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**Edition 78**

Editor's Desk

Dear friends,

*“Creativity is seeing the same thing but thinking differently.”*

*-Sri.APJ Abdul Kalam*

Happy Reading,

Regards

Bhavna Botta

<http://www.connectspecial.in/>

## **Inclusive Ideas**

### **Making learning accessible for everyone with Microsoft Education**

--Carla Gonzalez Fernandez, Microsoft, Education

Originally featured at

<http://www.accessandinclusion.news/>

<https://pulse.microsoft.com/en/transform-en/education-en/fal-microsoft-education-making-learning-accessible-for-everyone/>

Every student deserves a solution to help them achieve great things. Learn in this article how Microsoft's accessibility tools can support diverse learning needs.

More than 1 billion people across the world have disabilities. Yet only 1 in 10 have access to the tools they need to fully participate in society. It is a challenge that every organization has a responsibility to help solve.

Accessible technology can help bridge the gap, providing people everywhere with the tools they need to thrive.

Nowhere is that more important than in schools and classrooms, where every student should have access to the resources and support, they need to fully engage in learning.

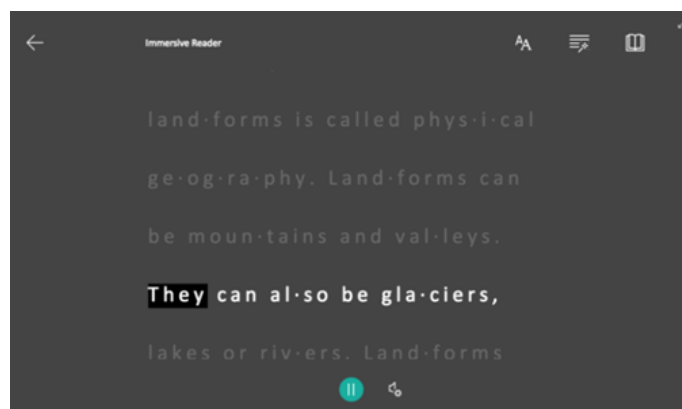
Our commitment to digital inclusivity in education extends through all aspects of the solutions we offer, from

product design to customer support. Our goal? To enable every student to fully participate in learning and life and empower every teacher to connect with each of their students, wherever they are, whatever challenges they face.

The accessibility solutions we offer have proven to enhance students' learning experiences and environments, providing multiple ways for students to create, engage and participate. These tools are designed to help all students, regardless of ability, as outlined below.

## Learning and speech

- **Immersive Reader** breaks down syllables, increases the spacing between lines and letters, and reduces “visual crowding” to support students with different learning styles to both read aloud and listen to a text. It's a free tool that's built into Word, One Note, Outlook, Office Lens, Microsoft Teams, Forms, Flipgrid, Mine craft Education Edition, and the Edge browser.



The picture shows a screenshot of a black block highlighting the words in white on a grey background

- Other integrated tools like **Read Aloud** support students with visual impairments by narrating web pages, news, documents, e Books or your own custom content.
- While **Presenter Coach** can help students prepare for presentations by evaluating the pace, pitch and language used, helping to build confidence and improve students' presentation style.
- Teachers can keep track of reading fluency by identifying accuracy rate and trouble words using **Reading Progress with Insights**. This tool helps students build confidence and reading fluency through personalized reading experiences built into Assignments in Microsoft Teams.
- Additionally, students can develop critical literacy skills using the reading practice tool, **Reading Coach**. The new offering, which complements other tools such as Reading Progress and Immersive Reader, automatically generates individualized exercises based on each student's specific needs and provides guidance on the likes of pronunciation and syllabification.

## Vision, hearing and mobility

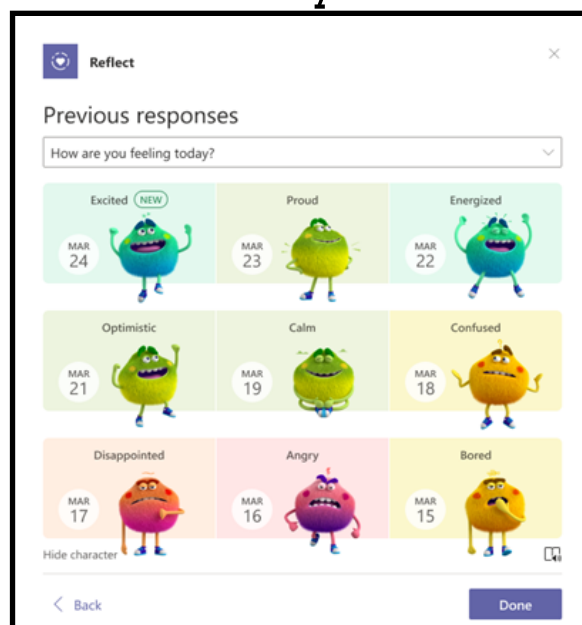
- The built-in screen reader **Narrator** provides simplified navigation and audio descriptions so students can easily interact with everything on their screen with their keyboard or Braille device.
- And for students with limited mobility, **Dictate** enables them to use their computer microphone to dictate presentations or documents.
- We also provide **captions on Microsoft Teams** for students who are hard of hearing, have dyslexia, or need support focusing. Teams can detect what's said in a class session or meeting and present real-time captions with speaker attribution.

## Neurodiversity and cognitive

- Microsoft **To Do** is a list, task and reminder app that can help students get organized and manage their school work and activities from a smartphone, tablet or computer.
- For students who need support focusing, **Reading view** removes distracting ads and excess information to reduce cognitive load while using the Edge browser, so every student can stay on-topic.

## Mental health

We've made it easier to check on your students' social-emotional well being with tools within Microsoft Teams. **Reflect** helps students recognize and navigate their emotions by providing regular opportunities to share and be heard, broadening learners' emotional vocabulary and deepening empathy for their peers. And there's support for teachers too with Insights, which provides valuable feedback to help educators build a healthy classroom community.



Picture shows various emotions in different colored emojis

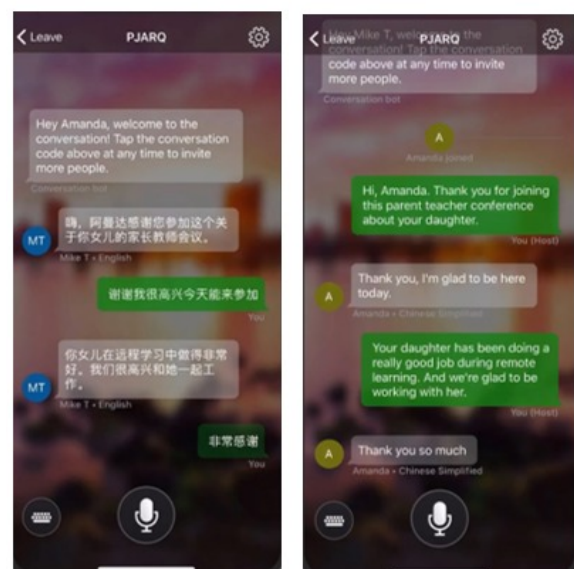
- Teachers can encourage everyone to learn and share their thoughts using **Flipgrid**. A safe video expression tool, Flipgrid encourages students to informally share details of their successes, interests and weekends .

## All learners

- For students who aren't learning in their native language, the **Translator app**, PowerPoint's Presentation Translator and Teams can be set to translate content into their preferred language.
- Regardless of the challenges that students may face, **The Ease of Access Center in Windows** allows everyone to personalize their computer to best support their needs. By making it possible to customize mouse actions, track pad options, keyboard preferences and more, every student can define a digital experience that matches the way they interact with the world.

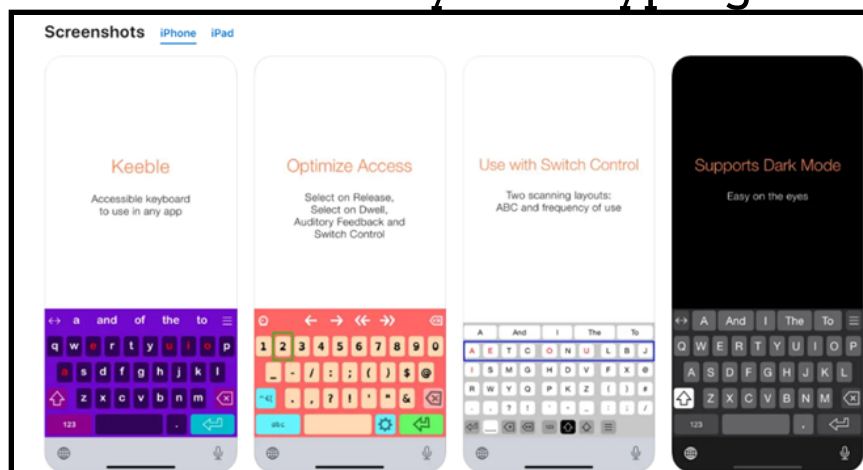
Before sharing documents and spreadsheets or sending emails, teachers and students alike can run the **Accessibility Checker** to ensure the content is easy for people with disabilities to read and edit.

Picture shows screenshot of translator app



## Keeble

Keeble is an iOS keyboard that allows users with fine motor-challenges, switch users and users with vision impairments to type in almost any app. The keyboard offers word prediction, timing options, Select on Release, Select on Dwell, auditory feedback, and other accessibility features. It also fully supports Switch Control and Voice Over. Keeble works in two ways - making it easier to type, and speeding up typing. Visually, it's highly customizable - from colors to a wide range of fonts, including a dyslexia font. It's also designed to respond in ways that help reduce typos and slip ups- selecting keys on release and speaking as you type for example. The predictive text feature offers suggestions based on what you're typing.



Picture shows a screenshot of different types of keeble keyboards layouts including one for switch users

<https://www.assistiveware.com/products/keeble>



## Dexteria

This app is a set of therapeutic hand exercises that improve fine motor skills. There are 3 activities – one requires the person to isolate fingers and press buttons while keeping the thumb in one spot- this works on finger isolation, motor planning, and sequencing, one works on a pinch – this works on fine motor movements needed for holding a pencil and picking up objects- the other is handwriting (print). This app is great for all ages because it does not look like a child's game, and it is quite engaging.



Picture shows a screenshot of different types of app games promoting fine motor skills

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/dexteria-fine-motor-skill-development/id420464455>

## **:prose**

:prose is the world's most intuitive mobile (AAC) app that let's you speak using body language instead of visual symbols. Starting with simple finger taps and swipes in the Canvas area, you can speak your own phrases out loud and communicate with others.

<https://www.iaccessibility.com/apps/cognitive-intellectual/index.cgi/product?ID=248>

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