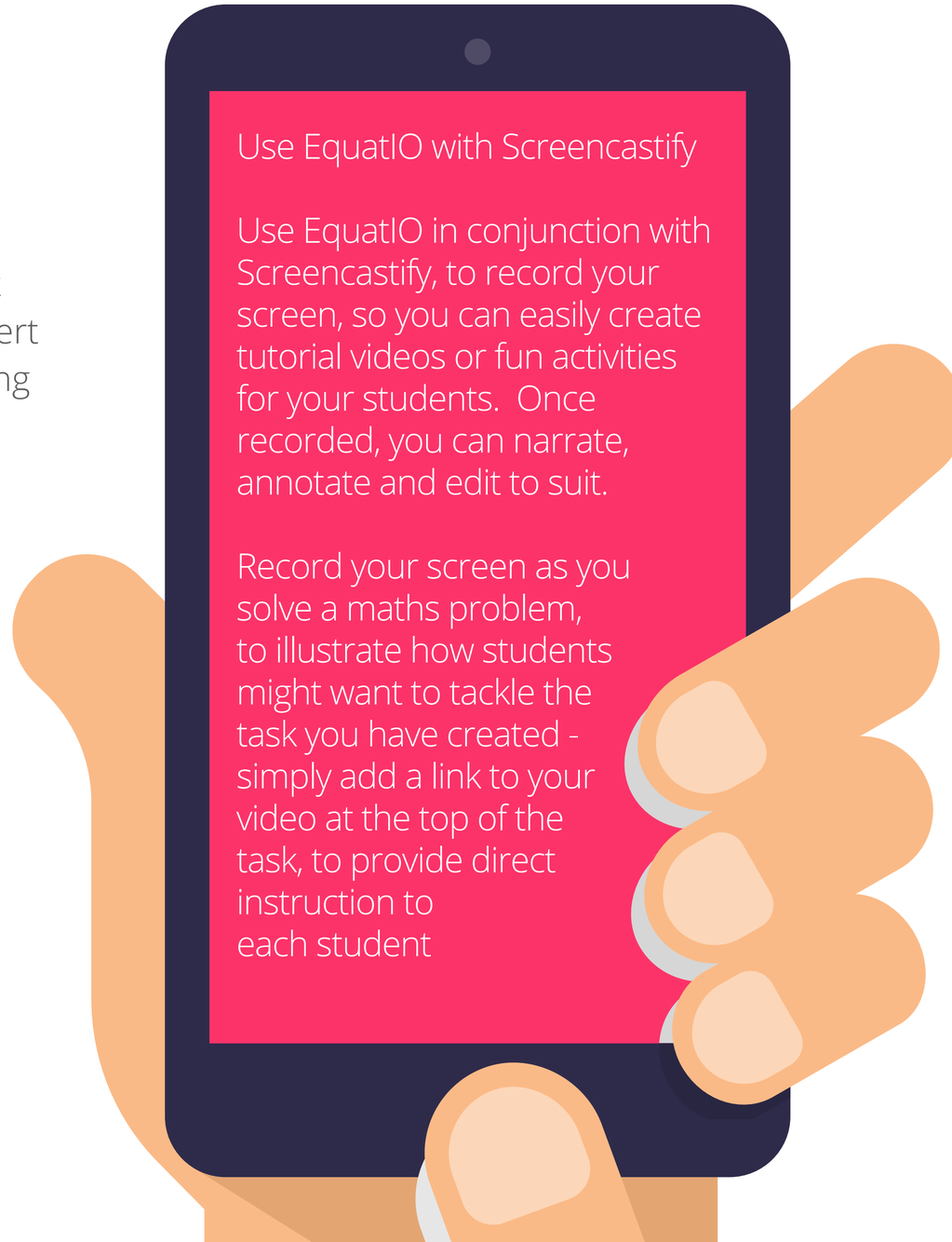
1. simple student resources, that won't take you forever to create

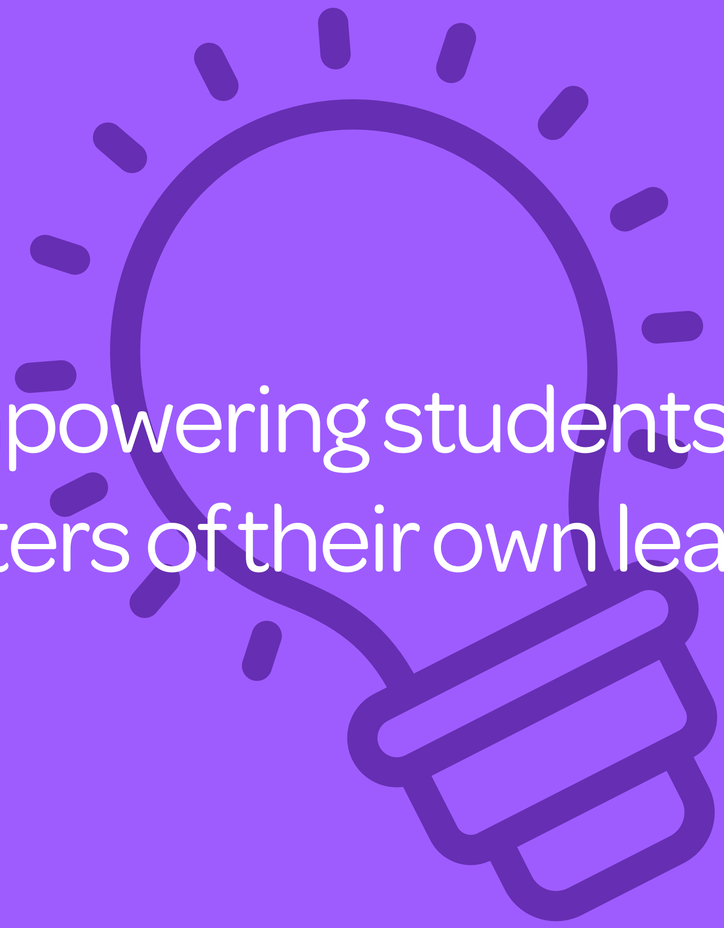
Screenshot reader

Resources are endless when you have the web at your fingertips. Screenshot Reader allows you to grab maths from your favourite sources, so you can insert and edit it instantly in your own document, without having to spend time trying to decipher and write it up yourself.

- Screenshot maths from PDFs, Google images, handwritten scans or even YouTube videos, to get a closer look at the maths and paste directly into your own resources

- Curate maths content using the screenshot reader across various sources, to create quizzes which give students a variety of maths to solve - when it comes to exam prep, grab maths problems from a combination of past papers, creating resources which split exam practice up by specific topics





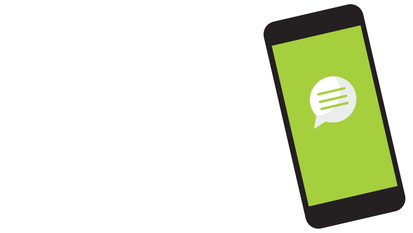
2. empowering students to be masters of their own learning

2. empowering students to be masters of their own learning

Creating an environment where students are in control of their own learning isn't just about enabling students to feel empowered, invested and engaged, it's about enabling learners to self-identify how they learn best. Encouraging students to become more self-aware naturally means they begin to think about their strengths, what skills they need to improve and what tools they need to support themselves. Ultimately, students become autonomous learners, with the self-understanding and confidence to source and select the tools they need to work independently - hugely beneficial for them as they move through life.

"My mind works overtime with the potential of edtech. With the right tools at their hands, and the skills and knowledge to use them, students can take ownership of their learning. When my students feel empowered in their learning, they take more pride in the work they produce, and the sheer enjoyment and focus towards new learning is evident.

As teachers, we can't be everywhere in the classroom at the same time and we can't be with each and every individual student every minute of the day. But with the right tools at hand, students receive real-time feedback and are able to move forward even without us being next to them."
Tracey Catling



"Two of the values that my colleagues and I work hard to impart on the young minds we teach and work with, are independence and self-reliance. We want to equip our students with the ability to question what they already know, what they are still to learn, how they will go about learning, what other ideas might be linked to their learning, and how they will share their learning with others. It is so important that students understand that their curious minds are constantly wondering, questioning and inquiring about the world, and that the world is full of knowledge and answers. Technology is the ultimate fulcrum in this equation. We encourage our students to be brave enough to take full ownership of their learning, with the knowledge that they may not always have a teacher by their side to guide them every step of the way. They can open their eyes to the possibilities inherent in becoming a master of their own learning."
Nick Brierley

Technology and digital learning can support the culture shift required for a student-centred approach by providing tools, resources, data, and systems that increase teaching options and opportunities as well as promoting more efficiency both with learning and teaching.[2]

Williams, S.

using read&write to empower students:

Customisable toolbar

The Read&Write toolbar has a variety of features such as text-to-speech, audio and pictorial dictionaries, translation, text prediction and talk & type. Students can customise the toolbar to include only the features that they want to use at that particular time. Customisation doesn't stop there - students can choose how the features work to suit their preferences; they can even choose the accent and voice speed of the text-to-speech speaker.

- Encourage students to personalise their experience by offering some suggestions as to features that might assist them when carrying out a particular task - this will help them to learn about the features that are available to them, and bring realisation that they can tailor the software to suit them

- Limit some features to help students identify what supports will be most useful to them i.e. if a student has certain limitations, make available only those features that they will be able to use

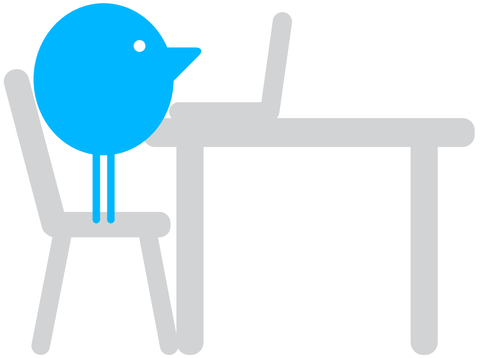
read&write

Talk & type

Read&Write supports student dictation, giving students a choice in how they create written pieces of work. Students can talk aloud and watch as their words appear on the screen. This feature engages reluctant writers, and is also powerful for students who find it difficult to use traditional methods of digital input, such as a keyboard.

"We know that students learn in many different ways; they prefer many different styles of input and output with their expression of their learning, so we find that tools like Read&Write really open up that door for those students. They can have opportunities to access their curriculum and participate in their curriculum in many different ways"

Julie - Technology Intervention Specialist, Cincinnati Public Schools



using equatIO to empower students:

Multiple methods of input

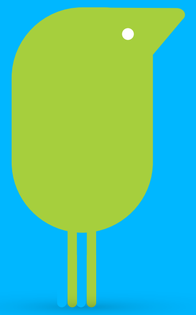
EquatIO allows students to interact with maths in a variety of ways - they can choose to type, dictate or handwrite maths, and this includes freehand drawing of shapes. Enabling students to engage with maths in the way that they prefer, allows students to focus independently on learning and solving the maths at hand. Not only that, but multiple input methods means students have the flexibility to start their work with one method and finish their work with another. This encourages them to express their knowledge creatively and allows them to demonstrate their knowledge fully, so that you have visibility of their entire thought process.

Mobile application

Not only giving students the choice of how they interact with maths, EquatIO also gives students the choice of what device they use. EquatIO mobile can be used in conjunction with desktop to complete mathematical problems - students can use the mobile app to convert non-digital maths into digital maths, to edit and share as required. They can also use a mobile or tablet to handwrite or draw their maths and share to their desktop document.

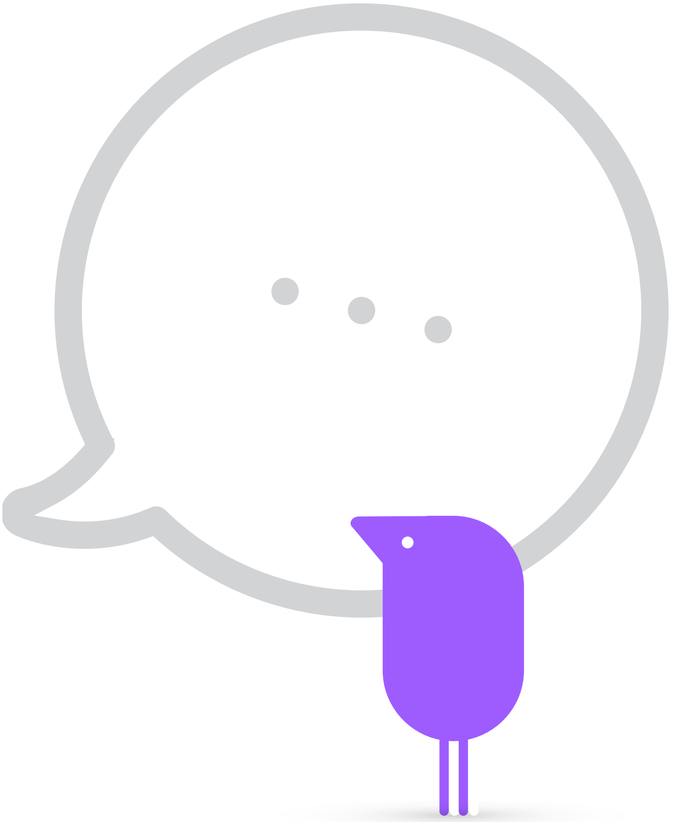
- Use EquatIO mobile when STEM activities are taken outside of the classroom. Students can record their work using the mobile app, and transfer to their laptop when they get back to the classroom.

3. maintaining a supportive and engaging environment



3. maintaining a supportive and engaging environment

Creating an environment where students feel supported and engaged is to create happy learners who are comfortable in the classroom and motivated to learn.
Any barriers to learning are alleviated by recognising student diversity and catering to different learning styles. Supportive tools and strategies naturally create and maintain an environment where each and every student feels supported - and they don't have to be time consuming to put in place. Easy to implement, supportive technology solutions like Read&Write and EquatIO, equip students across the curriculum with what they need to access and comprehend information, aand in turn to illustrate their knowledge. This is particularly notable when it comes to students with learning challenges or EAL learners.



"Positive relationships with students to me are one of the key factors in creating and maintaining a supportive and engaging environment. When a student knows you know them and how they learn, they engage, feel safe and respond better to learning. What better way to do this than to make them aware of the technology available for them - no matter their skill level, edtech allows students to choose to learn how they prefer, and gives them the confidence to extend themselves.

Take the benefits of text-to-speech with Read&Write for example - my students love this feature to help them with spotting their mistakes. Even though the likes of Microsoft Word and Google Docs highlight errors, often misused punctuation and ill-constructed sentences are not picked up. It's only when they hear their work read aloud that they can spot their mistakes. One student told me that this feature helps make her writing better and gives her the confidence to publish her work for others to read." **Tracey Catling**

3. maintaining a supportive and engaging environment

"What I have learnt about teaching and the nature of 'school', from over a decade working in primary schools, is that ultimately what school currently offers often doesn't serve the needs of all students. And that's a bit sad. We need an approach that is developed with students in mind. Where students have individual learning goals and where a positive relationship between teachers and students is at its core. Where learning can include scope for student talents and interests but above all, their needs.

Edtech enables personalised learning and has the potential to greatly influence student thinking, learning, engagement, and achievement. Students have the tools they need to learn beyond the classroom, where they realise that learning isn't just restricted to school hours. In recent years, I have found that edtech has changed the attitude of some of my former students around their approach to learning. Personalisation buffered by access to learning materials is making a difference, and that's exciting."

Nick Brierley

"It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking that students are engaged when they appear to be busy working and are on task. True engagement is much deeper – it is 'in task' behaviour, where all three dimensions of engagement; cognitive, operative, and affective, come together".[3]

Catherine Attard

Operative - active participation and involvement in academic and social activities
Affective - students' reaction to school and their willingness to become involved in school work
Cognitive - student recognition of the value of learning

read&write

using read&write to promote engagement:

Text-to-speech
Read&Write provides audio support with text-to-speech, removing the barrier to literacy, whilst increasing automaticity in word recognition and comprehension - and, combined with the Translator feature, is beneficial for EAL students.

- Encourage students to proofread their written work using text-to-speech within Read&Write - hearing their work read back to them can help them identify mistakes, allowing them to correct their work before being marked and giving them peace of mind that their work is the best it can be

Research[4] has found that Read&Write has a positive impact on learner behaviour and attitude, and a direct effect on classroom management. Teachers identify students using Read&Write as calm and focused learners, and maintain that classroom management is easier and the learning environment enhanced.

Text prediction

This feature eases digital input by suggesting the words students may wish to insert into their document, making input quicker and easing frustration of students who may have limitations with movement. Predictive text also supports students in learning new vocabulary, suggesting words they might not have thought of and helping them to improve sentence length and maturity. Additionally, this feature is synonymous with what students are used to - with the likes of predictive input available on web browsers and autocorrect technology on smartphones, students are used to having this sort of assistance when using technology.

- Customise Read&Write to include word banks applicable to class teachings i.e. there are word banks available for popular books studied within the curriculum, which include relevant themes and character names

Screen masking

Read&Write's Screen Masking feature gives students the option to apply a tint overlay to the screen, in any colour of their choosing - this is a great feature for students with colour sensitivity, migraine or eye strain, and also helps students to process information by reducing cognitive load.

- Guide students to use the Reading Light within the Screen Masking settings to help them with concentration - it provides them with a reading guide, which they can use to give them a focal point when reading digital content

Highlighters

The Highlighter feature allows students to highlight content, group it by colour, and collect the highlighted information in a separate document. This helps students to concentrate on what they're reading, whilst helping them to organise the most important points - this reduces student anxiety when it comes to working with large documents or revising for an exam.

- When highlights are collected in a separate document, the source is automatically pulled in for future reference - this is useful for students carrying out independent research, helping them to collect relevant information with ease

using equatIO to promote engagement:

Maths-to-speech

EquatIO reads aloud selected maths to help students gain confidence with the language of maths. Research[5] has shown that maths and science texts contain more concepts per line, sentence and paragraph than any other type of text, and many are written above the grade level for which they are intended. To help ensure students understand the maths problem they are being asked to do, and enable them to truly show you their maths knowledge, encourage them to use Read&Write in conjunction with EquatIO to understand both the text and maths language in their worksheets.

Maths prediction

This feature eases digital input by suggesting formulas students may wish to insert into their document, helping to ease the frustration of students who may have limitations with movement or find it difficult to remember a multitude of tricky maths formulas.

✓ Don't forget to customise EquatIO for use beyond the maths class - not only does EquatIO have maths and formula prediction, but you can also turn on chemistry prediction through the settings menu

Case study [6]
"EquatIO will help me to develop mathematical sequences and theorems. In the future I want to code too"

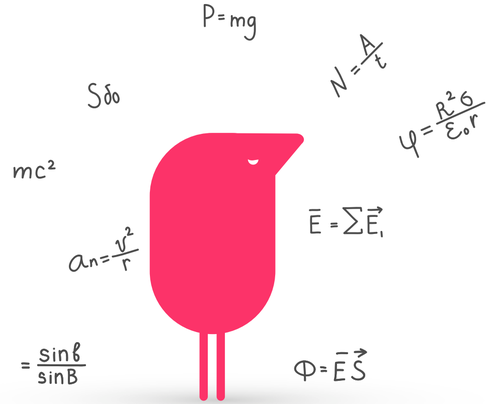
Cal Shepherd

Cal, a 10 year old maths enthusiast with Choreoathetoid Cerebral Palsy, uses EquatIO in combination with customised grids set up on his computer, to express his maths knowledge independently - without it, he would have to rely on others to interpret what he is saying, which is particularly critical since his level of maths competence surpasses that of many of those supporting his communication.

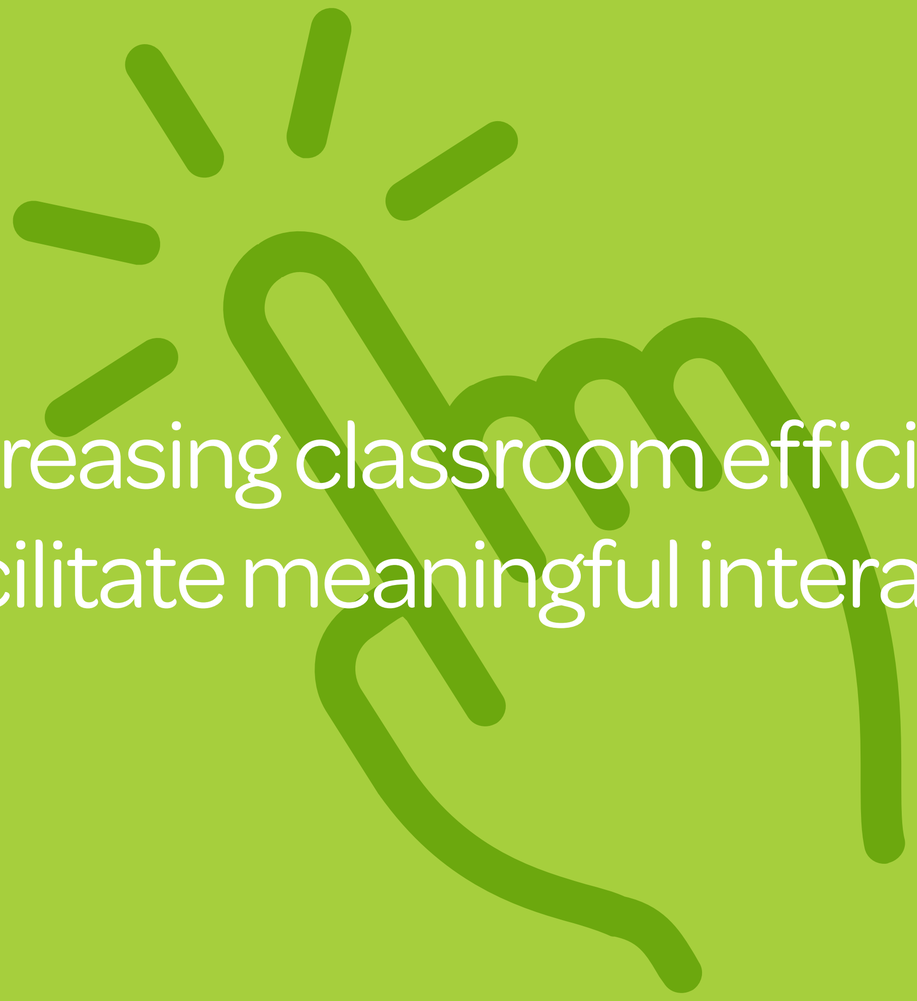
EquatIO®
make math digital

Interactive Mathspace

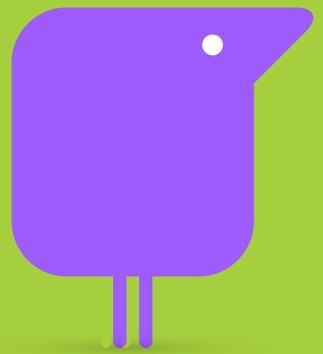
The interactive nature of EquatIO Mathspace gives students that one-on-one connection with their teacher, whilst providing a platform for fun and creative learning. Activities created using EquatIO Mathspace can be used for collaborative group work, which allows for student interaction, creating a friendly atmosphere where students will enjoy learning.



- Use EquatIO with Google slides and forms to create a variety of group tasks, which allow students to explore maths in different ways, to aid deeper understanding. They can collaborate on a public screen or embed their work into a shared Google slide document, for discussion as a wider group.



4. increasing classroom efficiency,
to facilitate meaningful interaction



4. increasing classroom efficiency, to facilitate meaningful interaction

Don’t you wish you could multiply yourself across the classroom during lesson time? Between answering students’ questions, checking in on the progress of group work, encouraging shy or struggling learners and all that’s in between, it’s hard to find time for one-on-one interaction with every student. With edtech tools, you are equipped to be in more places at once - not only by allowing students to clarify their understandings themselves, but by providing features which enable you to save class time, so you can use it for spending quality time with your students.

“As teachers, we have assemblies, whole school gatherings, classroom visits, excursions as well as a variety of Masses and liturgies in our Catholic schools. All of these are highly worthwhile endeavours and valuable to students, but mean less time for face-to-face teaching time. We need to ensure that students are able to learn as much as possible in the time they are given.

With over 30 children in my class, I rely on tools to support my students. Whilst they continue learning by accessing content with the right tools, I am able to spend time with individuals and small groups to conference, assess, scaffold and question students about their understanding. Edtech helps us to maximise time with our students, ensuring that learning and achievement of all learners remains of paramount importance.”

Nick Brierley

4. increasing classroom efficiency, to facilitate meaningful interaction

“There was a time as a teacher, I often dreamt of cloning myself so I could engage with each and every student in my class. I used to imagine ways in which I could make the students accountable for their learning while I worked with that small Guided Reading group. Now with my students using technology, they can work independently whilst I instigate deep and meaningful conversations with students around the classroom. I have more time for one-on-one conferences about their learning. This also allows students to see that what they are doing isn’t just ‘busy work’. When they can see that your time is being used to feedback on their work, they know it has an audience, and are more likely to give their all to the work they produce.”

Tracey Catling

using read&write to increase classroom efficiency:

Check it

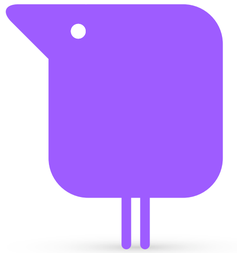
The Check It feature highlights spelling, grammar and punctuation errors, and offers suggested corrections. It works in a more complex way than conventional spelling and grammar checkers as it pays attention to confusable words, so students have the chance to rethink their word use. This feature means students can check and continue with their work without waiting on teacher assistance in class, so teaching time can be used more effectively.

"I can add so much more value as a teacher when I'm not constantly checking spellings every time they put their hand up and it's much more rewarding to be able to help them to develop their writing skills in other ways."[4]

Teacher, Aberdeen Efficacy Study

"Read&Write frees up my time in the classroom, effectively allowing me to be in more places at once. It allows students to progress with their work independently, rather than being held up waiting for my attention. It's magic!"

Danielle Myburgh - E-Learning Specialist, Hobsonville Point Secondary School



read&write

Voice note

Students and teachers can use this feature to communicate directly with one another straight from a document. Teachers can use it to provide detailed instruction for task work, so students can listen to it as often as they need to complete work. Similarly, students can leave voice notes to add further explanation to illustrate their knowledge or highlight a query, so teachers can respond when it suits - this is particularly beneficial for students who are too shy to ask in class, and gives another avenue for meaningful teacher feedback.

- Use voice notes to accompany written instructions and provide further clarification - preempt questions you think your students might ask and use the voice notes to cover the answers
- If you have students where English is not their first language, use the voice notes to leave notes in the students' first language, to aid understanding

Dictionary and Picture dictionary/Web search

Student independence is at the heart of Read&Write, with all features combining to offer a supportive tool for independent study and research. Particularly beneficial is the ability to instantly discover the meaning of a word with the Dictionary and Picture Dictionary features, which conceptualise meaning with descriptive text, audio and visual support. In addition, students can use the Web Search feature, to instantly search the web for further explanation - all they have to do is highlight the word and click the feature's icon to bring them to various sources to aid understanding. This means they can clarify their understandings without waiting for teacher explanation, and is especially beneficial for EAL students.

- Familiarise students with this feature when introducing them to new words by setting activities - provide them with five new words and ask them to use these in a one page story, using the tools to help them put the words into context

Vocabulary List Builder

This feature can be used by students to collate a list of words that they have read and don't understand, or want to learn more about. When working independently, this means that students can save the words in a separate document, and share with their teacher for later discussion. This type of student feedback saves time in class, whilst being informative as to student comprehension. It can also act as a valuable source when it comes to planning the next lesson.

other useful tools:

Check out Seesaw
Seesaw is an online learning portfolio where students can complete multi-modal tasks to express what they have learnt. Students can create digital drawings, take pictures and videos, and make audio recordings, to share their knowledge creatively with their teacher and parents.

"Both Read&Write and Seesaw have given my students the opportunity to have an audience for every aspect of their learning, including independent work. They give students alternative ways to show and explain their learning."

Tracey Catling

fluencytutor® for Google™

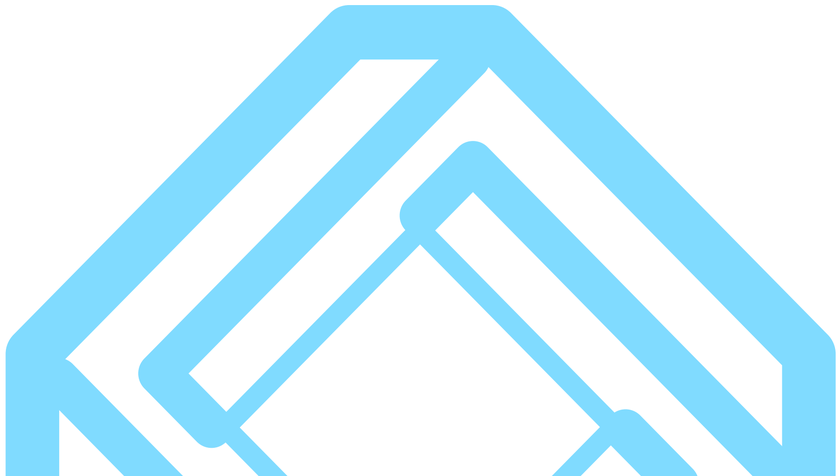
"With Fluency Tutor, I can share passages with my students or I can create topic-specific texts for students to record themselves reading to practice fluency.
It enables me to listen to all my students read each week and plan focussed guided reading sessions based on what I hear. I still get my students to read to me during small group guided reading sessions, but I can now use these sessions to effectively focus on comprehension skills."

Tracey Catling

using equatIO to increase classroom efficiency:

Equation editor

An easy to use equation editor, with a readily available selection of maths operators, symbols, functions and greek lettering - as well as smart predictions for express input as teachers type. These assisting features mean students don't have to master the whole tricky language of maths, and are given the help they need to work away at their maths activities independently in class.



Handwriting recognition

This feature provides assistance to students who prefer to scribble their thoughts or find it difficult using other forms of input - they simply handwrite using their mouse or equivalent assisting device, and EquatIO transforms their writing or freehand drawn shapes into digital text or images. Students can also integrate their mobile devices via the EquatIO app, so they can use their tablets or smartphones to draw.

Speech input

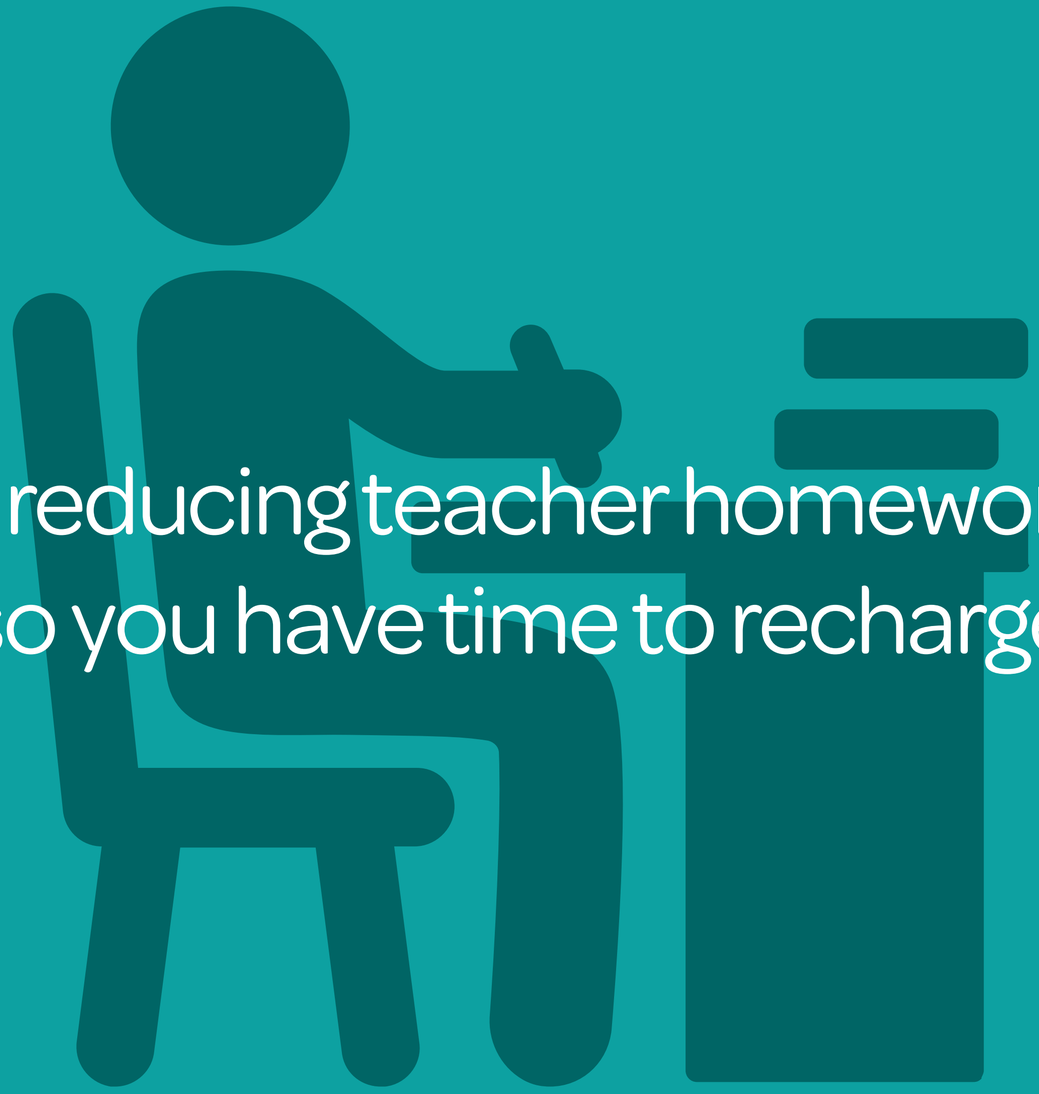
The speech input function enables students to speak aloud their maths, whilst EquatIO inserts it as digital text which students can then edit. The ability to dictate maths assists students who have difficulty using a keyboard, so they are given the help they need to work independently without teacher assistance.

Graph editor

EquatIO's graph editor makes working with graphs simple - students insert an equation (with the option to use smart prediction) and the graph will instantly appear. Students can then customise easily by changing colours used, updating their equation, adding a slider to experiment with outcomes and adding plot points until they are ready to add the graph to their document. Going a step further, they can create an expression or table from their graph. What's more, EquatIO has the ability to sound the graph out, using a noise to demonstrate the direction of the results. With ease, students can explore Desmos graphs independently.

Save time with Fluency Tutor

Part of the Texthelp product family, Fluency Tutor frees up class time by taking learning outside the classroom, whilst still being instrumental to student development. Fluency Tutor helps educators to make time for reading; students record themselves reading aloud at their own pace, and teachers listen and review at a time that suits them.



5. reducing teacher homework,
so you have time to recharge

5. reducing teacher homework, so you have time to recharge

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to use your time doing what you love? Coming up with creative lesson plans and interactive activities - and less on the tasks that make you feel stuck in a tedious routine. Edtech helps you to use your time more productively. Firstly, supportive tools encourage students to check their own work for those simple errors you spend ages correcting, so you can focus more on assessing their comprehension of the learned topic. Secondly, you can avail their helpful features to save time on reporting and providing feedback. Finding easier ways of working benefits you, not only by alleviating everyday pressures, but by giving you time to focus on tasks that will add real value to your students during teaching time.

"My red pen used to be my friend many a school night and well into the weekend. Before my eyes, my boys were growing up, and it wasn't until I discovered time saving tools that I realised how much time I was missing away from my family. Introducing my students to Read&Write's features such as Talk & Type, saves me time trying to decipher my Year 1's writing and means they can read back what they have written to familiarise themselves with correct spelling. When it comes to report writing, just like my students, I could read what I have written over and over again and not see small errors. The Read&Write Check It and Text-to-speech features help me find and correct errors, so I can be sure to present comments of a professional standard."
Tracey Catling

5. reducing teacher homework, so you have time to recharge

"One thing that most teachers will strongly agree on is that teacher workload is on the increase, and is only continuing. As committed teachers who want to persevere, we need to embrace the old saying 'work smarter, not harder'. With edtech tools, we can easily collect and analyse data, gather and assess student work as well as create, write and edit student reports. The best part of using technology in our role is not that we can enjoy work-free weekends and holidays - because let's be honest, this probably isn't going to happen. But, that we can complete the sometimes monotonous, repetitive and time-consuming work faster and more efficiently. This gives us the gift of more time to plan, program and craft a range of exciting and engaging learning experiences for our students that we otherwise simply would not have had the time to even consider."

Nick Brierley

read&write

using read&write to increase productivity:

Text-to-speech

When we look at our own work for too long, we become too attached to spot simple mistakes. The text-to-speech feature lets students hear their work being read back to them, so they can identify mistakes they no longer “see”. This method of proof-reading reduces the amount of errors in students submitted work, therefore saving you time to focus on the context behind written assignments.

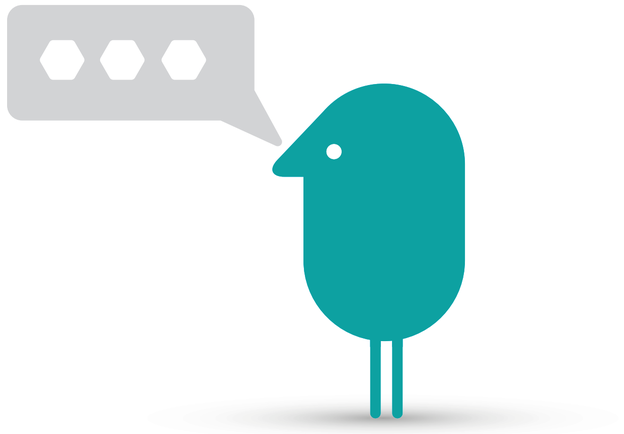
Check it

The Check It feature offers a final method for students to proof-read their work, by highlighting spelling, grammar and punctuation errors, and offering suggested corrections. Again, using this feature reduces the amount of errors in submitted work, whilst also providing a tool which will visually highlight errors instantly to you when it comes to marking.

5. reducing teacher homework, so you have time to recharge

Audio maker

Marking students' work can be quite time consuming, particularly when it comes to written assignments. The Audio Maker feature allows you to create an MP3 file from a Word doc, so you can listen to content on the move. An alternative method to marking, you can grasp the context of a student's piece before sitting down to check for grammatical errors.



Voice note and Talk & type

When it comes to providing feedback, it sometimes feels more natural and friendly to provide explanation through speech. With the Voice Note feature, you can add comments verbally into documents to provide detailed explanation quickly and easily. Alternatively, use the Talk & Type feature to provide students with the option to read or listen to your feedback - you simply speak whilst Read&Write types.

Text prediction

As well as benefiting students, Read&Write's smart prediction feature can be used to help you create written reports, emails and learning materials quicker, to save time spent on admin tasks. This helps you to use your time on those parts of your job that you value most.

using equatIO to increase productivity:

Mathspace

Aside from all the creative maths activities you can create and share using EquatIO (see section 1), EquatIO Mathspace allows you to input your feedback directly into a student's document and share with them instantly. In addition, you can use EquatiO's multiple input methods to easily insert correct solutions, so students can understand your feedback effectively.

Voice note

Save time when it comes to providing feedback with voice notes - add explanation about your grading quickly and easily, or use to provide direct instruction on mathematical solutions with ease. This feature also assists with student comprehension, as they can listen to your detailed feedback again and again whilst they retry to solve the maths activity.

Graph editor

The EquatIO graph editor is powered by Desmos, for quick and simple creation of graphs. Not only of benefit to students, this feature can be used by teachers for administrative tasks or to help inform your teaching strategy - use the graph editor to plot student progression throughout the year, so you can keep track of where they are excelling and where they may need some assistance. The visual representation is also great to have when it comes to updating parents on their child's progress.

conclusion

Technology is a key support when it comes to putting in place personalised teaching and learning strategies, not to mention when it comes to efficiency. We hope you have gained some useful ideas about how to use technology to both support your diverse learners and enhance your productivity, so you can focus valuable classroom time on more meaningful interaction.

If you would like to try Read&Write and EquatIO for yourself, we offer them **free for teachers.**

Get Read&Write and EquatIO, for FREE

refer a colleague

If you think your colleagues would be interested in trying out our supportive technologies, **feel free to share the link: text.help/fft-au**

texthelp®

"As a teacher, I strive to always put my students first, as they are the reason I teach and why I love my job. Personalisation and relationships are key in making a difference to the students in my class. It means I know my students and how they learn. With the right tools at their fingertips, students can feel empowered and really own their learning. Edtech is the key that opens that door to the unknown and provides students with the confidence to really learn. Not only does it change the way we plan, resource and implement engaging and effective learning experiences, it helps teachers reduce their workload.

As educators we are doing our students a disservice if we do not at least expose them to some of these tools. How else will they truly know what they are capable off. Nothing can replace the feeling of seeing the spark for learning reignited because you showed a student an edtech tool, such as the Read&Write toolbar, which enables students to write and be proud of the work they produce."

Tracey Catling

texthelp®

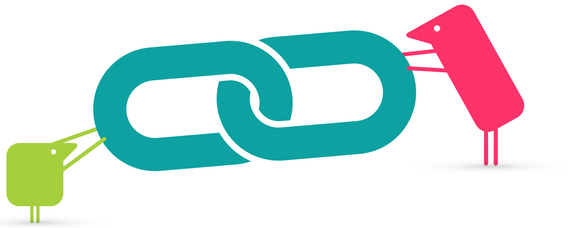
"If we were to ask teachers what it is that they wish to achieve in their work, it would be that they positively impact their students by providing them with learning experiences that excite, engage and inspire them to learn as much as they can, and therefore achieve.

I firmly believe that edtech is a gamechanger for education. We are able to quickly and efficiently research, plan and program each term. We are able to disperse learning materials, content and other resources with our students at the click of a button. Students are able to access their learning at any time, day or night, wherever they may be. We are able to accurately assess and analyse student achievement and build on this for our future teaching, and the future learning of each of our students.

Personalisation of learning supported by simple and cost-effective access to learning materials is what seems to be making a difference in education today. Students should be given all of the tools necessary so that they can work and learn whenever they like. As teachers, what seems to be clear to all of us in this profession is that personalised learning has the potential to positively influence student thinking, learning, engagement and achievement."

Nick Brierley

references



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