300M Team at Katha

How to Use Amazon Echo Dot in your learning environment?

Tips and Tricks for a Fast Start

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Content

A Note to Facilitator 5

1. What is Echo Dot? 6

1.1. What is Alexa? 6

2. How to Set Up Echo Dot? 8

Two.1 How to use Amazon Echo Dot? 10

3. How to Use Amazon Echo Dot in the Classroom/ learning environment? 11

3.1 Reading aloud 11

3.2 Listening to a Story 11

3.3 Answering Questions 11

3.4 Spelling Words 11

3.5 Integrating Regional Languages 11

3.6 Playing Music 12

3.7 Finding Definitions and Synonyms 12

3.8 Answering Math/Science/History related questions 12

3.9 Checking the Weather 12

3.10 Playing Games 12

4. Try Echo Dot in your learning environment 13

5. Know your Echo's lights- How does it work? 14

..... 14

6. Alexa Content and Privacy Controls 15

6.1 Making Alexa Safe for the Classroom 15
6.2 Here are five ways you can make Alexa safe for classroom use: 15
6.2.1 Set Guidelines for Student Usage 15
6.2.2. Deactivate Voice-Purchasing 15
6.2.3. Setting a Music Filter 16
Block Explicit Songs.' 16
6.2.4. Amazon FreeTime 16
6.2.5. Set Explicit Content Restrictions 16
7. Languages (How to give commands to Alexa in another language?) 17
7.1 What Language Does Alexa Speak and What Dialects? 17
7.2 How to Change the Alexa Language on Your Echo Devices? 17
7.3 Speaking in Multiple Languages 18
8. Best Alexa Skills for the learning environment 20
8.1 How to add skills to Alexa using your phone? 21
9. Conclusion 22
10. FAQ Section 23
10.1 How can I control the Echo Dot? 23
10.2. How do you power the Amazon Echo Dot? How Do I Turn on the Amazon Echo Dot? 23
10.3. Can I connect Echo Dot to a Bluetooth speaker? 23
10.4. Does Alexa record all my conversations? 23

10.5. What are Amazon Kids on Alexa? 24

Reference links: 24

A NOTE TO FACILITATOR

An Amazon Echo Dot can transform your classroom/learning environment into an interactive learning space where students can use voice-controlled searches. This will enhance the child's interest, and you will be able to monitor your children's activities and progress.

The Echo Dot has an inbuilt virtual assistant software called Alexa. By simply saying, "Alexa," you get the Echo Dot's attention. For example, you can say, "Alexa, set a ten-minute timer," and it will start timing your activity right away.

If you must make quick decisions, you can ask Alexa to play "Heads or Tails." From a very simple word to the most challenging word can be asked just by asking Alexa to spell, and we can get the answer within a fraction of time.

It will be a tool that can be used in your absences to engage the children, and they will love it.

1. WHAT IS ECHO DOT?

Amazon's Echo Dot is a ***smart speaker*** that uses Alexa, a voice assistant that performs tasks like answering questions, solving problems, and can connect to a group of people. You can access Alexa through the Echo Dot by saying the wake word near the device. The wake word is the name to which the device will listen when you are calling it. For Amazon Echo Dot, it is **Alexa.** It would be best if you were close enough to your Echo Dot that it can respond to your voice—it works best when you are within 10 meters. Your Echo Dot also needs to be connected to the internet to function.

1.1. What is Alexa?

Alexa is Amazon Echo Dot's interactive voice assistant that can reply to simple questions and perform various tasks or commands that one gives. It has incredible features! Its most important feature is, of course, its voice assistance. It can respond to your voice, play Music, read your books, report weather, spell words, play games, get definitions, provide breaking news, etc.

Voice technology like that used by Amazon's Echo Dot allows users to access information on the internet through voice commands. Integrating this unique voice technology in the learning environment can enhance learning and engagement.

Smart speakers in the learning environment can be helpful for instruction because they are more natural than a laptop or tablet. It is easier to control the echo dot through voice than other personal devices like phones and laptops because there's no need for students to look away from the class discussion. With other devices, students may begin looking up an answer but then look at material not related to the original task. With voice, answers can be given without distraction.

Smart education is a blend of traditional teaching methods and smart devices like echo dot. Having voice-command assistants nowhere implies meeting shortcuts or just memorizing answers. As far as factual things are concerned, teachers can have Alexa answer all such questions by saying, 'Did you ask Alexa?' to students.

Some examples are given below:

- Alexa, what can we do during our free time?
- Alexa, spell hippopotamus.
- Use it with permission to play:
- **Music**: Alexa, beatbox.
- **Games:** Alexa, play Twenty Questions.
- **Jokes:** Alexa, tell me a joke and many more fun activities.

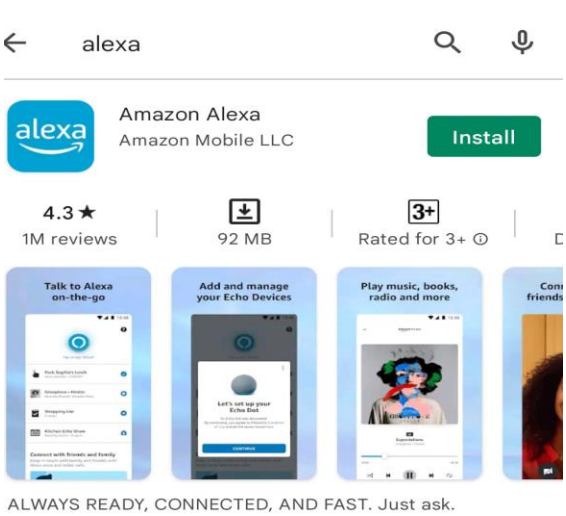
2. HOW TO SET UP ECHO DOT?

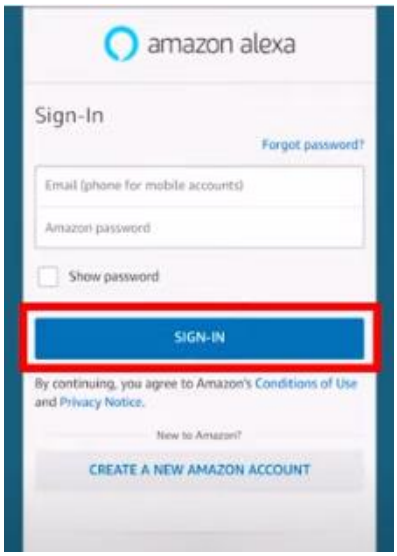
The Echo Dot setup is possible only if you download Alexa App to your device. The Amazon Alexa app is completely free, and it can be downloaded on any of your mobile phones or tablets with the recent operating systems. On your phone and search for "Amazon Alexa App" in your Playstore/Appstore, and download the app.

Watch the video to set up your Alexa by clicking on the link below or following the instructions to set up your Echo Dot.

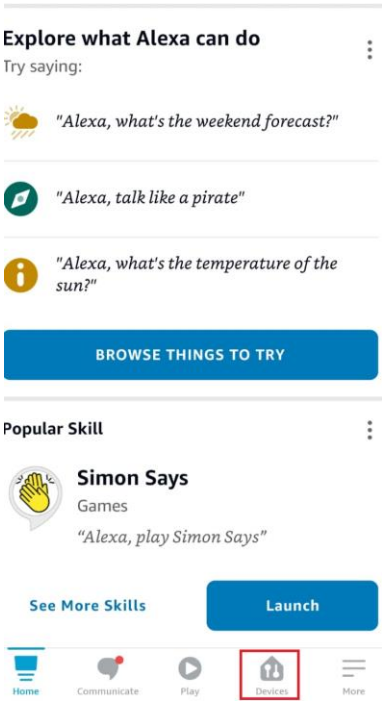
How To Set Up Echo Dot? [Click here]

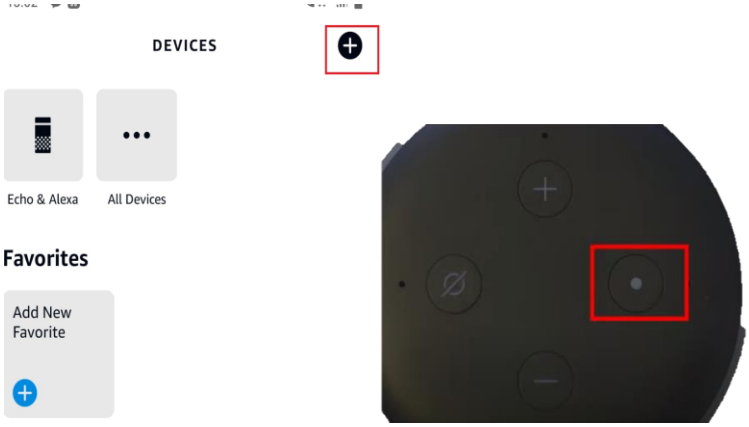
- After you download the Alexa app, it will prompt you to turn on Bluetooth and log in to the app. You need to have an amazon account to log in. If you do not have one, create a new account by clicking on the create my account button.
- Next, you will be prompted to give amazon permissions to send notifications; you can select 'Allow' or 'Later.'
- Plugin your device to power using the given adapter.





— Next, open your Alexa app and press the device tab on the bottom of your screen. Here, press on the '+' sign on the upper right corner, and then choose your device from the pop-up menu. On the next screen, choose Amazon echo and then select to echo smart speaker group on the next screen.





Add Device

— Once your device is in setup mode, the Echo's light ring will flash blue and orange if you do not see orange, press and hold the Action button for five seconds. Eventually, Alexa will perk up and tell you she is "Now in setup mode."
— On your phone, your app searches for available devices near you. You should see your device name in the menu. Select your device.

- Connect to the Wi-Fi available in the following menu and pair your device with your phone to access the internet.
- Once all the info has been sent to the device, Alexa will say, "Your Echo is ready," and the orange lights go out. After that, you select the Language to use and set the Echo's location.
- Once setup is complete, say "Alexa" to wake your Echo, then ask for Music, news, weather, and more - or ask, "Alexa, what can you do?" You will know Alexa is ready when the light ring turns blue.

Two.1 How to use Amazon Echo Dot?

When you want to ask anything to Echo Dot, follow the steps as given below:

- Stand in front of the Amazon Echo Dot without touching it.
- Only one person can use Amazon Echo at a time.
- You need to phrase your question so that Alexa can understand!
- Speak clearly, like Alexa, which Alexa can understand.
- Be specific and ask your questions.
- Start your question with "Alexa, ..."
- Ask your question and listen for the answer.

3. HOW TO USE AMAZON ECHO DOT IN THE CLASSROOM/ LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?

3.1 Reading aloud

The smart speaker can conduct fun story time sessions for young students, allowing teachers to sit down back and assess student engagements within the class. If you have books on Kindle, Audible, or Storytel, Alexa can read them aloud. other than reading, Alexa can sing rhymes for the youngsters and do some action songs with the children's

3.2 Listening to a Story

Students can participate in the storytelling action by using an application like Select a Story. This feature allows students to direct a story into the scenario of their choice by telling Alexa what they need to feature in, and it will then guide you. They will use commands like, "Alexa, find a fairy" to vary the storyline, allowing them to develop their imagination in an exciting and interactive way during which and about whom they are required to listen to. This interactive feature gives you another great reason to feature Alexa in the Classroom.

3.3 Answering Questions

Echo Dot's Alexa can answer student questions, becoming a good assistant. By having 'question-and-answer sessions,' you permit students to develop the habit of asking essential questions, which becomes a good skill. This skill also shows how a dynamic learning environment facilitates open conversations within the learning environment by encouraging students to state problems or confusion.

3.4 Spelling Words

Echo Dot's Alexa also can spell words. This might be useful for younger children to enhance their vocabulary. They can ask Alexa the spelling of any word ranging from A for Apple to the most challenging word possible and ask about nouns, pronouns, etc.

3.5 Integrating Regional Languages

The voice assistant is user-friendly, and this unique quality makes Alexa highly accessible to diverse demographics; the school's version of Alexa speaks different regional languages and is even dressed up by young students. This shows how Alexa is added to learning environments worldwide, adding to its versatility and appeal.

3.6 Playing Music

You can ask Alexa to play music and ambient sounds. Teachers need not stop what they are doing to feature sound or Music in the room. They will stay involved in their work with one sentence while adjusting to the learning environment.

3.7 Finding Definitions and Synonyms

In addition to spelling, Alexa can define words and act as a thesaurus (a book that contains lists of words and phrases with similar meanings). If you are teaching students new words, this will be fun to practice using new words. While teaching science, students could also ask Alexa to assist them in understanding what a word means; the chances are endless!

3.8 Answering Math/Science/History related questions

Students can ask Alexa for simple mathematical calculations such as sums and differences. If students are in math class, this may be a fun way to verify their answers. Another way to integrate to subjects is that it can answer questions associated with science in knowing, e.g., Alexa, what is the botanical name of the mango tree? While teaching history, you can ask questions like who was Hitler and when was he born?

3.9 Checking the Weather

During any season, you can ask Alexa to inform you of the weather in your city. It will offer you the forecast and temperature. And, of the other country and city, you would like to understand.

3.10 Playing Games

Do you need some ideas for games? There are many inbuilt Alexa skills for kids! These include educational games like Kids Trivia, Speak Listen Learn, and other fun games like Animal Workout, Animal Sounds, etc. You can do this by saying Alexa, playing Kids Trivia, etc.

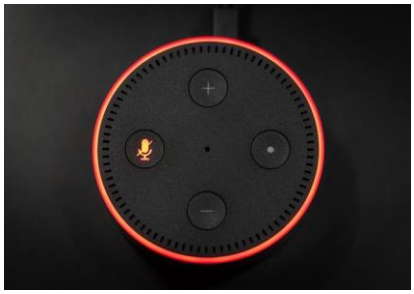
4. TRY ECHO DOT IN YOUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

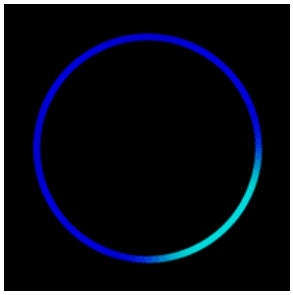
You're welcome to use Echo Dot by talking to Alexa - which only turns on when it hears its name, "Alexa." Then, it will listen to what you ask while the blue light ring is on. Here are a few examples:

- Alexa, how do you spell ___?
- Alexa, what is the definition of ___?
- Alexa, what is the time in ___?
- Alexa, Ask My Class to dance.
- Ask a Class Picker for a planet.
- Alexa, what is ___ + ___?
- Alexa, what is ___ - ___?
- Alexa, Pick a number between ___ & ___
- Alexa, what is the synonym for _____?

5. KNOW YOUR ECHO'S LIGHTS- HOW DOES IT WORK?

— If the red-light ring is on, Amazon Echo's microphone is turned off.
— If the blue light ring is on, Amazon Echo is listening to you and recording.
— If no lights are on, Amazon's Echo is waiting for its wake word.





6. ALEXA CONTENT AND PRIVACY CONTROLS

6.1 Making Alexa Safe for the Classroom

The topic of privacy and security within the classroom/learning environments is usually worth exploring and will be examined comprehensively. However, at a high level, there are some privacy and security measures that you should bear in mind, especially if you're worried about students accessing inappropriate information or facing privacy issues. Content and privacy restrictions on your intelligent speaker offer controls that may make the learning environment a safe learning space and help parents trust the concept of integrating such devices within the classroom.

6.2 Here are five ways you can make Alexa safe for classroom use:

6.2.1 Set Guidelines for Student Usage

Let children realize the privacy risks related to smart speakers and strongly advise them not to tell Alexa any personal details, like their full name, address, or school name. You will need to delete the voice history regularly to reduce the privacy risk.

To delete all your Alexa recordings, open the Alexa app and go to More > Settings > Alexa Privacy > Review Voice History. Then tap the downward-facing arrow next to Displaying and then the arrow next to Filter by date. Next, select All History and tap Delete all of my recordings.

Ask Alexa to Delete Your Voice History - Amazon.in

6.2.2. Deactivate Voice-Purchasing

You can access the Amazon settings on your smart speaker to deactivate the Voice-Purchasing feature. This stops your students from accidentally ordering items online, a common issue that many people face.

To turn Voice Purchasing on or off for your account, use the Alexa app.

- Open the Alexa app.
- Open More and select Settings.
- Select Account Settings.
- Select Voice Purchasing.
- Turn Voice Purchasing on or off.

Turn Alexa Voice Purchasing on or Off - Amazon.in

6.2.3. Setting a Music Filter

The internet is full of a range of content, and a few of that will be highly inappropriate for kids, especially content like explicit songs. To prevent students from playing such songs, access the settings on your Alexa account and choose the 'Music' option, then tap on 'Block Explicit Songs.'

Block Explicit Songs.'

You can use the Alexa app to turn explicit filtering for songs on or off.

- Open the Alexa app.
- Open More and select Settings.
- Select Music & Podcasts, and then Explicit Language Filter.
- Switch the feature on or off.

Turn Explicit Filtering on or Off in the Alexa App - Amazon.in

6.2.4. Amazon FreeTime

An Amazon FreeTime subscription gives you access to parental tools like activity controls, activity reports, disabled applications, etc. Amazon FreeTime may be an excellent program for schools to engage children because it ensures that smart speaker usage is strictly monitored.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTRf933n-Co

6.2.5. Set Explicit Content Restrictions

If you are worried about students asking Alexa inappropriate questions, you will set explicit content restrictions. This is often an excellent feature for higher grade levels, as students at this age tend to be curious about general topics, and this feature allows you to watch questions and maintain classroom decorum.

How to Set Parental Controls on the Amazon Echo

Open the Alexa app. Open More and select Settings. Select Music & Podcasts, and then Explicit Language Filter.

Turn Explicit Filtering on or Off in the Alexa App - Amazon.in

7. LANGUAGES (HOW TO GIVE COMMANDS TO ALEXA IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE?)

It is becoming the new typical encounter for others who use voice assistants through Alexa, phones, or computers.

With this new technology gaining more importance, equal importance applies to the number of languages a voice assistant can support. For example, Amazon Alexa languages support is causing them to possess fewer users.

The Language on your Amazon Echo is out there in eight different ones.

7.1 What Language Does Alexa Speak and What Dialects?

At the time of publishing this document, Amazon Alexa can interact in eight languages, including Hindi and English (Indian dialect is also acceptable). The other six are - Spanish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Portuguese (in Brazilan dialect only)

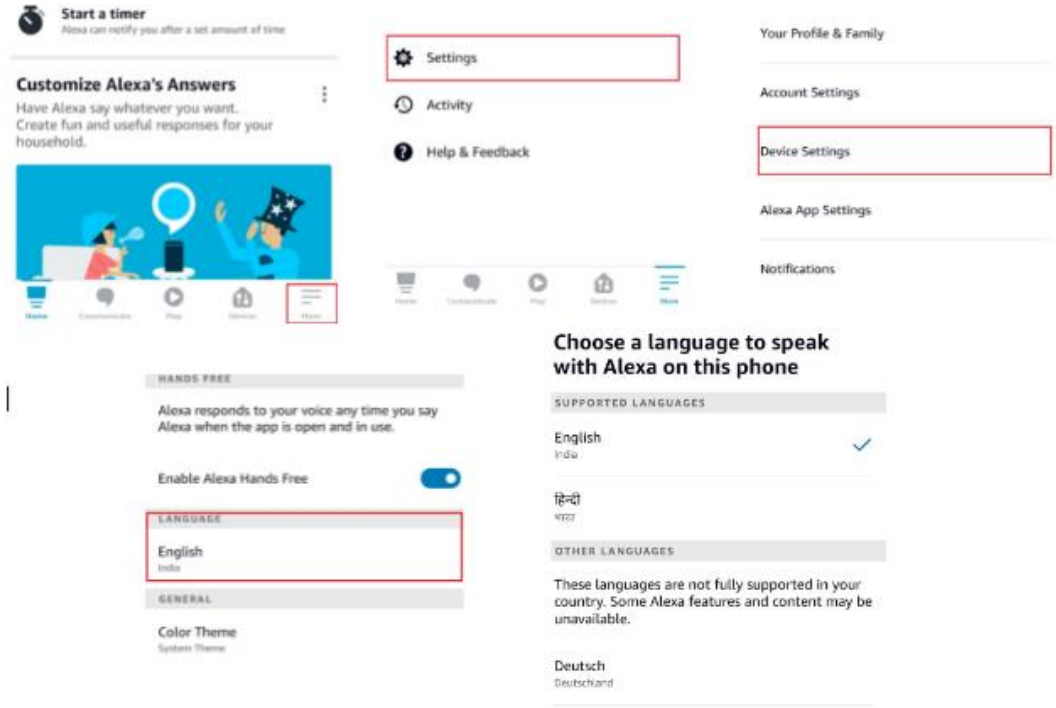
7.2 How to Change the Alexa Language on Your Echo Devices?

To change the Language on your Amazon Echo, first, you will need to have the Alexa app on your phone. You can download and install it from the app store/play store.

Once you have installed and enabled the app, or you already have it, follow these steps to change Alexa language:

1. Open the Alexa app on your smartphone.
2. On the main page, tap on the "More" ☰ (Hamburger Menu - *a Vada Pav menu*) option on the bottom right corner.
3. Now select "Settings."
4. Tap on 'Device Settings.'
5. You to choose the device or group for which you need to change the Language.
6. Then tap on Language, which will show you a list of languages available.
7. Here you can select the Language you want.

Alexa will need a few minutes to set up the new Language, and then you will be acceptable to use it.



Note that changing the Language may limit Alexa's capabilities, skills, Music, and content, by making them unavailable.

(Alexa skills are like apps. You can enable and disable skills using the Alexa app or a web browser. In the same way, you install and uninstall apps on your smartphone or tablet. Skills are voice-driven Alexa capabilities. You can add Alexa skills to your Echo to bring products and services to life.)

Also, consider that every accessory connected to that specific Echo dots and their responses will work only in the new Language

7.3 Speaking in Multiple Languages

In case you want to use two different languages at the same time, you can enable what is called Multilingual Mode.

The first way to do it is to follow the steps above again, and when selecting the Language, choose an option with two different languages.

You can also use the voice commands by asking Alexa:

- "Alexa, Speak Hindi." to vary the default language.
- "Alexa, Speak English and Spanish." to talk to Alexa in either speech, or Alexa will respond with the same vocabulary.
- "Alexa, Stop speaking Hindi." to switch back to the primary Language.

8. BEST ALEXA SKILLS FOR THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Alexa skills are the inbuilt capabilities that Alexa can do. We have collated some of the best Alexa skills for your classroom periods. When you incorporate these skills into your lessons, you allow for interactive learning to take place, which increases overall student engagement and learner retention

At 300M/Katha, we are in the process of building a few Alexa skills that can enhance your experience with Katha Stories, Partner Content, and the 300M Portal Courses. We will keep you posted on the developments. If you want to be one of the early bird access, please write to 300m@katha.org or register at https://bit.ly/300m-early-access

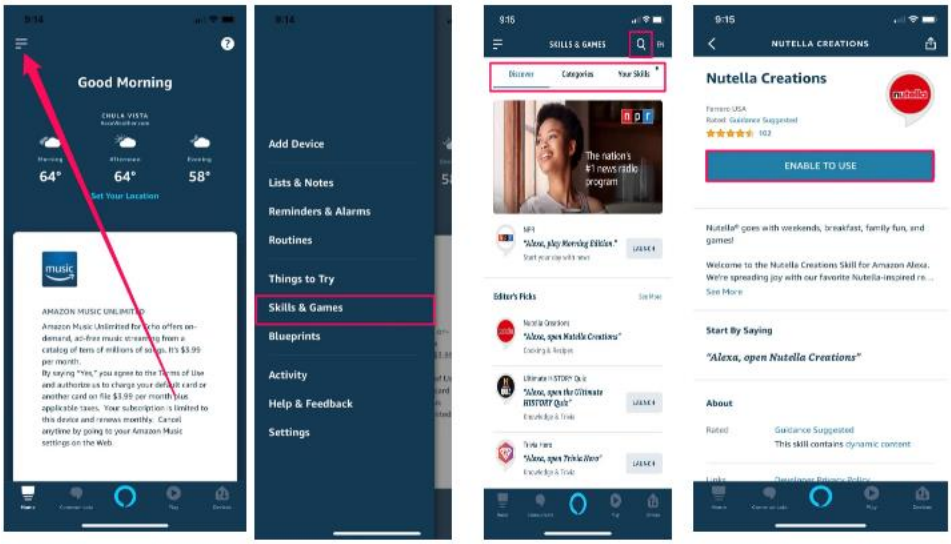
In the while, here are a few other skills or apps that you may be interested in.

- Amazon Storytime offers you a large collection of short stories for children aged 5 and above, ensuring that you never run out of storybooks for young kids.
- The Magic Door is an interactive storytelling game that allows students to make choices during an adventure. Children can find hidden items, solve riddles, and help magical creatures when playing this game.
- The Queen's Mathematician is a math game for kids aged 6-8. This skill includes fun stories and adventures, with math problems that make playing with numbers fun.
- Curiosity is a fun, general learning app that helps your students listen to cool amazing new facts every day, increasing their general knowledge and sparking amazing conversations between students.
- This Day in History helps your class uncover historical events that took place on the same day, throughout history. History is always a fun and interesting topic, but sometimes it can be a bit boring for students and such a skill transforms the lesson into a dynamic learning program, making it quite enjoyable.
- Word of the Day helps you build your class's vocabulary by regularly teaching them new words. This is a fun skill to use during an English lesson because it helps young children learn about proper word usage and sentence structures.
- Kids Quiz! fun new questions every day for children ages 5-12, from animals and science to brainteasers and fun facts. Kids Quiz is a great way for children to reinforce their learning and discover new things about the world.
- Appu's Adventure: Based on themes and rhymes from Appu's world, this interactive skill is designed to help develop and improvise listening,

comprehending, and problem-solving abilities in children. Just say "Alexa, open Appu's Adventures ".

- Amar Chitra Katha's India Quiz: India's favourite storyteller has put together this fantastic quiz that will help kids expand their knowledge of Indian mythology; from gods to kings. Just say, "Alexa, open Amar Chitra Katha Quiz" or "Alexa, open ACK Quiz".
- Suppandi's Crazy Brain Teasers: Tinkle's favourite simpleton is here to rack your brains with clever riddles that are too smart for him. Help him out with these wacky questions and exercise your brain muscles as well. Just say, "Alexa, open Suppandi Quiz".

8.1 How to add skills to Alexa using your phone?



- Open the Alexa app on your phone and tap the menu icon at the top left.
- Open the top menu. ...
- Tap "Skills & Games" on the menu. Select "Skills & Games."
- Tap the magnifying glass icon to search for the skill you want.
- Type the skill you want to add.
- Select the skill from the options shown, then tap "ENABLE TO USE."

9. CONCLUSION

Integrating voice technology into the classroom or time learning environment can enhance engagement and learning. Smart speakers can be beneficial for instruction because they are more communal than a tablet or laptop. It is easier to limit off-task behavior on a voice device. With other devices, students may look up an answer but look at material not related to the task. With the Amazon Echo and Echo Dot, answers can be given without distraction.

We are excited that we can help you with a futuristic technology that will help your children and your initiatives. It is a wonderful future and exciting future and exciting journey out there and together we will continue to build the kit of reaching and fun in learning environments where our children will become the reader leaders of tomorrow.

10. FAQ SECTION

10.1 How can I control the Echo Dot?

Echo Dot can be controlled by giving basic commands to it. Here are some basic commands:

- **Ask for help:** "Alexa, help."
- **Mute or unmute:** "Alexa, mute" or "Alexa, unmute."
- Stop or pause: "Alexa, stop" or "Alexa, shut up." (Yup, Alexa is patient, and you can scream at it, but here too is a lesson for children - "just because you can, does not mean you should use wrong words and scream - use soft words and treat with respect"
- Have you tried *whispering* to Alexa, she will whisper back to you?
- Change volume: "Alexa, set the volume to five," "Alexa, louder" or "Alexa, turn up/down the volume."

10.2. How do you power the Amazon Echo Dot? How Do I Turn on the Amazon Echo Dot?

— Plug the power adapter into the Echo Dot.
— Plug the power adapter into the wall.
— Wait for the light ring to illuminate.
— When the light ring turns blue and then turns off, your Echo Dot is on and ready to use.

10.3. Can I connect Echo Dot to a Bluetooth speaker?

Yes. Open the Alexa App. Tap the "Devices" icon and tap on '+' and then tap on the 'Add device option.

Select "Bluetooth Devices" and select the device you want to connect.

10.4. Does Alexa record all my conversations?

No. By default, Echo devices are designed to detect only your chosen wake word (Alexa)

10.5. What are Amazon Kids on Alexa?

Amazon Kids on Alexa is an amazing experience just for kids, available on compatible Echo devices.

When you use Amazon Kids on Alexa, Alexa will play Music, answer questions, read stories, tell jokes, and more with younger ears in mind. Certain Alexa features may differ when Amazon Kids on Alexa is enabled.

Reference links:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u--lmSEywJg

https://incompassinged.com/2020/06/08/how-to-use-echo-echo-dot-and-alexa-in-the-classroom/

https://www.voices.com/blog/alexa-in-the-classroom/

https://www.mrsrichardsonsclass.com/10-ways-to-use-alexa-in-the-classroom/

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