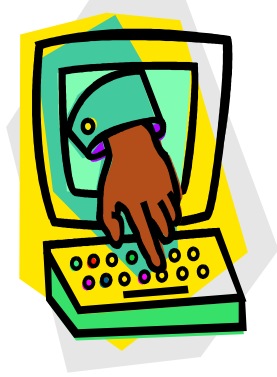


Assistive Technology for Students



The following may be of assistance for students:



- **MP3 Recorder or dictating machine:** helps remember things that have to be done later, or to dictate a report into, which can be typed later on.
- **Spellchecker** with a large, clear display screen. Use of a hand held battery operated spelling checker. This is similar size to a calculator and you type in the word and it makes suggesting for the correct word from a word list. These are available at places such as Dick Smith and Tandy Electronics.
- **Grammar and Spelling – checking programs:**
 - Grammar Slammer Deluxe: <http://englishplus.com/gramslam.htm>
 - Spell Catcher: <http://www.spellcatcher.com>
 - Alcodas – spelling checking: <http://www.alcodasoftware.com>
 - Use online dictionaries to assist with writing tasks. For example, Your Dictionary (<http://www.yourdictionary.com>) allows you to look up words. It also will pronounce the word for you to allow you to hear what the word sound like.
 - Use the computer to cross check words for synonyms in the computer's dictionary or thesaurus. Students with learning difficulties sometimes use less complex words due to inability to spell more difficult words.
- **Text Help Read & Write** (www.texthelp.com) provides a small box on your word– processing screen, which tries to guess the next word you are going to type. It suggests words that you can click on without having to spell them, and reads out loud what you have written so that you can hear if any words have been missed out or written inaccurately. This program gets better and better if you remember to save your Text Help session each time, as it can then begin to build up a list of the words you use a lot: for example, if you use the word 'computer' a lot, it will put that word at the top of the list every time you start to type 'com'.
- **WYNN (What you need now):** is software (for a standard PC) that helps you read study, and comprehends text more easily and effectively. WYNN lets you open a file and hear it read aloud. Or, you can scan a page using a flatbed scanner, and read that aloud. Once you open a file, you can alter the way the page is presented on the screen as well as the way it is read aloud to you. You can also insert notes and bookmarks, highlight sections, or look up words in the dictionary. WYNN tool bars are intuitive and easy to learn. All have large buttons that are labelled with both pictures and words. This gives WYNN a very short learning curve.
 - For more information see: <http://wynnwizard.com/>

- **JAWS:** is a screen reading software program.
 - For more information see: https://www.freedomscientific.com/fs_products/software_jaws.asp
- **Zoom Text:** is magnification and reading software for the vision impaired.
 - For more information see: <http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/browse.asp?cat=14515>
- **Reading Pens:** available from www.dyslexic.com. This can be run over a word that cannot be read. The pen will then say the word out loud or through a small earpiece. (The pen can be helpful for reading a single word that you cannot read, but not a whole passage.)
- **Technical Aids** are available from www.dyslexic.com.
- **Dictation onto a Computer:** A word processor that you can speak into - e.g. Dragon Dictate and others - which will do the typing for you! Reports indicate that, although the technology is still developing, these programs can be made to work successfully provided that a lot of time is spent in the initial stage of training the program to become familiar with the sound patterns of your individual speech. This program takes approximately 2 – 3 hours of training. It allows you to dictate words to the computer at 40 to 70 words per minutes. For examples of such programs see:
 - <http://www.globalchange.com/speech.html> for a video demo and access to variations of Dragon Dictate software.
 - <http://www.voicerecognition.com/ibm/simplyspeaking.html> IBM Voice type simply speaking
- **Facilitating Visual – Spatial skills:**

Programs exist (i.e. Inspiration) that have graphic capabilities that can facilitate brainstorming by allowing the user to create a diagram of their ideas. The main ideas are displayed on the screen and related ideas are linked to the main idea. This is similar to mind mapping. The graphical representation can be automatically converted to an outline. These types of programs facilitate visual learning techniques, which are graphical ways of working with ideas and presenting information. They teach students to clarify their thinking, and to process, organize and prioritise new information. Visual diagrams reveal patterns, interrelationships and interdependencies. They also stimulate creative thinking. This is good for those who have strengths in visual- special skills. It is a simple way to easily plan an assignment or essay.

 - For more information visit: <http://www.inspiration.com>
- **Class Mate Reader:** the Class Mate is designed to improve reading skills, developing and understanding vocabulary, while promoting phonetic recognition and fluency.
 - For more information visit: http://www.humanware.com/en-australia/products/learning_disabilities

Assistive Technology

School Psychology Services

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- **MyReader2:** myReader2 is designed for sustained reading. In addition to magnifying a page "live", like a CCTV magnifier, myReader2 can capture a page. You can then do navigate the page image flexibly, with a trackball, or display the page text as a column of words, a row of words, even a word at a time, so you can read comfortably and easily.
 - For more information visit: http://www.humanware.com/en-australia/products/low_vision/myreader
- **Smart View:** The Smart View product is a closed circuit TV magnifier that changes as your needs change. It allows for: auto focus, high contrast/false colours, magnification - 3 to 68x and brightness control. It is designed for usability.
 - For more information visit: http://www.humanware.com/en-australia/products/low_vision/smartview
- **SARA (Scanning and Reading Appliance):** is an easy-to-use solution for reading a wide variety of printed material including books, mail, newspapers, magazines, and so much more. SARA uses the latest in advanced optical character recognition technology to scan text and then read it aloud in crisp, clear speech. SARA can store and remember the contents of hundreds of thousands of scanned pages.
 - For more information visit: <http://www.quantech.com.au/sara>
- **Quantum Technology:** for people with a print disability. They provide products for individual with low vision, blindness and learning disabilities.
 - For more information visit: <http://www.quantech.com.au/ourvision>
- **Suppliers of Access Technology for People with Vision Impairments:** Suppliers and sources of equipment and other resources for students with vision impairments are listed alphabetically. Contact details and a brief description of products and services are included. Australian website.
 - For more information visit: <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/distributors.htm#Q>

Reference:

Raskin, M. & Higgins, E (1998). Assistive Technology for postsecondary students with learning disabilities: an overview. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 31(1). 27- 40.

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