

# Capti vs. Competition

## Overview

	Capti Voice	Read & Write	Snap & Read	Kurzweil	Voice Dream
<b>Approach</b>	An integrated reading literacy support tool with an emphasis on speech, natural language processing, machine learning/AI, universality, usability, personalization, and analytics.	A toolbar that integrates with 3rd party tools and provides reading and writing literacy support features.	A Google Chrome browser extension for listening to web page content and PDFs, creating outlines and bibliographies.	A document editor (viewer) with focus on speech and dictionaries.	A mobile app for listening to content and formatting it for easier reading.
<b>Strength</b>	Usability, all-in-one design without bloat, integration with many content sources, integration with SIS, a statistical model of student skill levels, best text to speech, best OCR quality, multi-platform support, robust built-in sharing & synchronization of content, browser integration, personalization, analytics, and integrated assessments.	Many useful features for reading and writing, strong integration with the Google universe of products (Google Classroom, Google Documents, Google Chrome), multi-platform support, text simplification.	Well-focused user interface, Chrome browser integration, outline and bibliography tools, PDF viewer, text simplification.	A reasonably large number of features, mind mapping tools, writing tools.	Numerous options for formatting text and controlling speech, integration with multiple content sources.
<b>Weakness</b>	No writing support; No native Android support.	Fragmented into many separately installed tools that depend on integration with more 3rd party	Limited functionality, supports only the Chrome browser, can access only what is open in the	Confusing, buggy, outdated and inconsistent user interface, poor cross-platform feature parity,	Not focused on the institutional market: no rostering, no analytics, no server-side, no student- or

		tools for critical functionality. Difficult to set up for a school.	Chrome browser.	very limited document sharing, a very large download size (Windows / Mac), slow at loading documents.	instructor-specific features, no web or desktop support.
<b>Target Market</b>	Institutional Education, Consumer.	Institutional Education and Enterprise.	Institutional Education.	Institutional Education.	Consumer.
<b>Relevant Products</b>	Capti Voice.	Read & Write, Fluency Tutor.	Snap & Read.	Kurzweil 3000, Firefly.	VoiceDream Reader, VoiceDream Writer.

### Competitiveness

Capti can be used in parallel with Read & Write because they enable very different use cases. Capti has beaten out Read & Write in the cases where schools were looking to provide only reading support. Snap & Read has very limited application. Capti has been consistently displacing Kurzweil. Capti won the EdTech Digest Award for the “Best Special Needs Solution of 2017”, beating out Kurzweil. Capti has been converting VoiceDream users, and especially in education settings.

*The following tables compare these products feature-by-feature and explain their strengths and weaknesses in more details.*

## Accessibility

All EdTech tools need to be accessible for students with disabilities to ensure compliance with laws.

	Capti Voice	Read & Write	Snap & Read	Kurzweil	Voice Dream
<b>Technology responds to assistive hardware, e.g., Braille display, switch devices, scanners, eye tracking, etc.</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Supports vision impairments, e.g., magnification, screen readers</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Includes specialized Dyslexia font</b>	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Includes high-quality text to speech</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	<p>The main factors in producing a high-quality text to speech (TTS) are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All tools in this table use high quality TTS engines; however, Capti and VoiceDream stand out by using Ivona (Amazon) voices. Those are considered to be the best commercially available TTS for the English, and some European languages.</li> <li>• The input for a text-to-speech engine should be correctly punctuated and cleaned up (e.g., from hyphenations) to ensure that generated speech has correct intonation. Capti pre-processes documents to make sure its speech engine speaks with correct intonation wherever possible.</li> <li>• The adjustment of the speed of the voice should be intuitive. Speed of different voices may not scale the same way and may not scale linearly, forcing users to adjust reading speed every time they choose a different voice. Capti solves this problem by mapping its every voice to the same linear words-per-minute scale so that users do not have to worry about adjusting speed every time they change voice.</li> </ul>				
<b>Includes text navigation tools</b>	✓			✓	✓
	<p>Text navigation tools are useful for quickly changing the current reading position in text (forward or backward) by some unit: a word, a sentence, a paragraph, a heading, etc. This feature is particularly important as an assistive technology for visually and mobility impaired users. Kurzweil has some basic navigation controls, while Capti and VoiceDream have the more advanced implementation. In particular, Capti pre-processes documents in order to optimize responsiveness in large documents. In addition, Capti implements a number of shortcuts to make it easier for keyboard users to navigate text.</p> <p>Also see:  <a href="https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_unit_navigation#ios">https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_unit_navigation#ios</a>  <a href="https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_shortcuts">https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_shortcuts</a></p>				
<b>Converts images to text (OCR)</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<p>OCR provides students and educators with the ability to quickly digitize printed text, saves them time, and enables new use cases. All tools, except VoiceDream, allow the use of OCR to convert an image or a scanned document into machine-readable format that can then be narrated by text to speech. However, the OCR implementation in Capti has some advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capti users say that it has the best OCR quality. We achieve this through a combination of superior OCR technology by ABBYY and carefully fine-tuned image processing.</li> <li>• Users can open Capti on their iPhone or iPad, snap a photo, and it will be automatically OCR'd and added to Capti playlist, ready to be played, read, shared, annotated etc. within seconds, and without leaving the app. Kurzweil also allows taking a photo and adding it to a “folder” from within the app. In contrast, Read &amp; Write requires the use of: (a) Google Drive on iOS to snap a photo and upload it to Google Drive (b) an</li> </ul>					

additional Chrome extension on a PC computer to OCR the uploaded image, (c) Spanverter, a Read & Write's Chrome extension to convert the image to speech, and (d) Read & Write to read it. Snap & Read lacks the ability to take photos from within the app itself; however, similarly to Capti, it has an iOS apps that can import and OCR images from other apps.

Our team is planning to further improve Capti by allowing its users to snap a sequence of photos, and have Capti stitch all those photos into a single document, with each photo rendered as a separate page.










Also see:

[https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help\\_import\\_photos#ios](https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_import_photos#ios)

## Instructional Support

	Capti Voice	Read & Write	Snap & Read	Kurzweil	Voice Dream
<b>Promotes active reading strategies with the ability to make highlights and take notes</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Unlike its competitors, Capti enables instructors to share highlights, comments and bookmarks with their students. Instructors can also enable students to share the same with the instructor or other students.				
<b>Allows to store content within the application</b>	✓			✓	✓
	Kurzweil and VoiceDream allow users to store documents in "folders". In contrast, Capti brings the concept of a "playlist" from listening to music to listening to texts, making the concept immediately familiar for students. Neither VoiceDream nor Kurzweil "folders" enable one to specify content ordering. In contrast, tracks in the Capti playlist have a persistent order, which is important because students need to read materials in a specific order. Further, each playlist in Capti has a "current reading track" (this facilitates sequential reading) and each track has its "current reading position"; its own "word list" (a list of words and phrases and their user-selected translations or definitions, each linked to a specific location in the track); its highlights, comments, and bookmarks. Each track is also represented with two models: the visual (what the user will see) and the audio (what the user will hear) – each model constructed in a pre-processing step. The visual and the audio models already enable the user to extensively customize how the text looks (fonts, colors, etc.) and sounds (what and how should be				

	read), providing even more customization and personalization opportunities in future versions of Capti.				
<b>Includes integrated content sharing</b>	✓	✓		✓	
<b>Ability to create and administer assessments</b>	✓	✓		✓	
	<p>Capti version of content sharing is superior to those provided by Read &amp; Write and Kurzweil. In Read &amp; Write, the sharing of content is done one document at a time and requires 3rd party software (Google Classroom), which leaves users with very little flexibility as to what, how, and with whom they can share. In Kurzweil, the instructor can set up a read-only public folder that can be shared with all or none. Capti enables users to create and share playlists with one or more users, enabling the instructor to personalize reading materials for students with different abilities in the class. Instructors may allow students to contribute to the content by giving them “edit” access permissions to the playlist. By sharing a playlist, the instructor shares not only tracks, but also notes, highlights, bookmarks, and word lists associated with each track.</p> <p>Our team is planning to continue enhancing the usability of sharing in Capti, e.g., by enabling the instructor to share playlists with the entire class of students (i.e. playlist will be automatically shared with any new students in class and unshared when a student leaves the class).</p> <p>Also see: <a href="https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_share_playlist">https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_share_playlist</a></p> <p>In Capti, instructors can create different types of questions (open-ended, multiple choice, and spelling). The assessment can then be assigned to sets of students, who can then submit their responses to the instructor. The instructor can monitor the progress of each individual student in real time (even before the student submits his/her final version of answers). Each assessment can be associated with a specific track, so that students can read the track on the left and answer questions on the right of the screen. This allows the instructor to associate documents with multiple assessments (even if the document itself contains no questions), only the reading materials, and automatically grade the assessments. In contrast, Read &amp; Write and Kurzweil follow an approach where the document shared with the student <i>is</i> the assessment. To answer questions, students have to write on top of the shared document, which does not allow for automated grading that is possible in Capti.</p> <p>Our team is planning to allow students to write their answers directly on the text with questions (tracks in a playlist). This will enable instructors to choose the way they want to administer the tests: as a track with questions, or as a track with reading materials plus questions in a sidebar (current implementation).</p> <p>Also see: <a href="https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_assess_table">https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_assess_table</a></p>				

<b>Ability to grade and publish graded assignments</b>					
<b>Includes integrated access to Google Drive, Dropbox, OneDrive, etc.</b>					
<b>Includes integrated 3rd party reading materials</b>					

In Capti, the instructor can assign grades and publish them (if desired) to students, with or without the set of correct answers. In Read & Write, the instructor can write comments on top of the document itself and then submit it back to the student. Read & Write is accompanied by another product, Fluency Tutor, which enables instructors to give students writing assignments, and then flag specific words in the submitted text as mistakes, following which the Fluency Tutor automatically computes a grade using 4 different metrics.

Also see: [https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help\\_grade\\_assignment](https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_grade_assignment)

Capti supports adding content from Google Drive, Dropbox, OneDrive, iCloud Drive, Pocket, Instapaper plus any cloud storage app on the user's iOS device that is integrated with iCloud, e.g., Box. Read & Write does something different: it integrates directly into Google Documents user interface in the form of a document editing toolbar. No other sources are supported by Read & Write. Kurzweil supports adding content from Google Drive. Voice Dream's support of sources is the only one as extensive as that of Capti.

Also see: [https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help\\_text\\_import\\_table](https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_text_import_table)

Capti provides access to Bookshare (500K+ titles for students with disabilities) and Gutenberg Books (50K+ titles, free access). Voice Dream does the same but with a less convenient user interface. Kurzweil supports Bookshare only. Our team is planning to enable instructors to add content from their preferred LMS system.

# Comprehension Support

	Capti Voice	Read & Write	Snap & Read	Kurzweil	Voice Dream
<b>Includes writing support with writing aids</b>		✓		✓	✓
	The most common writing aids include word prediction and text to speech as user types. Capti has no writing aids and its support for content creation within Capti is limited (text comments, assignments, and word lists). Our team is planning to add some writing support.				
<b>Includes graphic organizers (mind mapping tools)</b>		✓	✓	✓	
	Mind mapping tools are used for brainstorming, mapping out ideas and complex relationships between things. Capti currently has no support for mind mapping tools, since it doesn't support writing. Our team will add mind-mapping tools when writing support is added to Capti.				
<b>Includes dictionary</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<p>One of the unique advantages that Capti has over its competitors is contextual dictionary lookup. If you look up a single word from a sentence, Capti will check if the word is used as a part of a phrase. If it is, the definition of that phrase will be displayed. Capti also takes into account the word's part of speech, tense, and other factors when choosing which definition to display. See more in the Language Learning section. Capti's weakness is a lack of a picture dictionary, which is available in Read &amp; Write and Kurzweil (support is planned).</p> <p>Also see <a href="https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_trans_def#pc-macos">https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_trans_def#pc-macos</a></p>				
<b>Offers text simplification, summarization, or decluttering</b>	✓	✓	✓		✓
	<p>Capti, VoiceDream, and Read &amp; Write can automatically extract an article appearing on a web page, discarding the clutter around it. With Capti, however, users simply add any article or a link to a playlist as a track (in VoiceDream - to a folder), making any web page just another source of content, i.e. the user can use all standard Capti features such as text masking with this content. Read &amp; Write opens the extracted content into a separate browser tab with a very limited set of features. However, Read &amp; Write enables users to click a button to simplify the text further by replacing complicated words and removing some sentences from the text. Snap &amp; Read can replace complex words in a text with simpler ones and enables the user to create an outline of a text.</p> <p>Our research team is working to add <i>simplification</i> and <i>summarization</i>.</p>				

# Language Learning

	Capti Voice	Read & Write	Snap & Read	Kurzweil	Voice Dream
<b>Translation languages supported</b>	100+	50+	100+	50+	30+
<b>Offers context-aware translation and definition of words and phrases</b>	✓				
	<p>When the user looks up the translation or definition of a word in a sentence, Capti does linguistic analysis to: (a) determine the part of speech of the word and (b) determine it was used in the context of a phrase or an expression, which can influence the translation of the word. Also see: <a href="https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_overview_translation_definition">https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_overview_translation_definition</a>  <a href="https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_language_table">https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_language_table</a></p>				
<b>Offers a gamified vocabulary building tool</b>	✓				
	<p>In Capti, the user can play a Word Challenge Game where the user is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shown a sentence from the text with a word or a phrase highlighted and asked to select the correct translation of the word or the phrase from a set of answers, or</li> <li>• Shown a sentence with a skipped word or phrase and asked to select the skipped word or phrase from a set of answers.</li> </ul> <p>The unique properties of the game are that: (a) the sentences and the answers are taken directly from the text the user is reading, and (b) the game is adaptable, i.e. the difficulty of questions is based on the statistical user model. The game enables players to improve their vocabulary while better understanding the text they need to read anyway. In this way, for example, English language learners can acquire new vocabulary in a contextually-relevant and entertaining way, without having to devote extra time to studying English. Our team is planning to expand the types of questions and games.</p>				
<b>Shared word lists</b>	✓	✓		✓	
	<p>Instructors can create word lists for students by saving the default or custom translations and definitions of words or phrases. Every word list item is linked to a specific word/phrase in a specific sentence in a text, providing context. Every track in the playlist can have a wordlist. Instructors can share content with their students and provide a pre-specified essential vocabulary. An extension of the Word Challenge game is planned to allow students to play the game specifically with the words they or the instructor selected.</p> <p>Students can also create word lists in Kurzweil and Read &amp; Write; however, word lists in these tools cannot be shared, unless they are exported into a file. These word lists do not maintain context since they are disconnected from the text. These tools offer no gamification.</p> <p>Also see: <a href="https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_share_playlist">https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_share_playlist</a></p>				

# User Management and Monitoring

	Capti Voice	Read & Write	Snap & Read	Kurzweil	Voice Dream
<b>Offers separate student / Instructor accounts</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Students and instructors require a different set of instruments and a different user interface when using educational software. Capti uses a Role Based Access Control, recognizing 4 roles: Student, Assistant, Teacher, and Administrator. In addition, the user may have no role at all, meaning he/she is using Capti as a consumer product. Read &amp; Write and Snap &amp; Read recognize 2 roles: Students and Teachers (although, if the instructor is not using Google Classroom in conjunction with Read &amp; Write, it becomes a single-user product). The Read &amp; Write's companion product Fluency Tutor will not work at all unless Google Classroom is also used. Kurzweil recognizes Students, Teachers, and Administrators. Voice Dream is a single-user consumer product and it does not maintain user accounts at all.</p> <p>Also see: <a href="https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_org_roles">https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_org_roles</a></p>					
<b>Supports single sign-on (Google, Facebook, etc.)</b>	✓	✓	✓		
<p>Single sign-on allows users to create a new account or login by clicking a single button and authenticating via a 3<sup>rd</sup> party (e.g., Google). This is a very important feature for potential users visiting Capti for the first time and younger students or students with cognitive impairments who require maximum simplicity when signing up and logging in. Single-sign-on is critical for institutional use, where multiple products are used and it is impossible to maintain multiple accounts. The feature is not implemented in the same way in every tool, e.g., Capti supports Google and Facebook on all platforms, while Read &amp; Write supports many 3<sup>rd</sup> parties on Windows, but none on some of their other supported platforms.</p> <p>Our team is planning the addition of other popular single-sign-on approaches, e.g., with Clever, Edmodo, Microsoft.</p>					
<b>Includes SIS / SMS / LMS integration</b>	✓	✓		✓	
<p>Instructors and school administrators using Capti have 2 options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Load student and instructor records from their SIS, automatically, which syncs whenever roster is changed in SIS. This approach is needed for large Capti deployments. Currently, integration is done using Capti SFTP server and additional integrations are planned (e.g., using Clever, Google Classroom, etc.).</li> <li>• Add/remove students and instructors in Capti manually (one by one or by uploading a CSV file). This approach is needed for small groups and when trying Capti for the first time.</li> </ul> <p>Once the accounts are set up, latter can share playlists and assignments with students, review analytics reports, etc. without leaving Capti.</p>					

Read & Write is completely reliant on Google Classroom for user management, making any deviation from the Google Classroom design (which does not care about Read & Write needs) impossible, and making any instructor who is not using Google Classroom unable to use Read & Write. For example, in Read & Write, the instructor can share a document with an entire Google Classroom course, but not with individual students. In Capti, instructors can share with the full class or individual students within the class. Snap & Read has no integration with 3<sup>rd</sup> party tools, but it allows adding students with a CSV file.

Also see:  
[https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help\\_org\\_add\\_members](https://www.captivoice.com/capti-site/public/entry/help_org_add_members)

**Analytics and Reports**



Capti collects statistics on student activity, including playback, translation and definition, games played, assignments, etc. In addition, Capti models every student's level of English knowledge. Our team is planning to expand Capti analytics.

Read & Write does not provide any analytics and, since Read & Write is a collection of 1st and 3rd party tools, detailed analytics will also be hard to implement. The Fluency Tutor (a Read & Write companion tool) can collect and plot statistics of student's test scores. Kurzweil provides basic statistics of student activity. Snap & Read only reports on the number of words read and time spent reading.

## Costs

	Capti Voice	Read & Write	Snap & Read	Kurzweil	Voice Dream
<b>Individual license</b>	Freemium*	<b>\$145/year</b> (R&W) <b>\$99/year</b> (Fluency Tutor)	<b>\$3.99/month</b> <b>(\$47.88/year)</b>	<b>\$100 - \$700/year</b> (depending on students number)	<b>\$14.99 to \$19.99 one time buy</b> (depending if purchasing only Reader or Reader+Writer)
<b>In-app purchases</b>	Multiple*				TTS voices and translation
<b>K-12 school wide license (year)</b>	<b>\$0-\$20/student</b> Or <b>\$4,000/site</b>	<b>\$12+/student</b> 150 min (R&W)	<b>\$750/site</b>	<b>\$4,000/site</b>	
<b>K-12 district wide license (year)</b>	<b>\$1+/student</b>	<b>\$1.75+/student</b> 350 min (R&W) <b>\$1.00+/student</b> (Fluency Tutor)	<b>\$0.5-\$2 per student</b>		
<b>Higher education license (year)</b>	Hybrid pricing \$0-\$20/student	<b>\$1.75+/student</b> 350 min (R&W)			
<b>Includes priority customer support</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	

\*The Basic version of Capti is free with the following options for in-app purchases available to all users:

- Premium plan subscription (advanced features): \$1.99/month, \$5.99/6 month, \$17.99/year
- Capti Coins (1 Coin to OCR 1 page in a PDF or 1 image): \$4.99/50 coins, \$19.99/210 coins, \$49.99/550 coins
- Downloadable text to speech voices (for iOS, Windows, Mac) range: \$1.99-\$11.99 per voice (license)
- Streaming text to speech voices (for web application): \$5.99/month, \$9.99/3 months, \$29.99/year (subscription)

NOTE: Capti education account administrator can turn off in-app purchases for their students

## Device Platforms

	Capti Voice	Read & Write	Snap & Read	Kurzweil	Voice Dream
<b>iPhone / iPad</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Mac</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Windows</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Chromebook</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Web application (no installation required)</b>	✓			✓	

<b>Android</b>	Web application	✓		✓	✓	<p>Capti has a fully featured online version. The installable Mac and Windows versions open in the web browser and look and feel just like the online version; the installable versions are intended for students, so they lack user management and analytics. Capti for iOS has the same functionalities as the installable desktop version except for the Word Challenge game; it has additional mobile and iOS specific functionalities such as taking photos, integrated browser, and iOS sharing for sending content from other apps to Capti. Capti's weakness in platform support is a lack of a native Android client; however, Capti online can be used in a browser on Android tablets.</p> <p>Read &amp; Write is cross-platform, but has no online version. Snap &amp; Read is a Chrome browser extension, so it is restricted to the Chrome browser on Windows, Mac, and Chromebooks; Snap &amp; Read also has a separate iOS app. Although Kurzweil is cross-platform, it has no feature parity, offering a different user interface on each platform. VoiceDream has a functional iOS app, but its Android version is of much poorer quality.</p>
<b>Synchronization</b>	✓			✓	✓	<p>Capti and Kurzweil have built-in cross-platform synchronization, enabling users to access their content across their devices. VoiceDream uses Apple's iCloud for synchronization, limiting itself to iOS devices only, which is only useful for synchronizing between the user's iPhone and iPad. Read &amp; Write and Snap &amp; Read do not store content and have nothing to synchronize. Capti's strength is in that it stores and synchronizes the user's playlists, tracks, their order, track language, current track, reading position in every track, as well as notes, highlights, bookmarks, word lists, etc.</p>
<b>Offline mode</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>This feature is important for users of mobile devices who do not want to be interrupted by issues with Internet connectivity. Schools can have Internet outages or unreliable Wireless; also, many students report not having a reliable Internet connection at home. All tools still require Internet access for accessing any online services, e.g., user authentication, definitions and translations, etc. Capti and Kurzweil web applications are, of course, not accessible offline. Snap &amp; Read can technically work offline, but since it is a browser extension, the content open in the browser also needs to be available offline. Read &amp; Write for Google also relies on the availability of Google Docs in the browser.</p>