Assistive Technology Peripherals

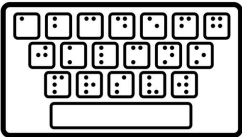**Discussion:**
There are a multitude of different peripherals that can be used to help humans interact with computers. Some peripherals are considered input devices such as a mouse, keyboard, or webcam. An **input device** sends information to the computer. Other peripherals are considered output devices such as a monitor, printer, or speakers. An **output device** sends information *out* of the computer to the user. There are also storage peripherals such as a USB or external hard drive. A **storage device** is used to store data.

Data is the information that is sent and received between the peripheral and the computer. This can be as simple as a letter on a keyboard or as complex as sound waves sent through a microphone. The computer takes the input and is programmed with how to convert the data into computer-readable form. The computer can also take data and convert it to human-readable form before sending it back out to the user with an output device.

Exercise:
One of the most important jobs of a peripheral can be how it helps people with visual impairments and other additional needs to access computers. Complete the chart by naming whether the assistive device is an input, output, or storage device and what type of data is transferred. Then, add in a few additional peripherals that you use to interact with your computer.

Peripheral	Interaction it enables	Is it an input, output, or storage device?	Type of data transferred
Braille Keyboard	Allows people who are blind to type a message.	input	letters, numbers, symbols, and special function keys
Screen Magnifier	Allows the screen to zoom in for people with visual impairments.	output	text and graphics

Screen Reader 	Allows what's on the screen to be read aloud.	output	text, images, and sound
Foot Controlled Mouse 	Allows physically disabled users to control the computer with their foot.	input	motion and clicks
Touch Screen along with a Head Wand 	Can assist physically disabled people to use a touch screen.	input	touch

Reflection Questions:

1. How are you able to determine whether a device is an input or output device?

2. What makes it challenging to know what data is transferred?

3. Brainstorm for a minute or two to come up with at least one idea of a peripheral that could help a user with an impairment.