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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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