Play it Again: Using Students’ Smartphones for Audio Recordings

# **What is the teaching activity?**

* Have students use their smartphones to produce and to listen to audio recordings.

**What are the advantages?**

* Accessibility, availability, and ease of use.
* There are a variety of free recording apps and apps that offer additional features.
* Students can access audio recordings whenever and wherever they want.
* Audio recordings allow for the expression and reception of information in an alternative format that can be beneficial to diverse learners.
* Students may find it difficult to listen, process information and write notes at the same time.

# **How can students use their phones?**

## During class:

* Entire lectures or important explanations can be recorded.
* **Notability** is an app that synchronizes the audio recording with typed notes.
* Built-in features of the phone allow students to convert speech to text.
* Teamwork meetings can be recorded.
* Recording is helpful when group discussion is happening too quickly to write notes.
* Audio recordings can be shared with all team members, including those that were absent.
* Some students like to listen to music as they work individually on assignments in class.

## Outside class:

* Audio recording allow students to focus on thinking instead of stressing over spelling.
* Listening to a recording of a finished assignment can be used for proofreading.
* Teachers can assign oral histories, interviews, qualitative data collection tasks.
* Teachers can assign listening to podcasts.
* Students can record oral presentations and share these with the teacher.
* Audio clips can be used to develop listening comprehension and to improve pronunciation.
* Smartphone apps exist for practicing vocal activities including singing and the pronunciation of tonal languages such as Mandarin.

# **Hot tips for teachers**

* Check out instructions on how to record audio on both iPhones and Android phones.
* Smartphones do not have much space to store audio. Remember to move files to locations with increased storage (e.g., **OneDrive, Google Drive, iCloud**).
* Use Creative Commons to grant copyright permission to share and use your audio productions.

# **Keep in mind that…**

* everyone, including students, must get permission before recording.
* noise levels in classrooms may make it difficult to record groups. Spread groups out.
* if sound quality is important use an external microphone.

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