



### ***Kitt the Learning Companion*** **(1020626)**



Read all about what educational experts have to say about Kitt and how it enhanced the learning experience of children in the schools they work with.

Jodie Lopez is an EdTech consultant and former primary school teacher who works with a number of schools. Read how Kitt has been used in the schools she works with to support children's learning and wellbeing, including supporting children with EAL.



KITT is a fantastic resource which has supported a number of children with transition from year to year with schools I work with, as well as being used in class with a number of children across the school from Nursery to Year 3 (although older and younger siblings have joined in too when KITT has been taken home!)

KITT has been used primarily with children who need to build confidence in reading and have read to KITT. As KITT has a 'personality' children take to this and find reading to KITT, whilst recording for the teacher, helps them to let go of inhibitions with reading aloud. This then also gives the teacher evidence of a child's reading even if they are reluctant to read aloud to them.

Some families took KITT home over the summer holidays in 2021 and we know from them that even 2 year old siblings of our pupils were able to use the functionality of KITT as it is so simple. The families who really take to KITT tend to give their learning buddy a name (one was called Eva!) and carry them around everywhere, recording audio and visual content on days out, trips to the park and around the home. This has led to some children building on their oral skills both in the classroom and from home. By uploading some podcasts and talking stories to KITT we are able to put good quality content into the classroom and the homes of students who take KITT home. This has given access to talking books, nursery rhymes and short learning songs. For some children this has helped them to continue to listen to English at home during the holidays, where their home language differs, and we have also added home language content too so that they feel KITT fits in with their family whilst supporting their English language development.

The “technology output” of what KITT does is similar to many microphones or video cameras, but where KITT is different is that the personality of KITT and the design makes it easy for young children to carry KITT around and feel like this is a learning friend rather than simply a piece of tech.

KITT also enables teachers to add instructions for KITT to read out to a child to support them during class. Although it would be great to have enough adults in every class for whenever a child needs them, it just isn't possible. But adding instructions to KITT means that children can get the next instruction from KITT while they do a task which has helped some specific children who struggle with retaining all of the instructions of a long task in class.

KITT has mainly been used to support comprehension and oral skills but there have been cross curricular uses, from maths songs to science and topic work instructions, and these have helped to ensure KITT is well used regularly.

The fact that KITT is not enabled for wifi connectivity or similar means we also feel confident that this is a device we can use safely with children and teach them about sharing information about themselves in recordings. Although this can be done safely with KITT when used in class, it is a good way to safely remind them what they should and should not share which leads to interesting discussions about online safety.

KITT being able to take photos also helps with pupils who take KITT out to play in the playground and can then take pictures and explain to their support adult/key worker about what they did. These oral explanations with the photos help them to build up their language and storytelling skills - for some children this has been especially needed and they find the photo prompts really useful when reviewing with an adult.

Children naturally refer to KITT in human language i.e. “I need KITT where is he/she?” Which shows that they do not see it as just another bit of technology in the classroom but their learning buddy always ready to help them!

**With thanks to Jodie Lopez**

**Jodie Lopez is an EdTech consultant and ex primary school teacher who won a number of awards for her use of technology across the curriculum. Jodie is also a Teaching Awards judge.**

# Kitt the Learning Companion

Mr Hunt is a teacher, author, vlogger and education consultant. Read how Kitt has been used with the children in his class, including the impact Kitt has had on the children's communication and language development.



I often get offered to test out new software and hardware, but rarely do I come across something that I would consider a game changer! I know game changer is a big statement but, having had our very own Kitt for a couple of months now, I believe this statement to be true.

The great thing about Kitt is that it is a learning companion for both the teacher *and* the children in all areas of the curriculum. 'He' has a camera for children to record and evidence work through photographs and video. He can record audio, meaning that children can record and listen back to their voices - something we encourage when discussing pitch, tone, and intonation. He has a timer which promotes independent learning and allows children to check easily how long they have left, encouraging children to complete a task in a set time. The children in my class see Kitt as an extra member of the class (he even has his own place in the classroom). They can relate to him as he aids confidence and self-regulation due to the sensory features he has. Kitt has many features but what I found most impactful was the communication and language enrichment he provides.

I sent Kitt home for a couple of nights with each child (and a letter to parents to explain who this cute little guy was) and all I asked the children to do was investigate the main features, get to know Kitt and find out what else he could do. What I received back was heart-warming; I had videos of children reading poetry to Kitt, children reading stories to him and even photos and videos of extra work they had done together (I say together as they talked to Kitt like it was team effort!).

As a teacher, to have something that puts a smile on children's faces, whilst adding educational value, is something worth shouting about! Now I could finish off with a famous quote or something profound, but I thought I would end with a quote directly from the important, little people that Kitt was designed to support- the amazing children in my class!

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*We just love Kitt!*  
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Class 3/4 H

**With thanks to Simon Hunt**

Mr Hunt is a teacher, author, vlogger and education consultant. Simon has presented at shows such as BETT (the leading event for education technology), SETT (Scandinavia's largest trade fair and conference for modern and innovative learning), and various other educational conferences across the globe. In 2018, Simon was named 'Inspirational Teacher of the Year' and recent recipient of the Curriculum Improvement Award 2021. He has also appeared on the BBC, BBC iPlayer and on multiple educational podcasts.