

INTRODUCTION: Guidance Note 1, Inclusive Digital Learning

A new series

This guidance is part of a series to support you during the Covid-19 crisis. The guidance notes include #1- Inclusive Digital learning #2 - Teacher resources and #3 Home support. We will keep selecting interesting resources and develop new guidance as the crisis continues. Feel free to contact the IE sector and share if you have specific guidance needs, with your usual contact. Please share also the material you developed at country level, it might be relevant to other programs and partners.

A quick note about translation

If material that we have collected for your use at programme level is not available in language(s) you need, we can contact Translators without Borders to support us with translations. Let us know.

You can also adapt some material, simplify it and make it more accessible, illustrated (e.g. with Widget). There is free trial [version here](#), and more info is available in brief 1, tip 7. Please simply ensure you quote the original source and mention “adapted or translated from xxx”.

Format

1. Introduction
2. Pictorial based summary of the top tips
3. Explanation of the resources and more information about top tips, with hyperlinks of relevant resources

IE Sector contacts


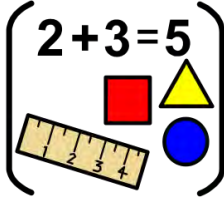
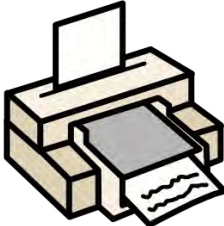
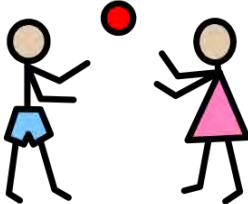

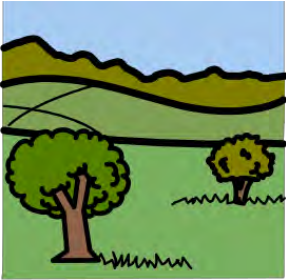
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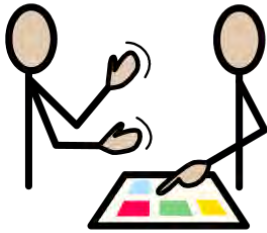
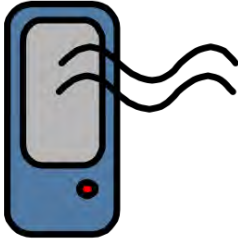


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These briefs were developed with the support of Erika Trabuko, Accessibility specialist.

**Summary of Top Tips for Inclusive Digital Learning –
with a focus on children with disabilities**

<p>1. Make use of FREE resources to promote literacy (i.e. storybooks, including resources for children with hearing or visual impairment)</p>	
<p>2. Promote the use of FREE online lessons (in the core subjects) either as a supplement to the core curriculum or to replace it if necessary</p>	
<p>3. Make use of FREE resources to print out for home based learning (or to use as part of an education pack to send to families)</p>	
<p>4. Promote digital resources for fun inside and outside play, cultural activities and activities for socio-emotional development to promote holistic learning.</p>	
<p>5. Make use of resources for learning foreign languages for free: (this is an example of simple self-directed learning)</p>	
<p>6. Encourage the use of websites and platforms where the content works offline. (This is particularly helpful in more remote and rural contexts where there is limited electricity and connectivity)</p>	

<p>7. Make use of resources that facilitate the creation of picture symbols and related materials to support the communication and learning of children with cognitive difficulties or communication impairments</p>	
<p>8. Promote free audio resources for children with visual impairments</p>	
<p>9. Try to promote multi-group learning, in addition to individual learning through apps, printed resources, digital books and self-directed content.</p>	
<p>10. FOR APP and WEBSITE DEVELOPERS: When you are designing an app or a website, think about accessibility!</p>	

10 TOP TIPS for inclusive digital learning

For children and learners at home

PLEASE CLICK on the HYPERLINKS (underlined words) for the resources!!

To support children and learners, a number of organisations and agencies have developed repositories of resources to support distance-learning during COVID-19. There is a compilation of specific [distance learning solutions available from UNESCO](#), and also a wealth of [useful resources at INEE](#). There are also a range of [resources for e-learning](#) available here, from the Education Above All foundation, and a useful hub from DFID dedicated to [Ed-tech](#), looking at research and innovation, with a specific section dedicated to COVID 19.

To help with the vast range of information on distance learning, here are some recommendations about helpful resources that are simple to use to complement learning, do not require subscriptions, include resources in a range of languages (used in the context of HI programs), and are free to the user. These tips are about resources to be used for children and learners. Some education ministries are also making their own curriculums available online, through video teaching or by uploading the content through e- learning modules etc. A separate brief is available for resources to build teacher capacity in general.

NOTE: Although these are recommendations about suitable ways to use free digital resources please note we suggest that children only spend limited time periods in front of screens, with plenty of breaks to run around and do exercise, especially young children.(e.g. around 20 – 30 minutes at a time)

TIP: To make these resources more accessible, use your device's embedded screen reader (tablet/mobile phone) to navigate through the websites, and magnifier or zoom to enlarge the text. You can also download a free screen reader for laptops on the [NVDA website](#).

1. Make use of FREE resources to promote literacy (i.e. storybooks)

[Global Digital Library](#) – Digital storybooks and other reading materials easily accessible from mobile phones or computers. This resource is very easy to use, and there are thousands of titles available in **43 languages**, and the materials can be used offline.

- Accessibility notes: this resource has only visual contents and navigation is not overly accessible for keyboard users

[Storyweaver](#) is great for multilingual stories too, although it's less extensive. However it is useful for encouraging children with read local context books and stories. This also includes some audio-visual story books for children with visual impairment ([readalong](#)).

- Accessibility notes: The site itself is not very accessible though, so blind children will need to be helped by adults to get to the desired audio resource

[Deaf World Around You](#) is a useful platform for young children with hearing impairment, with accompanying videos in sign language, to go with each story.

- Accessibility notes: This platform is specifically designed to support learners who use sign language, which accompanies the text. Arabic, Nepali and American Sign Language are some of the sign languages included.

[Ekitabu](#) also has storybooks in Rwandan sign language and Kenyan Sign language.

2. Promote the use of FREE online lessons (in the core subjects) either as a supplement to the core curriculum or to replace it if necessary

[Khan Academy](#) provides free online lessons from 2-18 in core subjects such as maths, language, science, and humanities, plus tools to make it easy to track progress. It is easy to find the appropriate content for children in different grades, from pre-school to secondary level. It is **available in 40+ languages**, and aligned to national curriculum for over 10 countries. The content is based on a personalized approach to learning, and the teaching ethos is in line with inclusive education pedagogy, which is child friendly, and personalized to each individual child's pace and way of learning. It is simple for children and parents to navigate and is motivating for learners. There is also a focus on removing barriers for all learners and the activities designed for pre-school children could also be applicable for older learners functioning at a lower academic level.

A free [app specific for young children](#) under 8 is available for tablets or mobile phones

- Accessibility notes: The site itself is quite accessible for keyboard users and navigation is easy. Also lessons are done through videos provided by captions, which is very good for children with hearing impairments.

TIP: *If recommending this resource to parents to use at home, suggest that teachers are involved in selecting which levels/ activities are the most appropriate for the child to work on. (e.g. some children in grade 2 could benefit from content from grade 1 for example). This resource could be used as a complement to other government provision online, (since the content is highly motivating) or also as a stand-alone, if no other content is available. Where possible, encourage teachers to contact parents through email/ text/ phone/ video message etc., to communicate about how to use the resources, discuss the child's progress and listen to parents' concerns. Realistically, this is only likely to happen on a semi-regular basis due to high numbers of children. In projects with other support staff such as CBR volunteers, or classroom assistants etc., more regular contact is possible.*

3. Make use of FREE resources to print out for home based learning (or to use as part of an education pack to send to families)

[Twinkle](#) provides thousands of free resources for primary school aged children, in a variety of languages, including Arabic, English, French, Lao, Spanish, Urdu, Hindi and many more. Resources include visual planners, school closure packs, and also fun games to help motivate children who feeling frustrated about being at home. [The Special Educational Needs and Disability resource](#) also contains activities and resources for children with special educational needs, such as children with speech, language and communication difficulties, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, hearing impairment, general intellectual disabilities, etc.

This website is free to join and does not require a subscription, although some resources do require a paid fee. (A large number of printable resources are free).

- Accessibility notes: The site itself is not very accessible though, so blind children will need to be helped by adults to get to the desired audio resource

TIP: *This website can be used directly by parents as they can simply scroll through to see which resources they like the look of, although it would still be helpful to be guided by a teacher. This resource is better in a context where it is possible to print materials at home, or print materials to send to children who are learning at home.*

4. Include resources for fun inside and outside play, and cultural activities, and activities for socio-emotional development to promote holistic learning.

Technology can also be used to aid home learning through outside and inside play (Here are some [outdoors activities](#) for children that can be adapted for indoors) These are online worksheets, but the ideas themselves do not necessarily need internet.

Technology can also be useful to help children have fun or learn more about culture.

- [Un défi par jour \(French\)](#): fun ideas for daily indoor challenges for children
- Coloring [drawings by great artists](#) (to print)
- [Promenades imaginaires au Musée d'Orsay](#) (French): fascinating stories inspired by the artworks of the Orsay Museum in Paris
- [Virtual tours \(English\): interviews, videos and amazing virtual tours of the greatest museums in the world](#)

Digital resources are also available to support children with their socio – emotional development.

- Tips to support parents during COVID 19 to support learning and promote well-being with a focus on ideas to help families to find ways to breathe, laugh, and play together are available on the [Sesame street website](#).

- A resource from Ubongo is available [here](#), to support socio-emotional skills

TIP: *In a context where teachers or HI staff are able to print out resources and send them home in an education pack, for children to work through at home, printable resources could be more feasible.*

5. Make use of resources for learning foreign languages for free

One of the best and most motivating apps out there is [duolingo](#), which is highly motivating and easy to use so is helpful for learners who have limited concentration. It is self-directed, so doesn't require a parent or teacher to support

- Accessibility notes: this resource is not overly accessible for keyboard users
 - [Free language games and activities](#) to learn French
 - [Free language games and activities](#) to learn English

TIP: *This is a good resource to recommend if users have android mobile phones / tablets, and in a context where children have access to the phone or tablet to direct their own study.*

6. Encourage the use of websites and platforms where the content works offline.

These are very important given that in many contexts where we work the internet connection, even if it exists, may not be reliable. In such contexts, it may be possible to download an app when internet is working and then use it offline. In addition to the downloadable content mentioned above (such as Twinkle resources, or the storybooks from the global digital library etc.), the following sites are recommended:

- [Kolibri](#) is an open-source, offline-installable technology platform which provides access to an openly licensed educational content library. It provides tools for pedagogical support for use in low-resource and low-connectivity contexts. Due to the current covid 19 crisis, Kolibri will be bringing out additional guidance on using Kolibri at home, and guidance on how to use align the content to national curricula, and how to pre-position devices for distribution etc, and support to governments.
- Accessibility notes: some of the provided videos have subtitles or captions and are suitable for learners with hearing impairments. Also, it has been designed so that assistive technology products can be plugged in easily.
- [Rumie](#), pre-installed tablets and computers, complete with relevant content are delivered to learners. The content is all open source on [Rumie's cloud](#).

TIP: *Unlike the previous suggestions, these platforms would need to be part of a solution that HI includes within the project, rather than just a suggestion for parents and teachers to use on their own phones/ tablets/ computers etc.*

7. Make use of resources that facilitate the creation of picture symbols and related materials to support the communication and learning of children with cognitive difficulties or communication impairments

[Do2learn](#) is a website for parents and teachers, with printable resources to support home learning for children. (This is only in English.)

[Widgit](#) allows users a free month's trial that can be useful to create a wide range of pictograms to be used on simple communication boards or in visual timetables. There are some picture symbols explaining what COVID 19 is all about. This is in English, but the software can be taught to use other languages.

[ARASAAC](#) offers free picture symbol and resources, to facilitate communication, but it is a bit harder to navigate, and it is not possible to write full sentence in symbols like with Widgit. This is available in a range of languages such as Arabic, French, and Portuguese. See the annex for other similar websites.

TIP: *These resources are helpful for learners who have a range of different needs, including Autism, intellectual disabilities, dyslexia, attention and behavior difficulties etc. It is more likely that HI staff, education authorities or others in larger centers would have access to printers to make use of this software (rather than parents). Creation of relevant personalized resources is something that could be carried out by paid staff members (e.g. itinerant teachers) during the lock down/ confinement period. This resource can help make "easy –to- read" materials, as pictures can accompany words to help explain content.*

8. Promote free audio resources for children with visual impairments

[Storynory](#) is an online resource where various short stories can be listened to in English, as are [Storytime](#) and [Stories podcast](#). [The alien adventures of Finn Caspian](#) is a science fiction story in hundreds of episodes that can be listened to or downloaded, as [The two princes](#) and the [Unexplainable disappearance of Mars Patel](#). On [But why: a podcast for curious kids](#) or on [What if world](#) short podcasts can be listened to, replying to funny or strange questions that children may have about all possible topics.

❖ [Repository of French podcasts](#)

9. Try to promote multi-group learning, in addition to individual learning through apps, printed resources, digital books and self-directed content.

There are a number of options to try to promote group learning, such as [Skype](#) , [Hangouts Meet](#) , and [Teams](#) , but the one of the simplest for teachers to use with learners at home, which operates on low internet connectivity, is [Zoom](#), a cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, collaboration, chat and webinars.

- Accessibility notes: Even the basic free version allows the user to record the session and can enable captioning which is helpful for learners with hearing impairments and those who need to view the lesson again, to help with memory difficulties or difficulties in being able to take notes due to physical disabilities.

10. TOP TIP FOR APP and WEBSITE DEVELOPERS: When you are designing an app or a website, think about accessibility!

Learners with a range of difficulties (including visual, hearing, intellectual, physical or communication impairments) will need to be able to access the app or website as well as all content (Word files, PDFs, Videos, etc.). Useful references can be found below:

- ❖ [Android accessibility guidelines for apps](#)
- ❖ [DEQUE accessibility checklist for Android apps](#)
- ❖ [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG 2.1\)](#)
- ❖ [Accessibility of Microsoft products](#)
- ❖ [How to make a Word file accessible](#)
- ❖ [How to make a PPT file accessible](#)
- ❖ [How to make an Excel file accessible](#)

Also think about developing an [easy-read option](#).

TIP: *If there is additional budget to be reallocated, also think about [assistive technology options](#), to facilitate the use of digital equipment by persons with different disabilities (e.g. larger keyboards, switches, eye gaze ,foot operated mice, or large switches instead of mice, etc.) .*

Annex : Websites for further reading

(Please also refer to the compilations hyperlinked on page 1, in the first paragraph)

Information on how to teach early literacy skills to students with different categories of disabilities, including in Low- and Moderate- Income Country (LMIC) settings.	Universal Design for Learning to Help All Children Read How to note on ICT (USAID)
Research and innovation into Edtech: information and insights about use of EdTech in low and middle-income countries -in response to COVID-19	Coronavirus (COVID-19) and EdTech

Instructional design for e-learning; a scalable e-learning network	IDEL center website
Connected Learning Consortium website : promoting and supporting the provision of quality higher education in contexts of conflict, crisis and displacement through connected learning	Connected learning in crisis
Free Audiobooks (during COVID 10)	AUDIBLE audiobooks
Robust, dedicated tablet designed to deliver reading, writing and numeracy in the child's own language – anywhere. Onetab comes in a durable protective case with an optional solar charger. (experience in East Africa	Onebillion website
Arabic language online education with resources for school learners and teachers.	Free Online education in ARABIC
Arabic language online learning platform hosting educational video lessons (linked to Egypt and Syrian curricula.)	Nafham educational platform
A large edutainment company (in 33 countries in Africa), with fun, localised and multi-platform educational media through accessible technologies. It is designed to appeal to children in rural settings such as remote villages.	Ubongo ubongo-kids
This alliance is committed to reducing barriers to access appropriate, scalable, low cost educational games and activities in low-resource and developing country contexts.	Mobiles for education alliance
Using Information Communications Technologies (ICT) to Implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL)	Working paper from the Global Reading Network for Enhancing Skills Acquisition for Students with Disabilities
Ekitababu : Kenyan Sign Language and Rwandan Sign Language videos and video storybooks support accessible, early grade reading	Ekitababu.
Video recording of INEE webinar on distance learning. during COVID 19	Presentation: click here Recording: YouTube link
20 top tips about where to start when designing an accessible course.	20 tips fo teaching an online accessible course
Two additional websites to help create pictogrammes and visual schedules, to support children's communication and also help to structure the day (free resources)	Scleraa Pictoselector /

IE Sector (Julia, Sandra and Sandrine), supported by Erika Trabucco (Accessibility global specialist), Humanity & Inclusion, April 2020.