

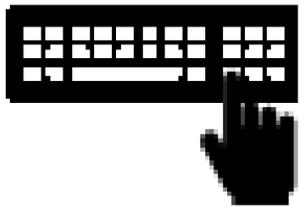
Best Practices for Narrating Online Resources

Your voice -- in the classroom and online -- is a powerful teaching tool. Online learning resources such as recorded lectures, interactive tutorials, and videos can benefit greatly from narration. Good images and narration can often engage learners and explain concepts more effectively than text.



Embrace Your Voice

- Students will get used to your voice -- either in the classroom or online. Narration doesn't have to be perfect, just thoughtful, helpful, and effective.
- Take time and don't rush. Pause. Students know how to speed up a playback.
- Be conversational, natural, and clear. Show your personality.
- Emotion grabs attention. Use your voice to emphasize, share enthusiasm, show concern or humor.



Write A Script

- Few people can effectively "wing" recording a narration. Write a script even if you don't follow it exactly.
- Read your script out loud. Shorten long sentences. Eliminate "mouthfuls".
- Don't over explain or repeat content. Extremely detailed content might be better suited for shorter, multiple recordings or a reading assignment.
- Write transitions between concepts and slides.
- If recording a PowerPoint, write the script in the Notes section of each slide. You can then save the Notes as a transcript for your students to follow.



Follow Technical Basics

- Use a good quality external USB microphone to record narration, not the built-in recorder on a computer or mobile device. Good headsets are widely available for <\$50.
- Check the microphone settings on your computer. Use the highest stereo quality and a good volume.
- Choose a quiet area in which to record. A good headset will eliminate a lot of distracting background noise, unless it's really loud.
- Hydrate to reduce mouth noise.
- To avoid "popping" sounds from your voice, avoid speaking directly onto the microphone. Position it at an angle, a small distance away from your mouth.
- To avoid variations in volume from one slide to another, try to record in one sitting.
- Separate long audio into shorter segments, so mistakes can be easily re-recorded.
- Allow 2 seconds of silence at the beginning and end of an audio segment so you don't cut off some narration.



Practice

- Practice recording your content in the right environment with the right equipment.
- Listen to your recording. Adjust the volume and the mic, if needed.
- Break long sentences into shorter ones.
- Label your audio files logically. Save them where you can find them.



Make It Accessible

Provide captions or a transcript because:

1. Listeners might have volume lowered due to environment.
2. Speaker and listener don't share same language so accent or pace make content difficult to understand.
3. Content is complex. Some learners need to both listen and read content for improved comprehension.
4. Student is hearing-impaired.
5. It's a best practice or it's the law.