Chromebook Accessibility Features to support SpLD

(adapted from Chromebook Accessibility Features for the Classroom by Brody Mitchell, 29.03.19)

How to enable accessibility features on a Chromebook

1. Click on the 3 vertical dots at the top right corner of the Chrome browser and select 'Settings'
2. On the Settings page, search for 'Accessibility' – please note that if you can't see this, click on 'Advanced Settings' instead and you will then see it
3. Look for the option that says, 'Always show accessibility options in the system menu' and turn the switch on
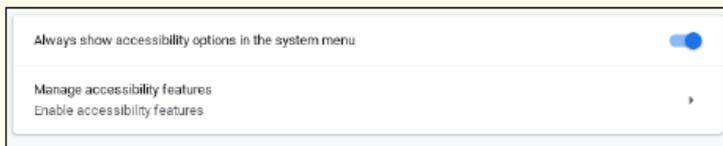
4. The accessibility features are now easily accessible in the system menu at the bottom right corner of your Chromebook – click on the time icon to access.

Different accessibility features available
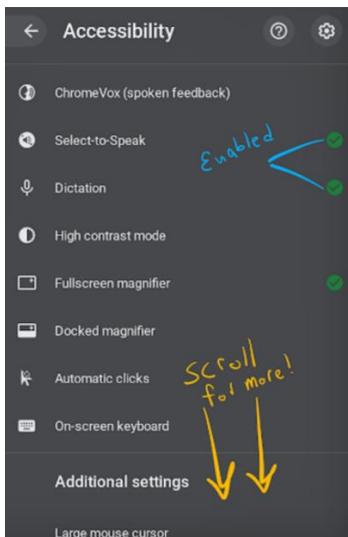
- **Chrome Vox**

ChromeVox is a screen reader intended for visually impaired users that allows them to navigate the web through verbal prompts. Weaker readers **may** find it useful too. However, **most sighted weaker readers find that the Select-to-Speak feature suits their needs better** as it will only read aloud exact sections that they choose.

When enabled, ChromeVox places an orange box around selected objects and reads **all** the on-screen text.

- **Select-to-Speak (Text to Speech for Chromebooks)**

Select-to-speak is a Chromebook reader that can read most on-screen text. Students can use it to support reading text or to hear back what they've written to help with editing.

While similar to ChromeVox, select-to-speak doesn't activate unless a student requests it. This makes it a more useful classroom accessibility feature for students who would benefit from having text read aloud, but don't need it all the time.

Select-to-speak works on MOST websites including Google Docs, Google Forms and Google Slides as well as PDFs (most, not all).

First, you will need to enable select-to-speak from the accessibility system menu on your Chromebook.

Once enabled you will see a new icon appear on the shelf (the black bar at the bottom of your Chromebook).
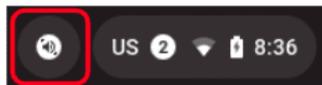
You can enable select to speak in two ways:

1. Press the speaker icon on the Chrome Shelf and then drag to select the text you want read.
2. Highlight some text on your screen and press search + s
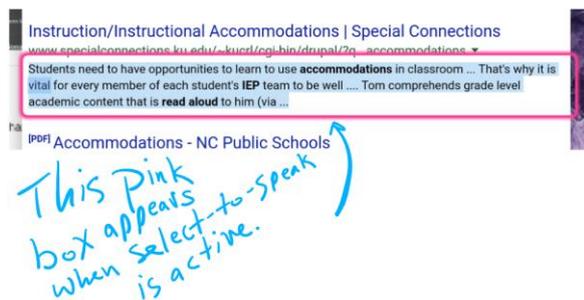
Words are highlighted as they are spoken which makes it easier to follow the text. In 'Accessibility' and 'Manage Accessibility Features', you can change the highlight colour or turn it off. You can also change the voice.

- **Dictation (Chromebook voice typing)**

Good for students who are slow typists, find spelling tricky, or need some extra help getting their thoughts "on paper."
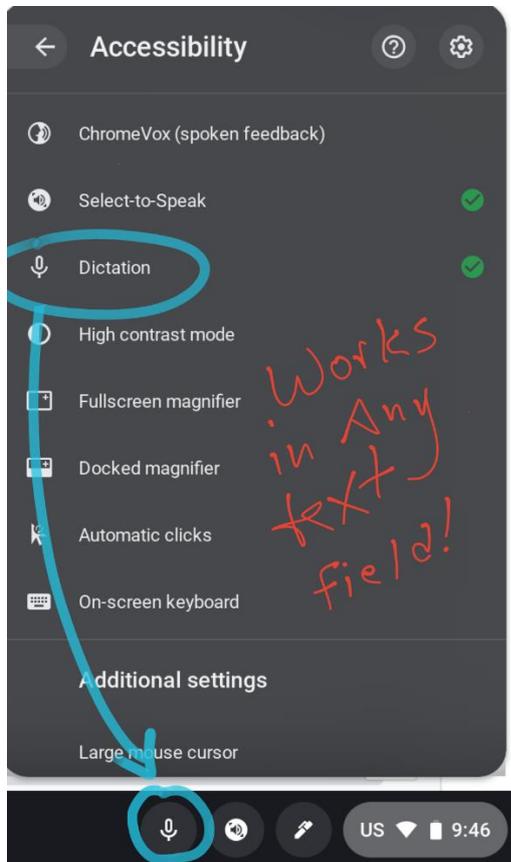
First, you will need to make sure that dictation is enabled through the Chromebook accessibility menu.

Click on the microphone icon to enable Google voice typing on your Chromebook.

You can add punctuation by saying "full-stop","exclamation mark" or "question mark."

The dictation feature will work in any text field, including Google Docs, Slides, Drawing, etc.

You can enable voice typing in two ways:

1. Click in a text field and then press the mic icon on the Chrome Shelf. Once you hear a soft "chirp", begin talking.
2. Click in a text field and press search + d