

Four Ways to use Speech Recognition in Your Classroom

With Apple's recent launch of the iPhone™ 4S with Siri™, voice recognition has gained a permanent place in the spotlight. While the technology itself is hardly new, Nuance, a provider of speech and imaging solutions, claims voice recognition technology has become so advanced that it is up to 99% accurate. The real beauty of the technology is that voice recognition bridges a gap: "Most people speak over 120 words per minute, but the average keyboard user types less than 40 words a minute."

With this advancement in voice recognition, classrooms now have the capacity to utilize this tool in a multitude of ways. Here are four to get you started:

#1: Boost your productivity

Educators who use voice recognition tools to make comments on essays, exams and other homework report a considerable time savings in the review and correction process. And, students no longer need to interpret the hurried handwriting in the margins.

To help make the process even more efficient (not to mention earth-friendly), consider using a purely electronic submission and commenting process in your classroom. If you don't have an electronic SMART Board system at your school, provide students with inexpensive [flash drives](#) that can be used to store and submit homework. For schools using SMART Boards, introduce the system to students at the beginning of the year by handing out [pens](#) or handy [computer-mounted flag sets](#) imprinted with the SMART Board URL.

#2: Enhance learning

Remember when you were a student sitting through a lecture, hurriedly scribbling notes and missing bits and pieces of the lecture as you attempted to catch up? Voice recognition software solves that problem. Just record your lesson, transcribe it using the software of your choice and distribute to your class. Voilà, class notes made perfect.

But, it goes beyond that. There is current research that indicates literacy may be improved through this tool. Youth who struggle with reading can read aloud and the voice recognition software is able to immediately provide corrections to assist the reader.

#3: Aid students with learning disabilities

Studies show that use of speech recognition tools by students with learning disabilities can actually help improve reading and spelling abilities. Because the tools allow words to appear on screen as a student is speaking, the student can see the flow and structure of the sentence as it is being written and words are always spelled correctly.

#4: Prepare students for the future

More and more businesses are focusing on input efficiencies, not only to save time over the manual transcription process, but to reduce repetitive stress injuries, such as carpal tunnel, often experienced by administrative professionals. For this reason, many schools are beginning to use voice recognition in their business curriculums to prepare students for the working world.

If speech recognition training is part of your curriculum, help students easily identify which computers in your school are equipped with voice recognition technology by pairing enabled computers with custom imprinted [mouse pads](#) featuring quick tips and tricks for using the technology. Another idea: dedicate a bulletin board or [table top display](#) to feature new voice recognition courses and quick tips for how students can use the resources to enhance their learning and prepare for the future.

Voice recognition software is one more tool that can help educators, no matter their grade level, deliver more efficient and accurate notes to their students. It can also assist students in learning more proficiently. The changing classroom landscape is ripe for new and improved technologies, and voice recognition software is certainly one to consider.

"[Helping All Students Reach Their Full Potential: A White Paper for the Education Industry from Nuance Communications](http://www.rtu-ser.ca/Documents/nd_007144.pdf). http://www.rtu-ser.ca/Documents/nd_007144.pdf" [Http://www.nuance.com](http://www.nuance.com). Nuance Communications, Mar. 2009. Web. Dec. 19.

Raskind, Marshall H., and Eleanor L. Higgins. "[Speaking to Read: The Effects of Speech Recognition Technology on the Reading and Spelling Performance of Children with Learning Disabilities](http://www.rtu-ser.ca/Documents/Raskind_1999.pdf)." *Annals of Dyslexia* 49 (1999): 251-81. http://www.rtu-ser.ca/Documents/Raskind_1999.pdf

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