

Day of Languages

iPad Lesson ideas



Day of Languages is a great opportunity to get your learners exploring languages with iPad. These Lesson ideas highlight ways to explore the use of different languages within your iPad curriculum.

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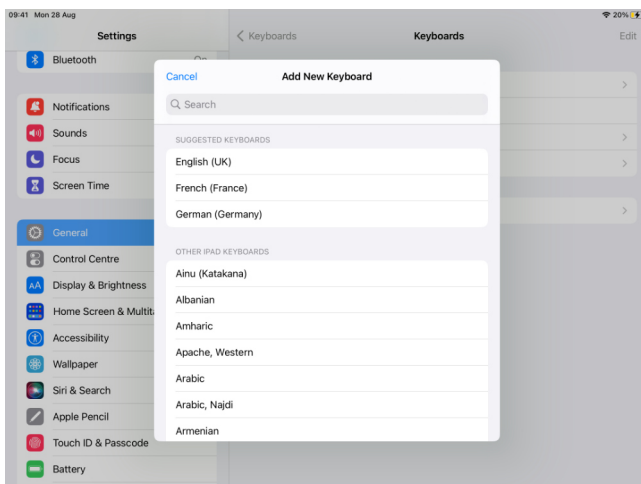
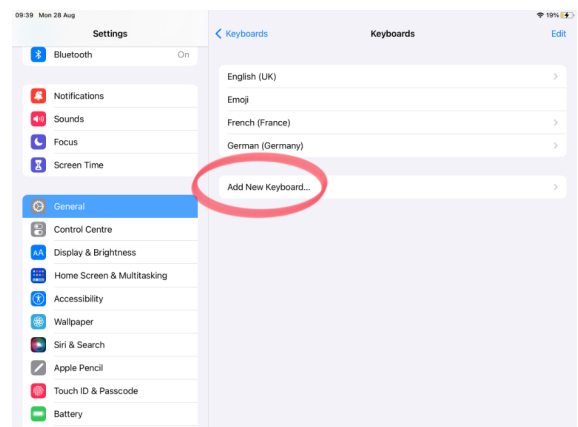
Languages on iPad

By default, iPads are usually set up using British English, which for most circumstances is what we want in this country, and this is perfect when creating content that makes use of features such as the spelling and grammar checks, but also when using some of the features that support learning in more general terms. Things such as the ability to have the iPad read back text, or even use the built-in dictation features which can be invaluable tools to support some learners.

Firstly, let's make sure that your iPad is setup to work with different languages, and the way we do that on the iPad is through the keyboard. This allows you to temporarily switch between different languages so that things such as the screen reader or dictation work, without actually changing the language of the menus etc.

We need to go to your settings and add additional keyboards for each of the languages you want to add, and there's a huge selection. Tap on the 'Settings' app, and select 'General' and then 'Keyboard', then tap the 'Keyboards' option.

This will then give you the option to add a new keyboard.



I already have English, French and German keyboards on my iPad, but you can add as many as you like. Some of the keyboards here can be really useful if you have EAL children in your class too.

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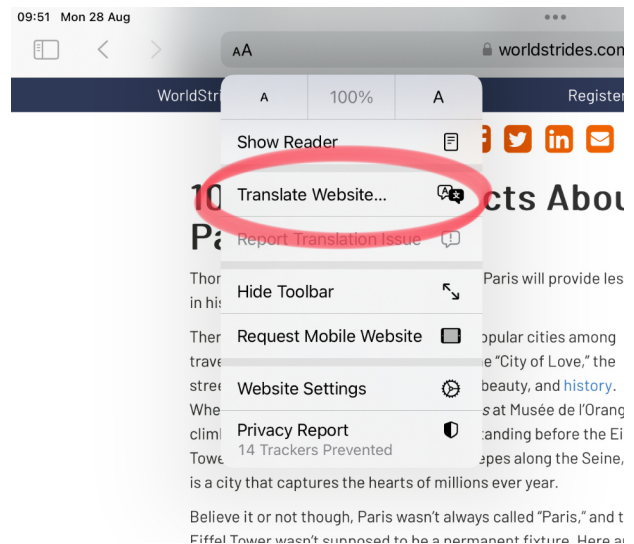
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Now you've added a new keyboard, you'll find you have a few more features to explore. Let's start with Safari.

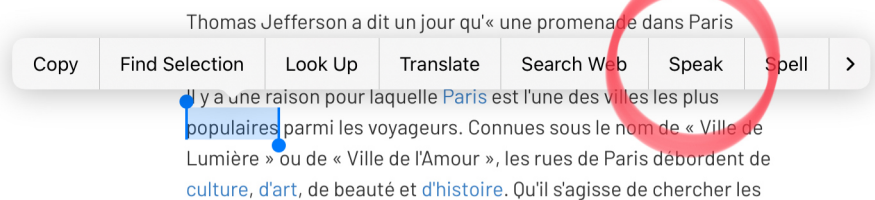
In Safari, browse to a website that might be useful for one of your lessons. In the address bar you'll notice the 'Aa' symbol on the left, and if you tap this you get several options to change how the website displays.

Top tip - try the 'show reader' option too, it's a great way to simplify the view of websites and remove clutter and advert popups, it works for most websites but not all.

You should find the 'Translate Website' option in this menu, and if you have multiple keyboards set, it will give you the choice of language to translate the website too.



10 faits intéressants sur Paris



Selecting your language will temporarily translate the entire website. You can revert to the original with the same menu by selecting 'View Original'. This could be a useful feature for comprehension exercises perhaps, finding information from text in the chosen language.

Now that we have the keyboard options set, we can use some of the other built in features in different languages. Let's go back to the 'settings' menu and check we have them turned on.

In 'settings', tap on the 'Accessibility' option, and then select 'Spoken Content'. Then ensure that 'Speak Selection' is turned on. You also get options here to change the voices and speaking rate.

If you now return to your website, and tap and hold on a word, it will highlight in blue, and a menu will appear with the option to 'Speak'. Select 'Speak' and the iPad will read out the word.

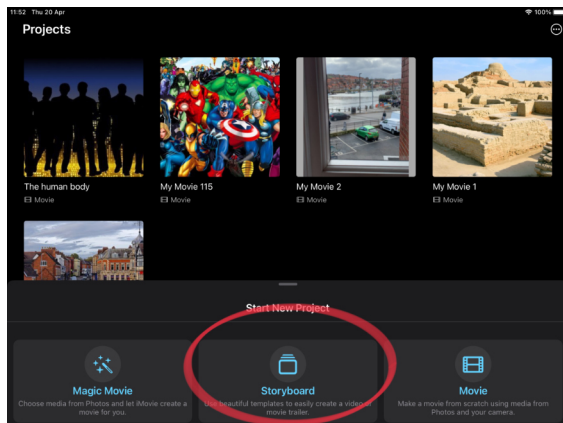
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Try this with the website in both the original language and the translated version, and you'll notice that the voice and accent changes appropriately. You can also extend the blue markers beyond the selected word to hear the whole sentence or paragraph read out.

Where this gets really interesting though, is if you try the same approach elsewhere on the iPad beyond Safari. However, this is where we need to think a bit more about the keyboard settings we applied earlier.

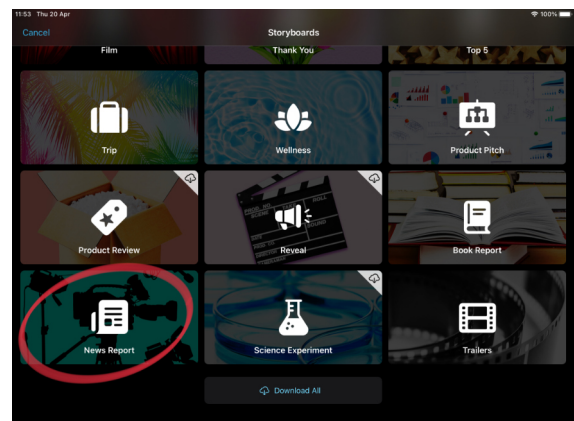
Let's move over to the Notes app, although this works anywhere on the iPad where the keyboard is used. You probably have the British standard QWERTY layout on the keyboard (so called because of the top row of letters are in that order), but since you added the additional languages, you also have a new button.



Tapping the new 'globe' symbol will toggle between the different keyboards you have chosen, or a long press will let you select the keyboard from the list. Depending on the language you have selected, you may see the keyboard layout change, I have the French keyboard set, and you'll notice my layout is now the French standard AZERTY layout.

Now you have selected the language of your keyboard, the spell check and spoken content options you used in Safari, will also work on our original text in the Notes app. This is a fantastic check point for the children to create content in a particular language, but listen back to the content as a point of self reflection.

Double tap on a word, and then extend the highlights to select the whole sentence. From the menu, select 'Speak' (you may have to tap the arrow on the menu to see all the options).

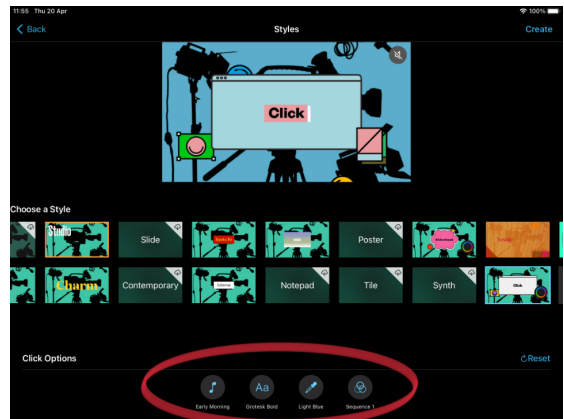


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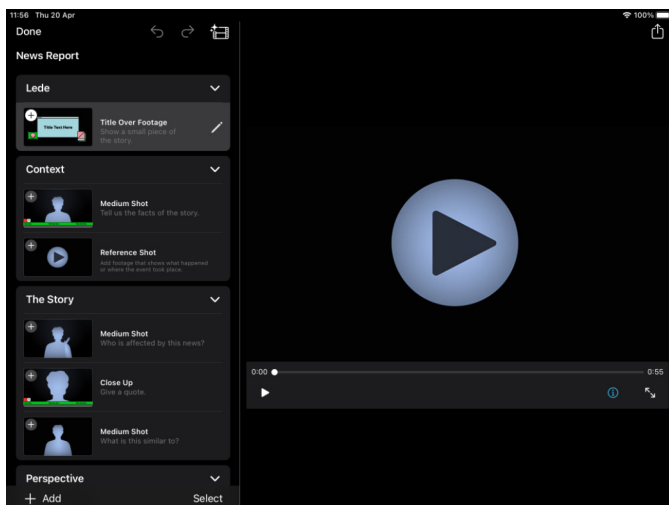
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We've done this in the Notes app, but it actually works across the iPad at any point that the keyboard is displayed, such as Pages, iMessage or Mail for example.

While we're looking at the keyboard, it has another trick, and that's the built in dictation feature. You might notice that there is a microphone button next to the new globe languages settings button we've just been using.



The first time you tap the microphone button, it will ask you to enable dictation, but after that we just tap the button to make the iPad listen to what we say, and transcribe it as we speak. We tap the keyboard icon to stop the iPad listening.



The iPad is listening for the language of the keyboard, however. If you have the British English keyboard selected, and use the dictation feature, you will find that it transcribes what you say with a high degree of accuracy. If you speak a different language with this setting, you'll find it makes a real mess of transcribing it, as the iPad is listening for English.

If you tap the globe and select a different language, and then try the dictation feature in the same language as your keyboard setting, then it works perfectly again.

So by using a combination of the keyboard language settings and the dictation feature, we can speak to the iPad, transcribe what we say, and listen to the iPad read it back to us. This is a fantastic learning opportunity, in an language, and allows us to focus on fluency and pronunciation too.

There's a lot to think about in the areas that we've just covered, but these can be really useful in supporting a lot of learners, and the approaches and features can be adapted to support the lessons you have planned.