Alternatives to reading

Context

Fruition of lessons' content can be a hard task for students with **reading** related issues. Some of the impairments and difficulties that stand under the SEN umbrella term, like ASD, hearing and visual impairments, or just socio-economic disadvantage can involve difficulties in reading or in language acquisition. The need of these students is to access content offered during lesson in alternative form respect to the written one, so this content should be re-adapted to different form or produced with the intent of supplying alternative ways of access.

The best alternative, according to **UDL guidelines** (Universal Design for Learning) is to produce parallel didactic materials in different forms, according to the diverse needs of the present students.

General Principles

The different forms in which lesson content can be produced exploit multimedia: audio, video or image/visual matarial in general.

Students with SEN, LSD, visual impairment and reading related issues can benefit from lesson in **audio format** so they can study or revise in comprehensible way.

Students with SEN, LSD, hearing impairment, cognitive and reading reading related issues can benefit from lesson in **video format**.
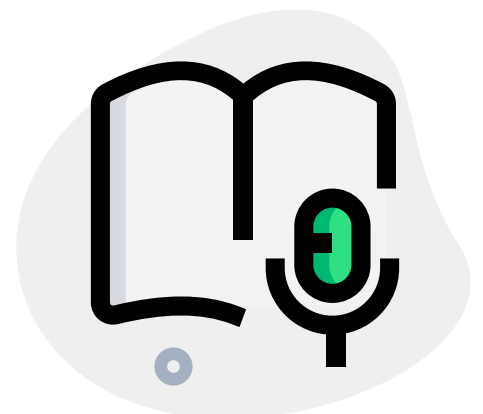
Students with SEN, LSD, hearing impairment and reading reading related issues find comfort and comprehension from lesson content explained with templates that involve **images** and **visual material**.

Adaptation

Focusing on the specific needs of the student can give clues about the adapted format work needed:

The lesson or homework instructions can be recorded on audio, with the help of online resources or dedicated programs and then shared with the students.
Also the opposite, transcribing audio of a lesson is possible through different online tools.

Different resources can be used to create the templates for visual reference exploiting images, highlighted key words and concepts or different multimedia.

Having visual reference of key concepts helps the students to focus and keep attention easier, while relieving from the cognitive effort of reading full texts.

Use easy readability fonts and be sure to always put a different title to the reference sheet when changing topic, also use different colors and bold fonts to clarify and link different concepts.

If possible the whole lesson should be recorded and saved on Cloud/Drive accessible for all the students, or small videos of explanation of the lesson contents or different tasks can be produced.

Videos should have subtitles if possible, captionable automatically through online tools to ensure accessibility.

Useful software:

These On/offline tools can help producing alternative contents:

Video	Visual Contents	Audio
Canva	Canva	Leawo Music Recorder
Covideo	Genial.ly	Audacity
Droplr	Visme	WavePad
Loom	Adobe Spark	Apple GarageBand
Camtasia	Design Wizard	Ardour
Bandicam	PicMonkey	Ocenaudio
Screencastify		QuickTime Player

Other resources

The **Toolbox** attached to this guide can be of great help in finding the resources to adapt lessons to different necessities. **Video tutorials** on how to use some of these resources can also be found on DigitALL's website and online.