Text to Speech/Speech to text in Commonly Used Software
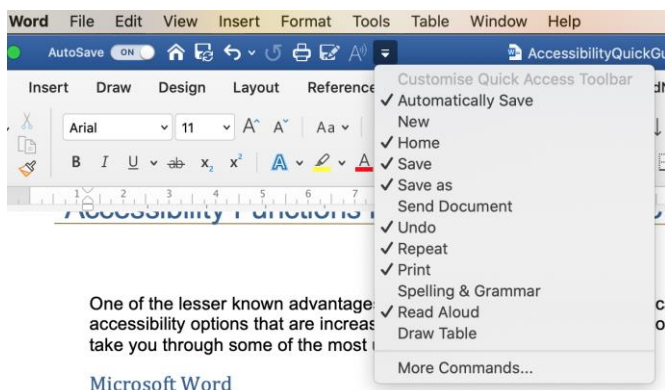
One of the advantages of using technology to deploy educational content is the accessibility options that are increasingly available in commonly used software. This Quick Guide will take you through Microsoft Word, Microsoft OneNote, Google, Firefox and PDF readers and show how you can have them read your text, and, in some cases, take dictation. Note, this guide applies to the latest versions of this software. These functions often exist in older version, but you may need to hunt around a little more to find it.
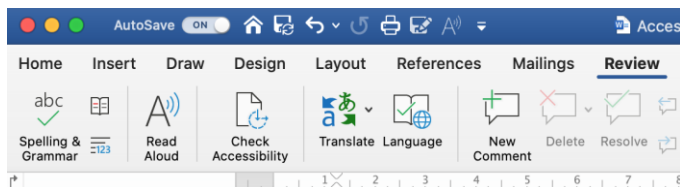
Microsoft Word has the ability to read out a document. Navigate to the Quick Access toolbar (top of your screen) and choose the dropdown menu.
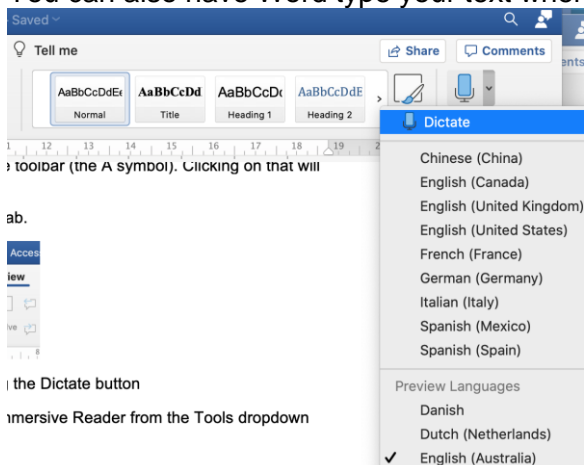

Checking Read Aloud will add the Read Aloud icon to the toolbar (the A symbol). Clicking on that will have Word read your document to you.

Read Aloud is also a toolbar option when in the Review tab.
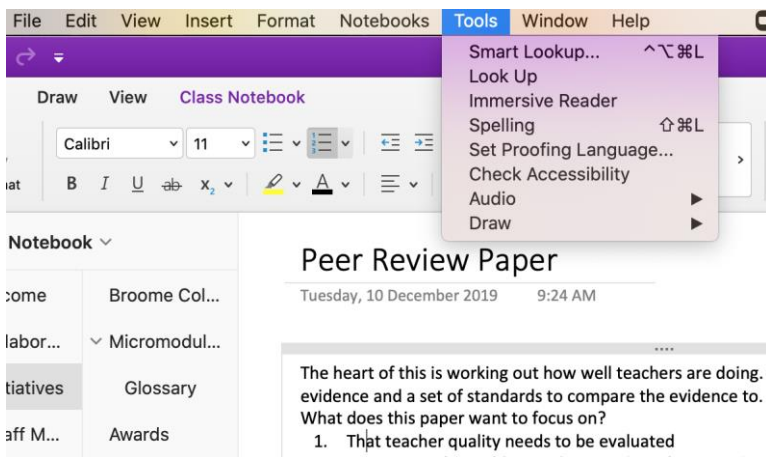

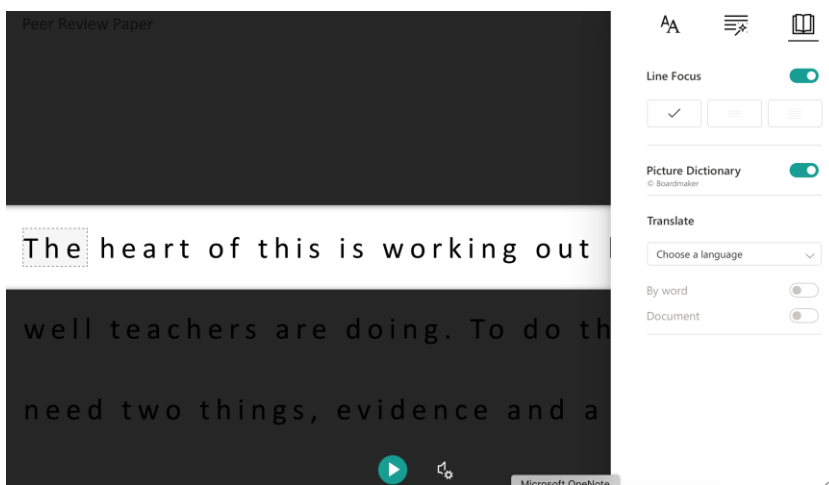You can also have Word type your text when you speak using the Dictate button.

If you have an old version of Word, this feature is still there, but a little hidden. This video should help.
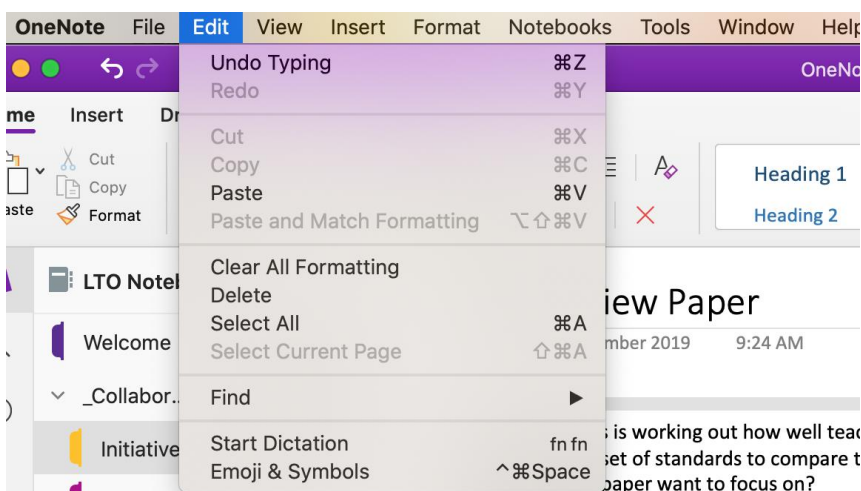
Microsoft OneNote will read your notes if you choose Immersive Reader from the Tools dropdown menu.

The Immersive Reader format opens other accessibility options, including line focus and translation services.
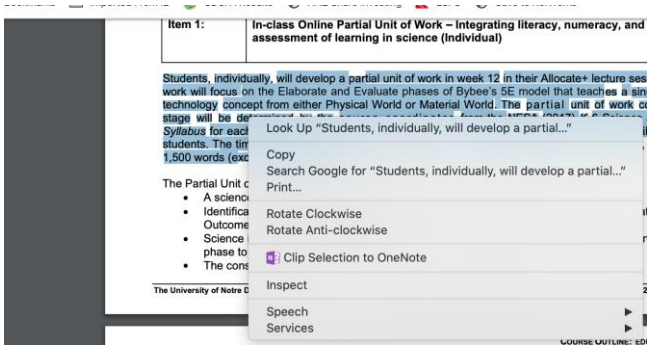

You can also have OneNote type as you speak by choosing Start Dictation from the Edit menu.

Google Chrome

You can highlight any text in any web page in Google Chrome (including PDFs and text in Blackboard), and have it spoken for you. Right click to access the feature:
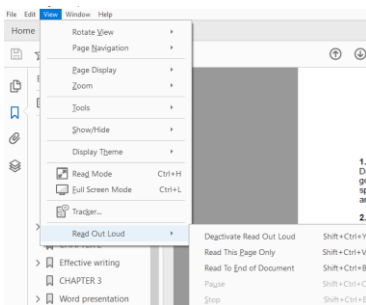

Mozilla Firefox

Firefox can read aloud text, but requires add-ons to be installed. Search Firefox for the most up to date read aloud add-ons.
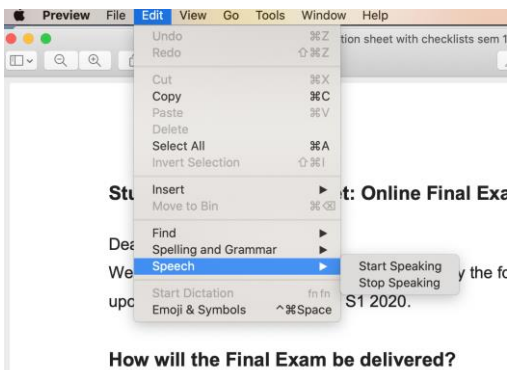
Adobe Acrobat PDF Reader

The PDF reader has a Read Out Loud function which is accessed from the View menu.

You can choose to have just one page read, or the whole document.

Apple Preview

This piece of software is the Mac default to open PDF documents. To access speech, go to the Edit menu and choose Speech.

Please provide your students with the student version of this guide:
https://www.notredame.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/119039/Read-Aloud-and-Dictate-Software-Options-for-Students.pdf