

Supporting Writing Difficulties

A practical guide from CALL Scotland

- Refer to local SFL / ASN Guidance Document(s).
- Involve SFL / ASN team.
- Consult 'Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit'.
- Consider consulting OT, PT, SLT, Visual Impairment service as needed.

The pupil's writing takes excessive time and effort?

The quality of writing output is poor; legibility, spelling, letter shape, length of writing etc?

Is there a difference in quality between what the pupil can write and what they can verbalise, i.e. dictating to a scribe?

The pupil appears reluctant to write?

Poor writing is not because a pupil is lazy or stupid.

A different size or style of pencil / pen?

A pencil or pen grip?

A writing slope?

Different or better positioning: chair / table / lighting etc?

One of more of the above in combination? Using appropriate writing technology?

Staff who 'don't do computers' is not a valid reason for the pupil not using technology! Hand writing is a life skill - true - but the physical process must be separated from producing content - language and ideas. Pupils must be prepared for a digital future.

Will a classroom computer suffice, or might the pupil need a personal, portable device?

There are different types of keyboards.

e.g. bigger, smaller, high contrast, upper, lower case, keyboard stickers.

If the pupil can't use a keyboard, why not?

Touch screen keyboards: on-screen keyboards controlled by a mouse pointer or external joystick.

There are many accessories for keyboards.

Is the keyboard too big, too small, too high and / or wrong size, wrongly positioned? Is the pupil unfamiliar with the keyboard, e.g. layout, upper case letters?

Does the computer settings need to be personalised?

Does the pupil require additional software to improve typing speed and accuracy? Does the pupil require an alternative method to input text?

Keypads which fit over the keyboard to prevent errors.

Keyboard mounts / risers to aid hand / arm / head positioning.

Keyguards which fit over the keyboard to prevent errors.

Dycem mats to prevent keyboard slipping / movement.

Is the pupil doing appropriate keyboarding tasks? Is copying or typing notes into a word processor really worthwhile?

Touch typing is NOT feasible for some pupils so 'keyboard familiarity' practice might be more useful.

- Who could help?
 - Consult school ICT Coordinator, and colleagues.
 - Consult local authority ICT SFL / ASN specialist.
 - Check for contact details in your area: www.ictsls.org.uk/

- Formulate an action plan for Next Steps, including list of possible technology(ies).
- Clarify / launch procedures for obtaining technology needed.
- Ensure child's views are taken into account.
- Share with parents.
- Take account of training and support implications.

Establish or expand the Child's Plan, as per La procedures.

- Touchscreen.
 - A different mouse or large rollerball / trackball.
 - A joystick with different handle adaptations (T-bar, large foam ball).
 - A Glidepad or a laptop mouse track-pad.
- A switch access system (interface box plus one or two switches) - which scans rows, columns etc.
- Positioning for one or all of the above - keyboard risers, mats to prevent slipping etc.

Try to borrow to trial before buying, locally or from CALL Scotland (2 - 3 months only).

Check what is available in school, contact local specialist for further advice.

Word banks - topic dictionaries, sometimes support with pictures and / or text-to-speech.

Mind mapping to visually help plan and organise thoughts and ideas.

Audio: voice recording, often directly into the application (which can be saved for evidence).

Speech recognition - talking to a computer, speech is converted to text.

One of more of the above used in combination with each other, e.g. Clicker, Co:Writer, Texthelp Read@Write, Penfriend, Textease, WriteOnline etc.

- What do writing difficulties arise from?
 - Dyslexia / specific learning difficulties with language, reading, spelling?
 - Vision or visual processing - acuity, visual field, tracking?
 - Cognition - learning, comprehension?
 - Physical causes - poor coordination, pencil grip, seating, positioning?

1 Identifying the problems, gathering information, team approach.

2 Identifying problems with physical writing using a pencil/pen.

8 Working in partnership with parents and professionals.

7 Have you tried different access methods?

6 Have you tried supportive software?

5 Have you tried customising the screen and computer settings?

4 Have you tried a computer, tablet or keyboard adaptation?

3 Have you tried the following?

I have a pupil with writing difficulties. What could help?

Supportive software can include:

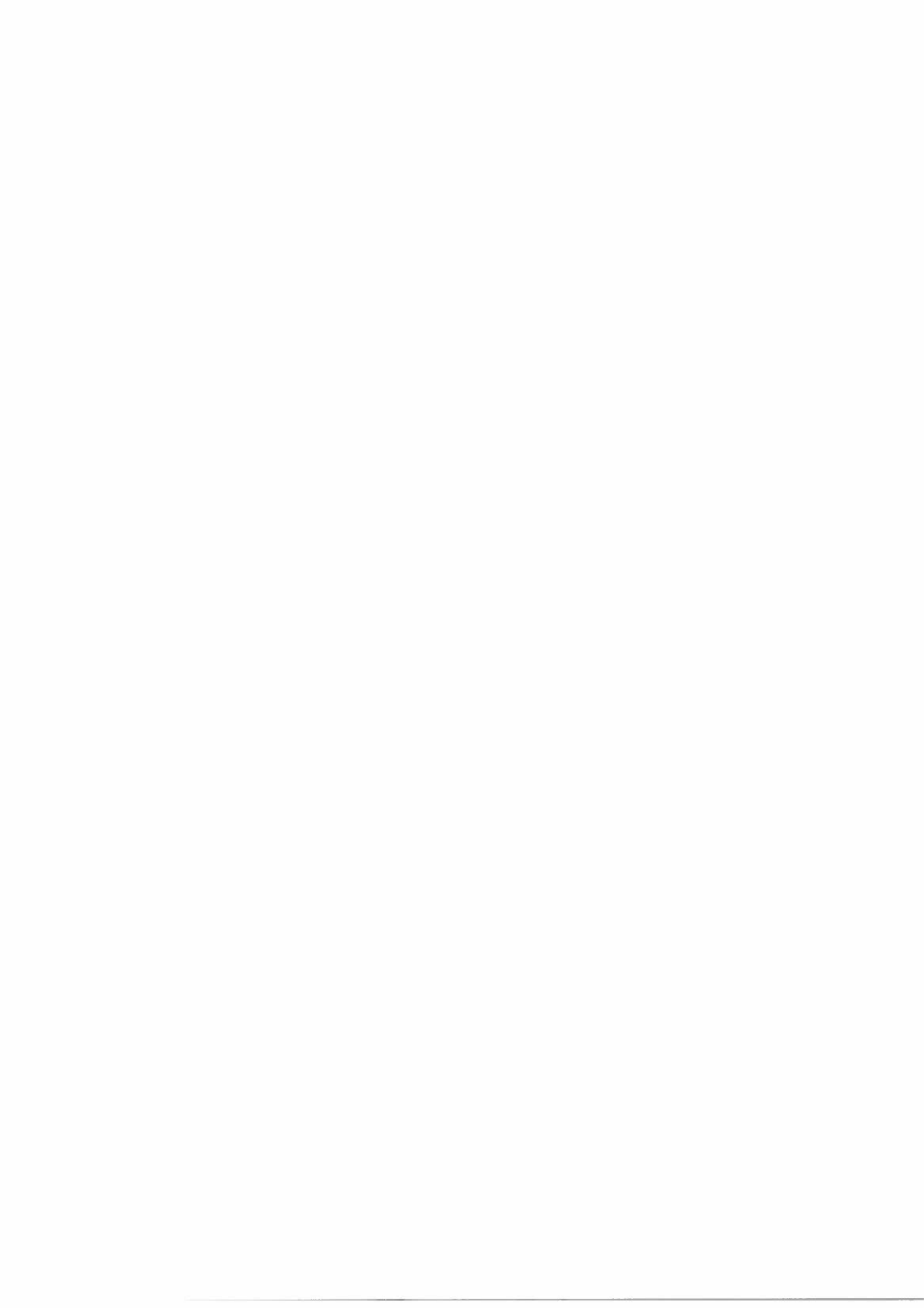
Picture or symbol support.

Text-to-speech - speech feedback, text is read aloud.

Word prediction - words are predicted in context after the first or second keypress - sometimes supported with pictures and text-to-speech.

Spell checking - phonetic, audio or symbol supported options are available. Support also available with homophones. Remember hand-held talking spell checkers, digital scanning pens etc.

If staff are not familiar with such software, training should be requested. Check local CPD calendar. Contact CALL Scotland.



Addressing Reading Difficulties

A practical Guide from CALL Scotland

Who could help?

- Consult school Support for Learning teachers, librarian and colleagues
- Consult local authority ICT/ASN Specialist
- Check for contact details in your area - www.ictsls.org

I have a pupil with reading difficulties. What could help?

1 Identifying the problems, gathering information, team approach.

Refer to local SFL/ASN guidance Document(s).
Involve SFL/ASN Team. Consult Addressing Dyslexia Toolkit, Consider consulting VI/ Dyslexia/Assistive Technology Service.

1.1 What do the difficulties arise from?

Seeing or understanding the text, due to dyslexia/specific learning difficulties with language, reading, spelling

Understanding the text due to learning difficulties

Holding the book or turning pages, due to physical difficulties

Understanding the text, due to language impairment or as a result of hearing impairment

Seeing the book, due to vision or visual processing, acuity, visual field tracking

2 Have you addressed these difficulties with reading interventions?

Reading comprehension

Paired reading

Reciprocal reading

Precision reading

Phonological awareness

3 Have you tried adaptations?

Coloured overlays or lenses

Magnifiers

Book stands

4 Have you tried other types of reading materials?

Graphic novels

Age-appropriate books eg. Barrington Stoke, Rising Stars

1.1 Next Steps

Source books in required format

Identify tools/features needed to support reading

Identify device(s) and software apps

Provide device software and books

Teach learner

10 Have you tried making accessible formats?

Copyright

Audio

Braille

eBook formats

Large Print

PDF

Scanning Paper Books

Word

9 Have you tried other alternative formats?

Large Print

Braille

'Easy Read'

Symbol-supported

8 Have you tried audio books?

Free/low cost audio books

Public libraries

Calibre

Project Gutenberg

Load2learn

Listening books

RNIB

Commercial audio books

Audible.co.uk

Amazon

iBook Store

7 Have you tried text-to-speech (TTS)?

Does it highlight the text as it reads?

Does it come with good voices?

Does it have other features (word prediction etc)?

What programs can it read from?

What to look for in TTS

6 Techniques for reading digital books

Font and colour backgrounds

Font size, line spacing, character spacing

Physical access

Navigating the book

5 Have you tried digital books?

Commercial eBooks

Kindle & Amazon

iPad & iBook Store

Google Books

WH Smith, Waterstones

Books for All Scotland Database

The Seeing Ear

Load2learn

Project Gutenberg

Public libraries

Free eBooks

Kindle

iPad

Windows

Android

MacOS

Nook, Kobo etc

Devices

Built-in

Speak Selection, Speak Screen, VoiceOver

WordTalk for Microsoft Word

Free eg Balabolka, Orato, Minireader, Natural Reader

eg ClaroRead, Co:Writer, Penfriend, Read & Write Gold

Windows

TTS Programs

MacOS

Scottish Computer Voices

Kindle

Android

Apps eg. Easy Text to Speech, Voice Read Aloud

Voices eg. Cereproc, Ivona

iOS

Built-in

Apps with TTS

eg ClaroRead, Co:Writer, Voice Dream, iReadWrite

Use the *Protocol for Accommodations in Reading to Compare TTS* with unaided reading (De Coste and Wilson, 2012)

Using the iPad to Support Dyslexia

With each new update of the iPad's operating system (iOS), the built-in tools continue to improve. iOS 9 includes support for literacy difficulties such as dyslexia, without necessarily needing to buy additional apps. This infographic provides a snapshot of some of the built-in tools; others not mentioned here, include lower case keys, undocking the on-screen keyboard to help track writing, the facility to add external dyslexia-friendly Bluetooth keyboards to aid writing and the newly designed Notes app with text formatting options.

As well as the suggestions provided here, CALL Scotland offers many more resources, such as the 'Dyslexia Wheel of Apps', and colour

background templates for Pages as well as neutral colour backgrounds for the iPad's screen.

bit.ly/dyslexia-wheel-of-apps

bit.ly/neutral-screen-colours

bit.ly/pages-background-templates

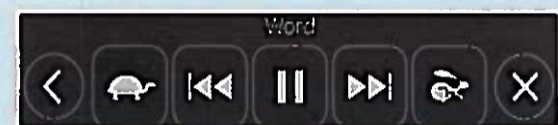
www.callscotland.org.uk

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Speak Screen

Speak Screen reads content on the iPad. You can set the speaking rate and choose from different voices. Swipe down from the top with two fingers or tell Siri to 'Speak Screen'.



Speak Selection

If you don't want everything read aloud tap and hold the bits of text and Speak Selection will read it.

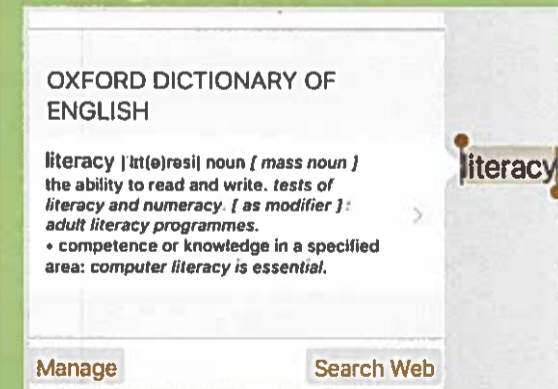


Highlighting

Follow words and sentences as they are read aloud with 'Highlighting'.

Define/Dictionary

Use Define and Dictionary to find the meaning of words.



Use **Manage** to choose from a range of Dictionaries such as the English Oxford, American English Oxford, French, German, Dutch and more.

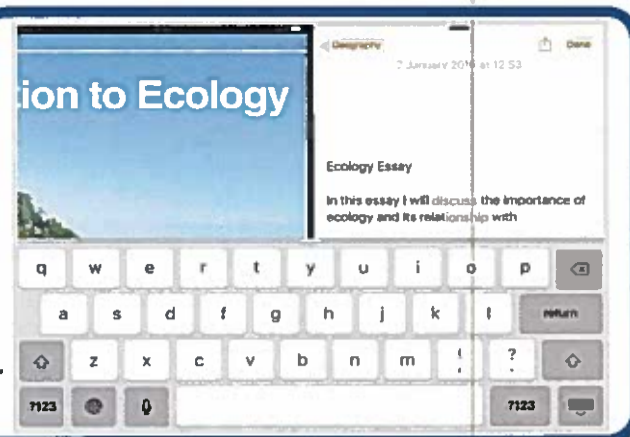
Dictionary can also help with spelling, grammar and pronunciation.



Split View

With Split View you can work on two apps and/or documents simultaneously, - useful for revision or notetaking.

(iPad Air 2 only - alternatively **Slide Over** for some older iPads).

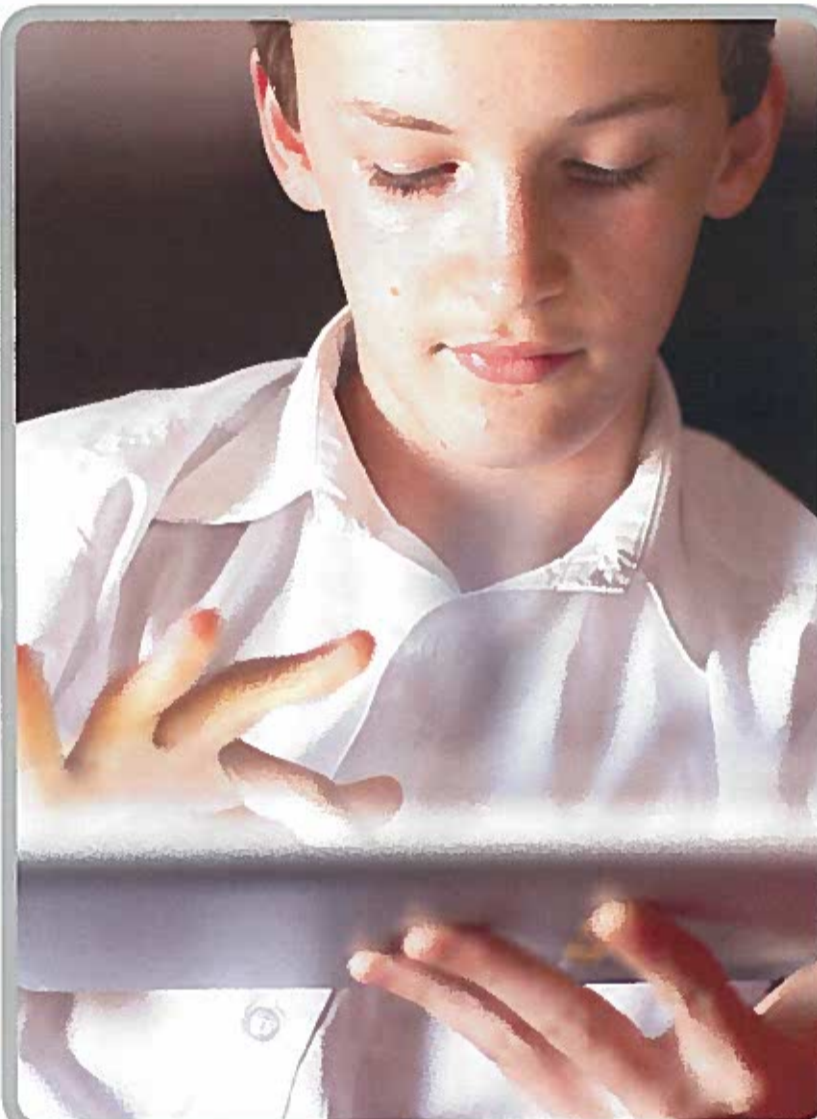


Siri

You can use Siri to ask questions, set reminders, open apps, complete tasks, and dictate text instead of typing.

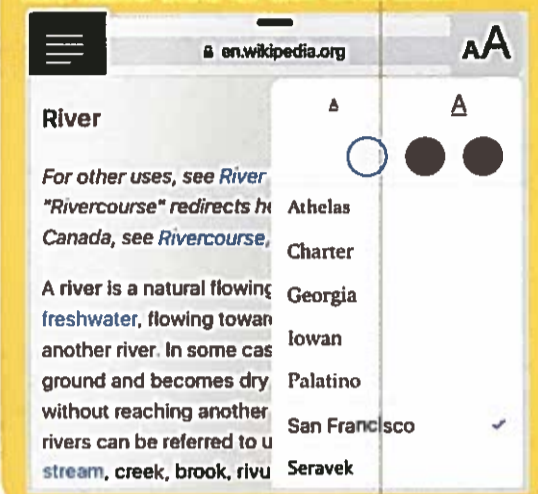
Siri Voices

Use the Siri voices - Siri Male and Siri Female - for natural sounding text-to-speech.



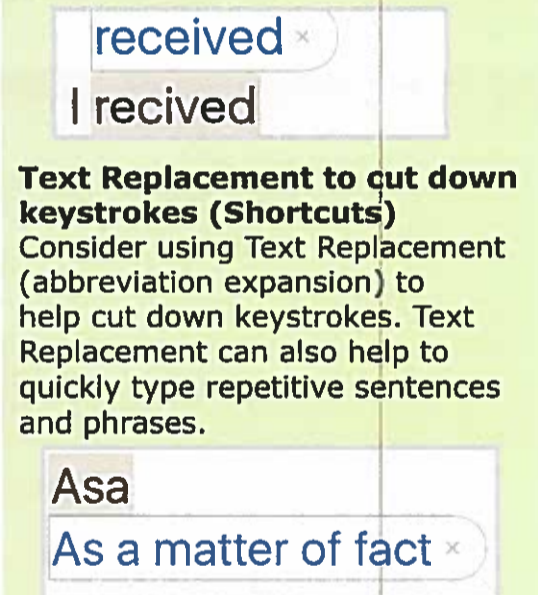
Safari Reader

Improve the readability of web pages by removing clutter - tap the black horizontal lines on the left hand side of the URL box.



Text Replacement to support spelling

Use Text Replacement to create personalised spelling lists and Auto-Corrections.



QuickType

Use QuickType to tap a word from the list of words appearing above the on-screen keyboard.



3rd Party Keyboards

You can use 3rd Party keyboards such as Keedogo, SuperKeys, Swype to aid writing and improve readability (Settings and Keyboard).



Check Spelling

Consider turning on Check Spelling (in General and Keyboards) to alert learners to spelling mistakes. Misspelt words are highlighted with a red underline.



Replace Spelling

Tap or highlight the misspelt word to replace it with a correctly spelt word. If you are unsure if the replaced word is the correct one, highlight the word to have it read aloud (Speak).





ChromeBook Apps and Extensions for Learners with Dyslexia

Click on the tiles to go to the Chrome Webstore.



Notetaking	Text to Speech	Organisation	Organisation	Writing Support	Writing Support	Working with PDFs	Reading Support	Reading eBooks	Reading the Web

What is a ChromeBook?

ChromeBooks are (generally) light, portable laptops that use Google's Chrome Operating System. Instead of storing programs and files on a hard disk, they connect to the internet using the Chrome browser and run apps that can be accessed through the online Chrome Store. ChromeBooks are becoming more and more popular in schools as they are relatively low cost, easy to carry round and are ready to use within 5 to 10 seconds of being switched on. They can be useful devices for learners with reading and writing difficulties, but are less useful for people with severe and complex disabilities. This is a guide to some of the apps and extensions available.

Google Docs Tools & Add-ons

Google Docs is the main word processor used with the ChromeBook. It includes a good spellchecker, a document outline facility and speech voice typing. It is also possible to get a wide range of Add-ons to enhance your documents and to make writing easier. These include Texthelp Study Skills, g(Math), Lucidchart diagrams, VeritySpell, and many other tools to help your writing.

Apps, Extensions and Themes

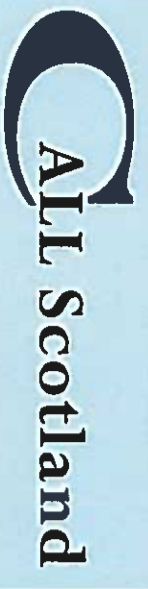
ChromeBooks primarily use apps and extensions available from the WebStore: <https://chrome.google.com/webstore>. Apps (yellow tiles) are the equivalent of programs on an Apple or Windows computer. A small number of apps are pre-installed on the ChromeBook, but most are run within your Chrome Browser. Extensions (Pink tiles) are pieces of software that add new features to the Chrome Browser. They can be used across the Browser, adding functionality to most, but not necessarily all, Apps. Themes are also available from the Chrome Web Browser to enhance the screen appearance.

Version 1.0, October 2016

Download:
www.callscotland.org.uk/downloads/posters-and-leaflets
 Produced by CALL Scotland with assistance from Mike Marotta
www.mmatp.com

Built-in Accessibility

ChromeBooks have built-in accessibility options (including screen adjustments, spoken feedback, 'sticky keys', etc) that can be adjusted to suit individual needs. They also have USB ports that allow a variety of assistive devices (keyboards, mice, switch interfaces, etc.) to be connected. Overall, the accessibility options are pretty good, though there won't be a solution for everybody - some needs are better met by using a Windows laptop or iPad. See the CALL Scotland Quick Guide available from www.callscotland.org.uk/chromebook



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