ReadSpeaker Additional Resources

Tools Available

webReader

ReadSpeaker webReader is a tool that is used in the content area of Blackboard to read text. It is sometimes called the Listen button. With webReader you are able to perform the following tasks to the content area in Blackboard:

- change the reading speed
- change the text highlighting
- download the mp3 file
- hover over the text you want to be read
- enlarge the text
- create a simple view of the text
- use a page mask
- translate
- look up a word definition

docReader

ReadSpeaker docReader speech-enables the content of online documents to enable site visitors to listen to the text.

ReadSpeaker docReader can provide document reading in Blackboard for the following formats:
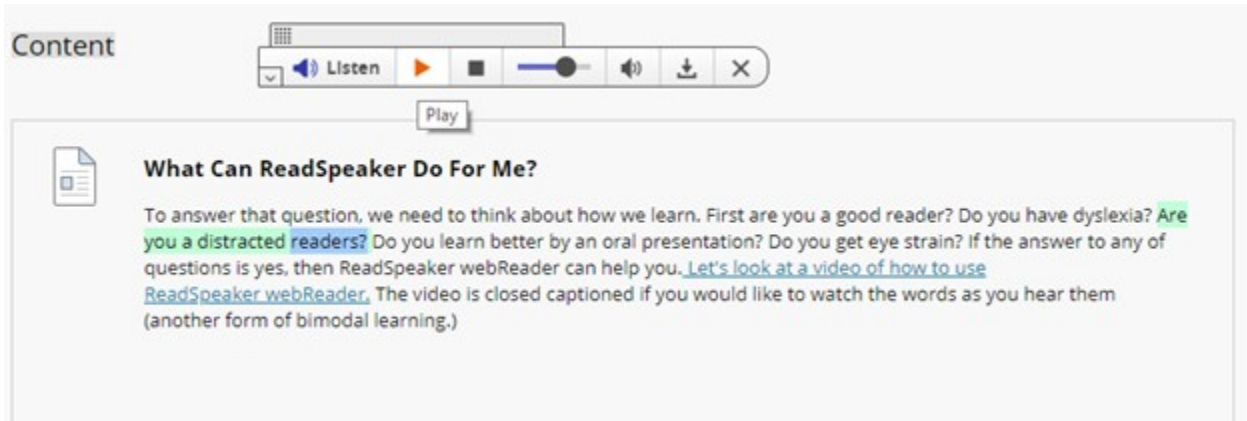
- ePub (.epub)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls, .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.pps, .ppt, .pptx)
- Microsoft Word (.doc, .docx)
- OpenOffice/OpenDocument Presentation (.odp)
- OpenOffice/OpenDocument Spreadsheet (.ods)
- OpenOffice/OpenDocument Text (.odt)
- Portable Document Format (.pdf)

How Does it Work

webReader

Listen to selected text: You can select part or all of the text on the page and then click the pop-up Listen button (see below). Note: if no text is selected, ReadSpeaker will begin at the top of the page and read down.
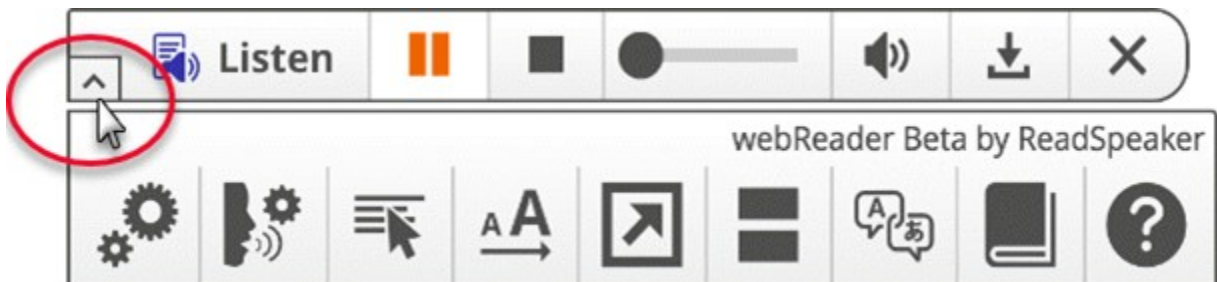
- Click the Listen button to open the player
- Select text to read

- Click the Play button to listen to the content

Note: You can adjust the text-to-speech settings by clicking the expansion arrow to reveal the full toolbar:
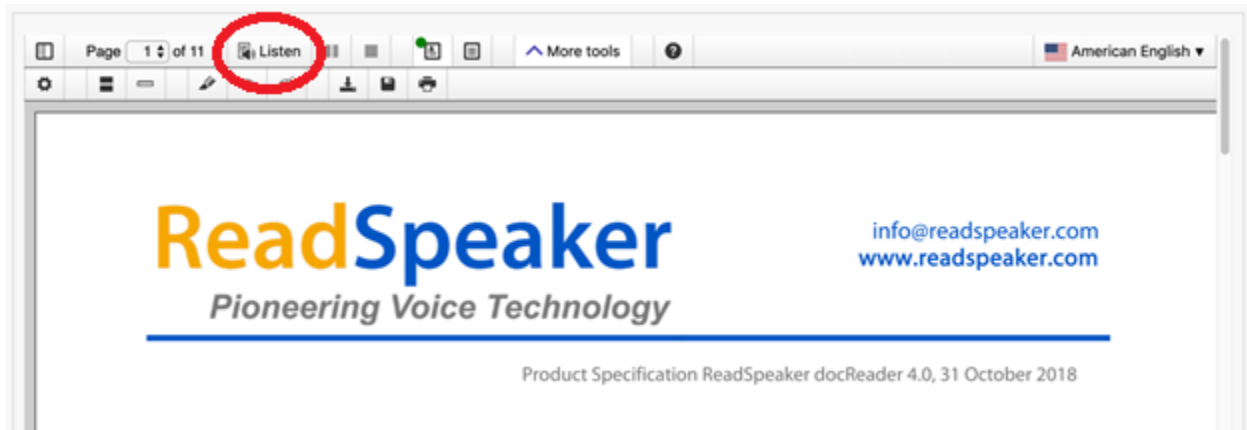
docReader

A docReader button is displayed next to online documents in your Blackboard course.

When you click on the docReader button, the document will be converted into docReader format and opened in docReader embedded in BlackBoard showing the first page of the document, a toolbar with which to access docReader's features and a sidebar for navigation through the document. The user can navigate to other pages in the document in various ways.

On any page, the user can now listen to the text of that page by pressing the Listen button in the toolbar. docReader then reads the content out loud whilst highlighting the sentence and the word currently being read in two different colors. The text on the page will be read section by section in the order defined in the document.

The docReader toolbar shows buttons for the following features:

- Show/hide the sidebar for document navigation
- Select document page
- Start, stop, pause, or restart the reading
- Select layout mode - original document layout
- Select text mode - text oriented version of the document; the advantage of text mode is that the user can change the way the text is presented for easier reading
- More tools - expand the toolbar to show more features
- Help - opens an instruction web page for docReader

In the extra toolbar shown when More tools is selected in the standard toolbar, there can be buttons for the following features (some features can be disabled and therefore not shown):

- Settings - opens a pop-up screen where the user can adjust general settings and highlighting setting which apply in both layout and text mode:
  - the reading speed
  - the language for the user interface
  - whether docReader will start reading automatically when the user clicks in a text section
  - whether docReader will automatically flip to the next page and continue reading when the end of a page is reached
  - word highlighting: choose color or underlining or turn off
  - sentence highlighting: choose color or underlining or turn off
  - and text mode settings which apply only in text mode:
  - size, font, color and background color for the text in the document when in text mode
- Page Mask - a reading tool that brings out a horizontal bar on the screen by masking the rest of the screen above and below it. The user can move it down along with the reading for better focus.
- Reading Ruler - a reading tool that brings out a gray horizontal bar on the screen that can be moved along under the text as it is being read, to help the reader focus on the line being read.
- Highlighter - highlight important sentences in the document and collect them to produce a summary that can be saved as PDF (can be disabled)
- Show or hide the highlights made with the highlighter (can be disabled)
- Save the page as an mp3 file with an audio version of the content (can be disabled)
- Save document in its original format (can be disabled)
- Print document (can be disabled)

The user can also look up the meaning of words they do not understand with the word lookup feature.

The audio is generated using ReadSpeaker text-to-speech technology. The customer can purchase licenses for one or multiple languages and for one or multiple voices in each language.

docReader allows site visitors who are not able to view a document in its original format (e.g. PDF) to view (and listen to!) the document through docReader.

ReadSpeaker Support Website