

# Closing The Gap

JUNE / JULY, 2009  
VOLUME 28 - NUMBER 2

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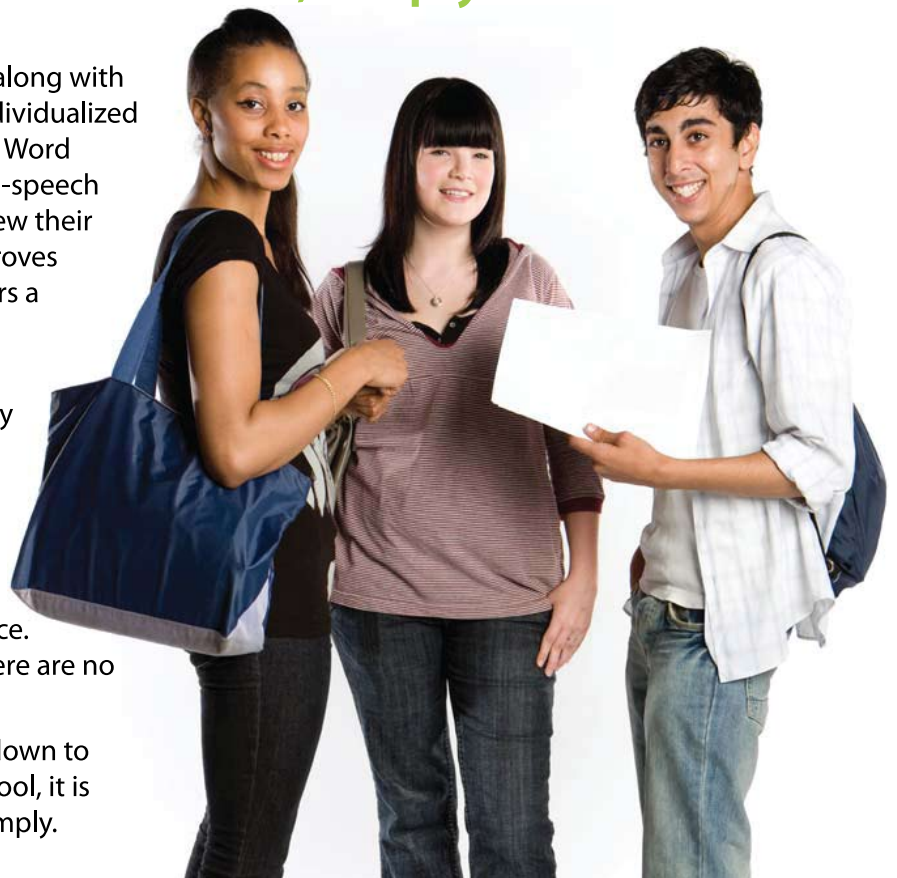
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# Closing The Gap

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- ClaroRead V5
- PCI Education Launches Turbo Solutions Builder for Stimulus Funding
- Proloquo2Go 1.0 for iPhone a Break-through in Augmentative Communication
- RJ Cooper Introduces Two New Products

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*"The music and visuals are wonderful for engaging my students, including those with Autism and other disabilities.*

*I have had students that have refused to write, learn their letters and numbers on the computer because it is so engaging."*

*~ Laura Johnson, OTR*



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# DISKoveries

## Interactive Entertainment Systems for Learning: PlayStation Portable (PSP)

By Joan Tanenhaus

Over the past few years, I've done on-going reviews of the Nintendo DS handheld system, the PlayStation and the newer Wii. Recently, I've received some requests for more information about the PlayStation Portable (PSP) and the available games for it. Following is a review of the PSP and some of the educational and entertainment programs that I have found that appear appropriate for individuals with special needs. The most outstanding use of the PSP that I have discovered is its use with the Plato Achieve Now Learning System (see below). It also has exceptional sports games because of the screen size and resolution. From program and game availability, the PSP appears more appropriate for older children and adults. Only programs rated E for Everyone are reviewed. As with the Nintendo DS hand held system, good fine motor control and good vision are required.

The PlayStation Portable (PSP) is a handheld game console from Sony. It uses an optical disc format, called Universal Media Disk (UMD) (read only), as its storage and game media. Among its unique features are its large viewing screen and excellent resolution. This screen makes it excellent for viewing while gaming, and also for viewing movies. The PSP also allows for access to the Internet (wherever wireless Wi Fi is available), and the newest version allows users

to access Skype for Internet video/phone use. There is also a Sony Memory Stick reader that lets users access pictures, photo slideshows, and audio and video files.

The PSP measures 6.7 x 2.9 x .9 inches and weighs about 10 ounces. It has a 4.3 inch LCD screen, capable of 480 x 272 pixel video playback, with millions of colors. On the right, there are four buttons ( $\Delta$ ,  $\circ$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\square$ ) used to select and confirm selections; on the left, is the directional keypad and the analog 'nub,' which serves

Following are reviews of some of the exceptional programs for the PSP.

**PLATO Achieve Now on PSP** (Plato Learning, [www.plato.com](http://www.plato.com)) Designed for elementary and middle school students (grades K-7), Plato Achieve Now on the PSP has 29 reading/language arts and 29 mathematics Adventures. The curriculum is aligned with IRA, NCTE, and NCTM guidelines. The adventures are designed to extend the activities of the classroom and increase family involvement. The Plato

activities are loaded onto interchangeable memory sticks that fit into the PSP. The students then browse from a menu of Adventures to locate specific games assigned by the teacher. They can then work directly on curriculum with the PSP anytime, anywhere. The entertaining stories and characters engage students as they acquire reading, language arts and math skills. Included with the program and the PSP is the Teacher Quick-Start Guide which includes CD-ROMs with classroom

materials. They help locate the appropriate Adventures to select by including an alphabetical list of learning objectives, organized by content and topic (i.e., emergent literacy, phonics and decoding, reading comprehension, etc.) Then you can select a specific skill within the category (i.e. identify the final sound of a spoken word) and be directed to a specific adven-



PlayStation Portable (Sony).

as the joystick. In addition, there are two "shoulder" buttons on top and a USB port and WLAN switch. On the back is the UMD drive that holds the game media, as well as movies that are in the UMD format. The PSP also has built-in stereo speakers, a headphone port and Wi Fi that allows for access to the Internet, multiplayer gaming and data transfer.



*PLATO Achieve Now on PSP (Plato Learning).*

ture and activity. PLATO Achieve Now also includes assessments to evaluate progress and monitor student growth. Plato Achieve Now ELL/ESL Adventure features materials in Spanish designed to develop emergent literacy, reading comprehension and vocabulary skills. It contains interactive activities with animations, music, stories and characters that incorporate Spanish culture to encourage students to read along with a narrator and listen to guided reading strategies. As students gain Spanish literacy skills, the teacher transitions them to the English-language components of PLATO Achieve Now. PLATO Learning is a leading provider of computer-based and e-learning instruction for kindergarten through adult learners.

**Buzz Master Quiz** (Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc, [www.scea.com](http://www.scea.com)) With over 5,000 questions on topics, including music, celebrities, TV, sports, science, nature, movies and more, Buzz Master Quiz is a great trivia game. Each round has pictures and videos. There are three multiplayer modes for play with friends and family. Players can pass around the PSP or use one copy of the game and Game Share on individual PSPs. Additionally, Quiz Host mode enables up to six players to play against each other, with one taking control of the game to select and ask the questions. The Quiz Host runs the whole game, with the power to award (or even deduct) points however they see fit.



*Buzz Master Quiz (Sony).*

**SCRABBLE** (Electronic Arts: [www.ea.com](http://www.ea.com)) This is a great new format for an exciting and classic word game. There are three modes of play: Classic offers traditional play; Speed has players race against the clock and the new Scrabble Slam card game has players try to be the first to discard all their SLAM cards by making four letter words. There are six difficulty levels with a training mode that has six training exercises that help players practice skills needed to be good Scrabble players. These include two Vocabulary Trainer activities (one gives a definition and scrambled letters – unscramble to find the word, and the other has you make as many words possible from a given set of letters). Pattern Recognition activities has players make as many words as possible from the letters shown, and Score Strategy helps players make the highest scoring word possible using the tiles on the rack. Scrabble also comes loaded with Scrabble Word Finder (finds the best word in any given situation) and the complete Merriam Webster Scrabble Dictionary. There are also Scrabble Tips (lists of “important words – i.e., two letter words, playing the Q, Q without u, vowels dumps, etc) and Game Help, which is a tutorial for playing the game. (i.e., controls, game setup, etc.) In addition, players can track their progress.



*SCRABBLE (Electronic Arts).*

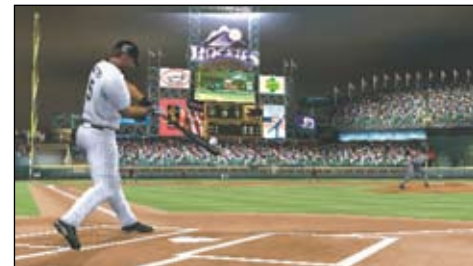
**LocoRoco2** (Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc, [www.scea.com](http://www.scea.com)) In this game, the LocoRoco are bouncing bubbles of fun, who live peacefully unless bothered by the Mojas. And here they come again. Players have to guide the LocoRoco to safety. They use the left or right trigger buttons on top to “tilt” the screen landscape, causing the little creatures to roll. When you press both buttons together, you can make them jump up high. Tapping one button makes them split into smaller parts, or holding it will join them back into one large blob. The goal is to work through 12 worlds to save as many blobs as you can. The LocoRoco can swim underwater, leap inside shells, roll around and much more. They like to eat red berries, which you can

collect and find for them. Beginning levels are easy enough for younger children, ages 6 and up. An opening tutorial teaches the basic movements. There are also mini-games to play. This is a fun beginning game for all ages.

Some other popular programs, previously reviewed for other formats, like the Nintendo DS, that are solid learning programs and also available for the PSP include: My Spanish Coach (Ubisoft.com), Mind Quiz (Ubisoft.com), Disney Pixar Cars (THQ.com), Thrillville: Off the Rails (LucasArts.com) and Surf's Up ([Ubisoft.com](http://Ubisoft.com)).

## SPORTS ON THE PSP

**Baseball: Sony MLB 08 The Show** (Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc, [www.scea.com](http://www.scea.com)) This is a great, authentic baseball experience for the PSP. Players can choose from Exhibition Games, Manager Mode, Career, Seasons, Home Run Derby and King of the Diamond (a fun mini-game where you try to rack up as many runs as you can). There is also a quick play mode for quick games between two teams. The expanded “Road to the Show” feature provides awards and penalties based on your performance. You can also choose your own music for the in-game jukebox rotation.



*MLB 08 The Show (Sony).*

**Basketball: NBA 09 The Inside** (Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc, [www.scea.com](http://www.scea.com)) For basketball players and fans, this program has Exhibition Games (match up any two teams), Franchise Mode (complete multiple seasons as a particular team), Playoffs Mode, and a Practice Mode (practice dribbling, dunking and shooting as well as free throw shooting). There are fun and challenging mini-games too.

**Football:** Two great PSP football programs – **Madden NFL 09** (EA Sports: [www.easports.com](http://www.easports.com)) Here's a fun and exciting football game with excellent graphics. You get to be on the field making all the decisions on both sides of the ball. You select your favorite team and stadium,

scoring touchdowns and racking up big yardage. There are two control schemes – Rookie and Advanced. Rookie is for newcomers, with the X on the PSP as the major key to press for passing and tackling. In the Advanced mode, the user has greater controls over the team. There's also a Superstar Challenge mode that lets you complete a series of additional games. In Franchise Mode, you select a team and attempt to build it up. In Practice Mode, players can practice offense, catching, throwing, kicking and more. There's also Mini-Camp, where you complete a series of challenges against the computer or other players offline. The Ask Madden feature lets players ask for help and find out the best play when they aren't sure what to do. **NCAA Football 09** (EA Sports: [www.easports.com](http://www.easports.com)) This football game has a Freshman Mode that simplifies everything on the field, making it much easier for newcomers to compete. Players can simply rely on hitting the X button to pull off most moves, so the only thing that they have to focus on is directing the pass to a receiver with the analog nub (by pushing in a specific direction as you hit X). In the Defensive Mode, players use the square and circle with the X used to hit, tackle, swat and intercept. Even with simplified features, players benefit from the icons and phrases that pop up in different situations, telling players when they should press the button.



*Madden NFL 09 (EA Sports).*

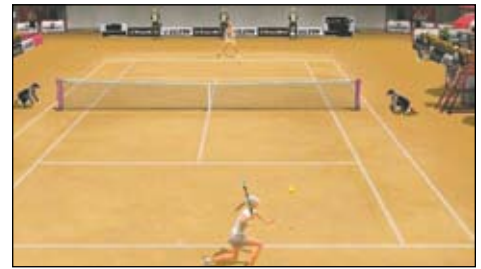
**Golf: Tiger Woods PGA Tour 09** (EA Sports: [www.easports.com](http://www.easports.com), [www.tigerwoods09.com](http://www.tigerwoods09.com)) This golf game is an excellent simulation – graphics are great! There's an easy-to-use swing system, including new two- and three-click swing controls. The analog stick is also used for swing control. Players can play by themselves, against friends or play as or against players from twelve different countries on a choice of 20 championship courses. They choose their clubs and shot type and can hear commentary describing the action by well-known golf commentators. In Stroke Play, the most basic round of golf, every stroke counts and the player with the lowest total at the end wins. In Match Play you go head-

to-head with your opponent on every hole. The player who wins the most holes wins. Other games include a game where players take turns playing with just one ball, having to hit from the position the last player leaves them. Many other types of play and games are included.

**Golf: Hot Shots Golf Open Tee2** (Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc, [www.scea.com](http://www.scea.com)) With this golf game, players pick the course and select characters and their abilities. They can play a round by themselves or join tournaments and matches to earn rewards. Players can line up the shot, select a club with the top buttons, and then, using a zoom camera, they can get an idea of where the ball should go. Tapping the X button three times starts the power meter, determines the power of the swing and determines how straight the shot is. The left and right on the direction pad will adjust your character's shot left or right, while the L and R buttons will switch between your clubs and thus how far the ball can go. If you need an extra boost of power, you can tap the square to make use of one of your power swings. You can practice your strokes in the training mode or learn to play within the game. The challenge mode gives you a progressively more difficult series of events to compete in, such as regular match games, one-on-one competitions, and full-blown tournaments. There's also a putting challenge mode where you're placed on a putting green with several different holes to one-stroke your ball into. There's a scavenger hunt within the game – during the golf game, sometimes there's a sparkle in the trees or bushes - when players zoom in on that item, they can find hidden things that they collect. In addition, you can earn golfer costumes, clubs and other accessories. There is also a WiFi multiplayer mode, so you can play head-to-head with an opponent in Match Play, join a tournament for up to 16 players or create your own game. Lots of fun, with entertaining characters, sounds and animations, this is an easy game to start to play but complex enough that it's good for a more advanced PSP player as well.

**Tennis: Smash Court Tennis 3 for the PSP** (Namco Bandai Games: [www.namco-bandaigames.com](http://www.namco-bandaigames.com)) With this tennis simulation, there is a training mode, which is a good way to learning about the game. Then, you can play a tournament, start a career, play a quick match or a few training mini-games. There are even a few arcade-style tennis variants. Pac-Man Tennis replaces the court with a maze. Galaga

Tennis places you in outer space and has you hitting the alien creatures that fly on the court. In Pro Tour, you create a player, and play against fictional and real players. There are a number of hard, grass or clay courts, each with a unique look and feel.



*Smash Court Tennis 3 (Namco Bandai).*

**Racing: Hot Wheels for the PSP** (ZooGames/DSI: [www.zoogamesinc.com](http://www.zoogamesinc.com)) In this program, you can race over 20 licensed Hot Wheels cars across 11 fun tracks, unlocking upgrades as you race. In Quick Race mode, you select your car, the environment to race in, the track and race your car. In Survival Mode, you complete a series of progressively harder races. You use the left and right buttons to steer, the X button to accelerate, and the circle button to brake. There are multiplayer modes for up to four players.



*Hot Wheels (ZooGames/DSI).*

## MOVIES ON THE PSP

For a complete list of movies available for the PSP, [www.sonypictures.com/homevideo/umc/movies.html](http://www.sonypictures.com/homevideo/umc/movies.html).

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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# Students + Teachers + Low Cost Hardware + Accessible Software = Change

By Samuel Sennott and Adam Bowker

The emergence of mainstream and commercially available portable computing hardware along with accessible software has the potential to make learning technology available to a far greater number of individuals with disabilities. Low-cost hardware options, such as the One Laptop Per Child XO computer, netbooks, and the iPhone and iPod touch, have quickly become available on a surprisingly phenomenal scale. Connecting these hardware options with software focused on communication, literacy and content/curriculum access has important implications related to access and high quality instruction in schools. How has this change quietly come about? Who can benefit from the prevalence of these tools and how can they be used effectively?

The computer hardware industry changed dramatically when, in 2005, Nicholas Negroponte of the MIT Media Lab proposed a new type of educational tool. His vision was to produce a low-cost computer that children anywhere in the world, especially in developing nations with minimal resources available for schools, could use to facilitate learning and communication. This idea developed into One Laptop Per Child (OLPC). In order to create the “\$100 laptop,” OLPC engineers began looking at the computer in a minimalist way, to strip every unnecessary gram of weight, and to get as much computing power out of every watt of precious electricity from its battery. While new screen technologies were developed and the newest battery technology was incorporated. They also looked at it from a highly functional perspective – what is this going to be used for and what is the minimum necessary to meet that function? The initial outcome is the OLPC XO laptop, with a distinctive colorful and rugged child friendly design.

OLPC has the potential to meet the needs of a diverse group of learners from around the world in developing nations and in industrialized nations as well. From an emergent literacy perspective, by combining the OLPC XO laptop with a

tool like the Tar Heel Reader, you have the potential to create a language localized, open source and nearly limitless library of books for beginning readers. Regarding individuals with disabilities, there seems to be far different cultural and economic

better. It can also be useful for many other children as a learning and curriculum tool. This ongoing project has much untapped potential to help children with or without disabilities learn, not to mention open up the many uses of the Internet to those who may not have access otherwise.

One Laptop Per Child discovered something that they were not initially looking for: that there was a latent unmet demand in developed nations for low-cost, low-power, ultraportable computers. Laptops had been getting bigger – up to 17-inch screens – and more powerful, with the newest processors and video cards suitable for video editing and graphics-intensive games. Many people needed a device to check and send e-mail, surf the Internet, read a simple word processing document, and little else. These computer users found that most of their computing potential power was being wasted, along with the money it cost to acquire that power. OLPC was more than just an educational tool for developing nations, it was a model for a market niche that was previously unknown.

The device that has emerged from this need is known in the computer industry as the “netbook.” The key features of a netbook include a very compact size and light weight, limited computing power, and very low price tag. Internet connectivity is an important feature, turning it into both a communication device and powerful learning tool. In the fourth quarter of 2008 and into 2009, netbooks are leading all other types of computers in sales. This is causing a flurry of new development in the computer industry to deliver more low-cost, portable computer hardware and software. For example, Microsoft has extended its support for its older operating system, Windows XP, which runs better than the newer, more powerful Vista on light hardware. Intel has produced a new line of processors, the Atom, which is designed around efficiency over power. Former OLPC engineer Mary Lou Jepsen has started a company, Pixel Qi, to produce



*Proloquo2Go: AAC on the iPhone and iPod touch.*

factors to consider. For individuals in developing nations with disabilities who may require AAC, the distribution of a near fully government subsidized \$8,000 hardware and software system is impractical as a model. Yet, distributing an open source tool costing \$200 has the potential to work



low-power, sunlight-readable screens for portable computers.

All of this attention that the computer industry is paying to portable computing will deliver dividends to the fields of augmentative and alternative communication and assistive technology. The low-power processors and screens and lighter, better batteries now available will make it possible for AAC devices to run longer between charges. Commodity hardware allows individuals to use their AAC devices for general-purpose computing at lower cost than ever before.

The iPhone and iPod touch are other examples of how portable computing has become increasingly powerful and relevant for use as an assistive technology tool. These multifunctional tools have great battery life, multi-touch screens, great sound and graphics, and the ability to add tens of thousands of third party applications. They are attractive to all ages, including people who refuse to use assistive technology or an AAC device because of the way those systems have the potential to make them look different.

The explosion of these hardware solutions increasingly becoming available is not enough. Their exponential value is unlocked when combined with software that meets the relevant task needs of the individual.

Regarding future directions, it seems that the increased access to the hardware on which to run the software is an important variable in the educational equation. Communication, literacy and information/curriculum are three important software domains to consider.

For individuals with AAC needs, having an iPhone or an iPod, combined with Proloquo2Go provides them with a solution that serves as a portable solution. The communication software, Proloquo2Go, gives natural sounding text-to-speech voices, up-to-date symbols, powerful automatic

conjugations, a default vocabulary of over 7000 items, full expandability and extreme ease of use to the iPhone and iPod touch. AAC users, their parents, teachers or speech pathologists will, for the first time, be able to go to commercial locations, such as an Apple Retail Store, Best Buy or Walmart and purchase a powerful AAC device for an affordable price.

Literacy is important for everyone. For learners in the schools, it is important to learn how to read and write and then refine those skills into powerful learning tools. For everyone, specifically adults, access to reading and writing empowers things like surfing the Internet, reading for pleasure,

of just one year's expenditure might create positive change in her school. She hesitated a bit when about to sign the purchase order, but then considered that if the students and teachers have the tools, then maybe they can connect all the powerful software and curriculum connections they had been showing off to her over the last year. She then signed that order with confidence, wondering what this seemingly simple change might mean.

In her school, everyone has access to the free Tar Heel Reader and throughout the school, books are being made and shared. The grade one team decides to align both their phonics curriculum and their social studies and science curriculum to some of the books they make available on the Tar Heel Reader. One day, the principle sees a few students waiting for the bus and laughing about something on their screen. He thought it may be a DVD playing or a video game and peers over and sees that they are reading a book that their class co-constructed using the Tar Heel Reader. She smiles.

Based on the success of a few weeks of using the Tar Heel Reader, the principal decides that the school will make a concerted effort to provide access to Bookshare for every qualifying student. She is happy to hear that there is a free version of Don Johnston's Read:Outloud that

comes with Bookshare access. At a staff function, a sixth grade teacher comments how he was able to give Mike access to the social studies text in a timely manner. Mike is a student who uses a computer for academics with a combination of eye gaze control, a head tracking system, and sometimes two switches. The teacher says that Mike wrote an amazing essay about how it made him feel to have the book at the same time as his friends, and that the principal just had to see it.

There are a number of students in the school who have autism, and they easily



*OLPC XO Laptop.*

reading and writing in the workplace, e-mailing and beyond. For individuals with special needs, access to high tech screen-based technologies can enhance literacy learning and the reading and writing process. Let's consider a scenario to see how communication, literacy and curriculum/ information can come together.

Imagine that a school principal was reconsidering how to spend the average \$8,701 per pupil expenditure this upcoming year. She decides to spend \$300 to purchase students a netbook computer. She thought about how this small fraction

get a subscription to the Internet-based, visual and multimodal learning platform, Vizzle. Their special educator reports that the students are highly engaged by the clean interactive learning interface. That same teacher pulls the principle into her classroom and shows her all of the lessons she has been able to use that are already on the site and how easy it was for her to put together a whole unit for the next month. That teacher tears up a bit as she is talking because she realizes that she would have never been able to keep up without a tool of this sort, and the fact that the students have the netbooks makes the integration nearly seamless. Based on the successful use of Vizzle, the principal accepts a proposal from a group of teachers wanting subscriptions to the News-2-You newspaper and the new Unique Learning System curriculum that is available now. She knows that News-2-You has been popular at the school for a while and when she sees all of the monthly curriculum from Unique, she realizes that between that and Vizzle, she has literally given students and teachers access to thousands of relevant curriculum resources. The principal looks up at her computer and realizes there is a direct message to her on her Twitter account saying that the fourth grade team has just aligned a Vizzle curriculum mini-unit with videos accessed from Discovery Streaming. "Incredible," she thinks to herself.

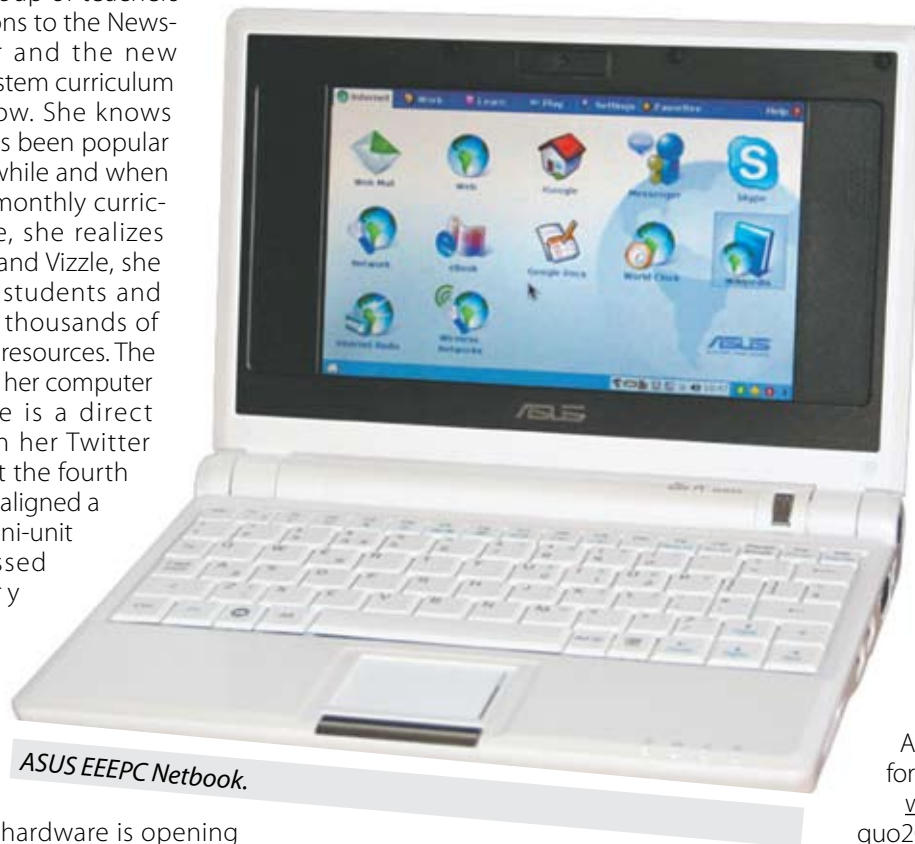
The principal at this school is beginning to realize that the \$300 spent on the hardware is opening up some really neat opportunities, some free, and some a very good value. There had been something weighing on her mind though. She thinks frequently about how she heard a presentation last summer about everyone being able to learn to read. There is an inclusion program in her school that serves individuals with more significant special needs and she knows that the teacher, who was also in attendance at that presentation, has been working hard, trying to create literacy learning materials for the group. The principal had heard about the ALL literacy curriculum and realizes this might be perfect. She purchases the light tech curriculum binders, as well

as the software version. She explains to the parents of this group of students that the literacy curriculum is based on the National Reading Panel's recommendations and that it is made accessible with things like symbols and alternate access options. A few weeks after they get it fully rolling, one of the parents calls the principal to exclaim that, for the first time ever, her son is reading words...and also loving it!

In the part of the country where this school is located, the local schools frequently provide AAC devices. The principal meets with the area AAC specialist and realizes that about ten students need a portable AAC solution. She quickly signs

have both a tabletop AAC system and access to a portable solution, explaining how they went out to dinner and to a movie and her son was quite that chatter box. She reminisced that, only a few weeks earlier, they had left the larger device at home because, as she said, "it just didn't fit on the table with all the food." The principal grins as she thinks about how the student has the best of both worlds, with access to table top and portable dynamic display AAC systems.

Then she realizes that she must get back in for a scheduled conference call. She makes it on time to speak with the principal of the area high school. He wants to ask her if she thinks he should get each student a low cost laptop and what the possibilities are. The principal stops and smiles for a moment before answering, "Well, let me tell you..."



ASUS EEEPC Netbook.

a purchase order for around \$5,000 and gets ten iPod touch devices, with a sleek speaker pack and the new Proloquo2Go AAC software. She just has to look, and in the filing cabinet finds a purchase order from a while back for one portable, and the price was just about the same. A few weeks later, she sees two of these students at recess, each talking with their iPod touch and Proloquo2Go-based systems and they have three or four speaking classmates with them as they are setting up the rules for some imaginary play game. Later that day, she gets a call from a parent of one of these students, saying how awesome it is for her son to

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# KURZWEIL 3000 VERSION 11

## NEW TOOLS TO SUPPORT THE WRITING PROCESS

By Jennifer Edge-Savage

"Class, please take out your journals and respond to the writing prompt provided on the board..." This simple direction often results in groans, blank stares, heads drooping down on desks, requests for pencils, requests for passes to the restroom and far worse behaviors. This shouldn't surprise us. According to 2005 NAEP statistics on student writing performance: 71 percent of fourth graders, 71 percent of eighth graders and 64 percent of 12th graders did not meet writing proficiency goals. Meaning, less than one third of America's high school students are reading or writing at grade level. How can we challenge our students to become more proficient writers, and, perhaps, even enjoy writing? Are we using the right tools and strategies to represent information to our students, engage them in learning and help them to express what they know through writing? (See Figure 1)

We frequently discuss the transition from "learning to read" and "reading to learn" and the inevitable struggles students face if they have not, in fact, learned to read proficiently. Proficient readers think actively as they read and engage with the content to understand and learn from it. After all, the ultimate goal of reading is *meaning*. Struggling readers, who have not yet "learned to read," face a significant barrier to "reading to learn" and, therefore, have limited opportunities for building knowledge and vocabulary and limited access to models of good writing. If you are expending all your energy struggling to decode words, what cognitive resources do you have left for comprehension?

According to the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), "Writers must learn how texts are structured because this knowledge supports their ability to create them." (2004) Through reading, we gain content knowledge, get exposure to written language structure and conventions, and develop the vocabulary that is essential for success in both reading and

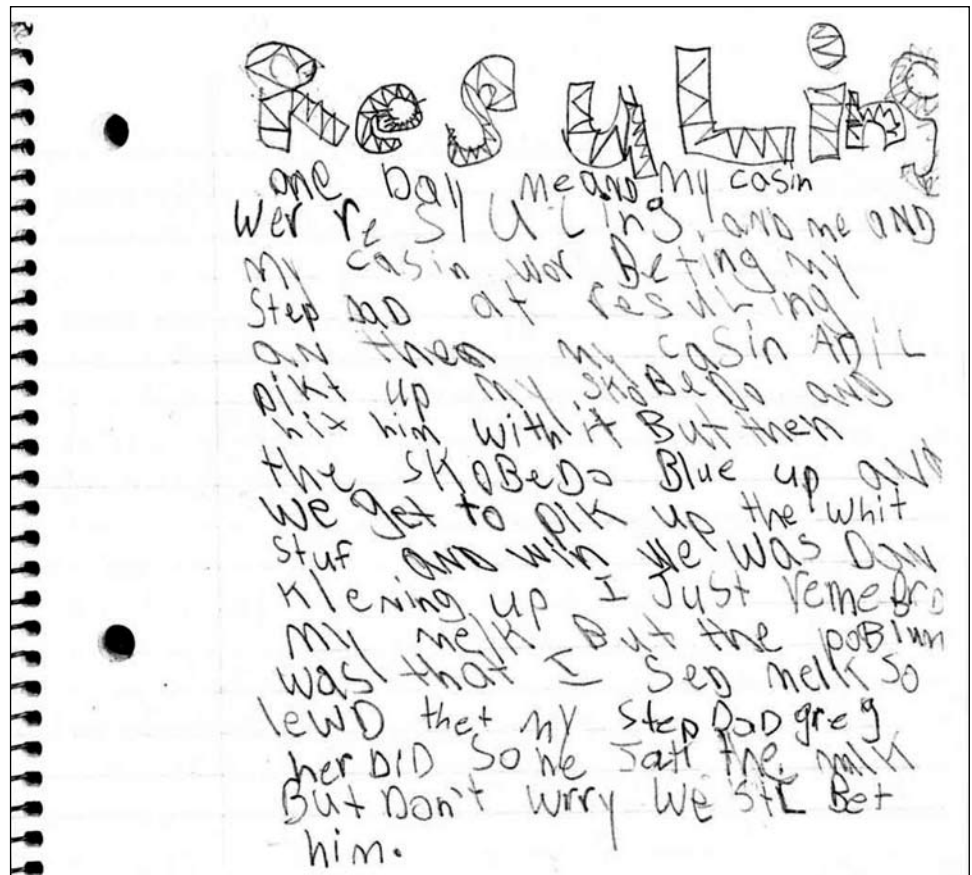


Figure 1: Does this look familiar?

writing. "When we write, we more fully understand what we read; when we read, we push ahead our ability to write." (Wood, 2000) Reading and writing are indeed complementary processes, but many of us are good readers and not necessarily good writers. If this is the case, it begs the question: "Can you be a good writer if you are not a good reader?"

In "Writing Next" (2007), Graham and Perin describe a transition that occurs with writing that is similar to that of reading. It presents the notion of "learning to write" and "writing to learn." Proficient writers have the knowledge, skills and flexibility needed to write in a clear and organized manner for different contexts, formats and

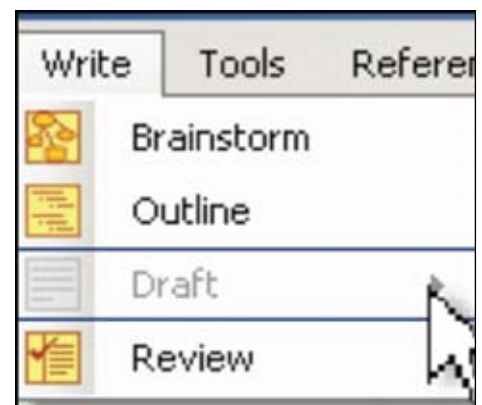


Figure 2: Kurzweil 3000's new Writing Path tools.

purposes, using a variety of forms, strategies and tones. They get to the point of “knowledge transformation,” figuring out what they know as they write. Struggling or beginning writers lack the high-level process strategies needed to plan, generate ideas and revise text. They have difficulty with the low-level transcription skills, such as handwriting, keyboarding, spelling, grammar, punctuation, word retrieval and vocabulary, and therefore, expend all their energy before they can get truly caught up in the process of writing. They remain at the point of “knowledge telling.” If students are focusing on the *mechanics of writing*, they don’t have the energy or cognitive resources left to devote to planning, composing and revising their work.

Imagine, if you will, a typical high school classroom. Consider the number of classes an English teacher might conduct in a course of a day; the number of students in each class; the number of papers a teacher might need to correct if they assigned just one writing task per day, per week; the time constraints in a typical classroom; the time demands on a teacher, ... How much time do our teachers have to actually devote to writing, re-writing and peer review of writing? According to the Alliance for Excellent Education Policy Brief: Making Writing Instruction a Priority in America’s Middle and High Schools (2007): not enough. Furthermore, many teachers do not receive the required professional development opportunities to learn *how* to effectively teach writing. Students need explicit instruction in research-based writing strategies, exposure to models of good writing, and lots of opportunities to write. The right combination of good instruction, teamed with powerful digital writing tools can potentially help support all students in becoming proficient writers.

For many years, Kurzweil 3000 has been at the forefront of making text accessible to students with different learning abilities. This research-based technology provides the reading, study strategies and research tools needed to help students access models of good writing and access content so they can then write about it! About 90 percent of the writing required of students is expository in nature: writing about what they have read to demonstrate understanding. Technology can not only help to extend a time-strapped teacher’s reach in the classroom, it can support students in becoming independent writers by providing them with the tools needed to get beyond “learning to write” so they can focus on “writing to learn.” Kurzweil 3000’s

writing supports have always included a talking word processor, speaking spell check, dictionary and thesaurus support, highlighting tools, word prediction, custom vocabulary lists, etc. But, this is just the tip-of-the-iceberg needed to thoroughly support writing. With Version 11, Kurzweil 3000 has introduced several new tools to support students through all phases of the

writing process, including column notes, mind-mapping/brainstorming, outlining, split-screen drafting, writing templates and graphic organizers, floating word lists, note snippets and a review checklist. Of course, Kurzweil 3000 does not replace good writing instruction, rather it is a powerful tool for supporting the writing process

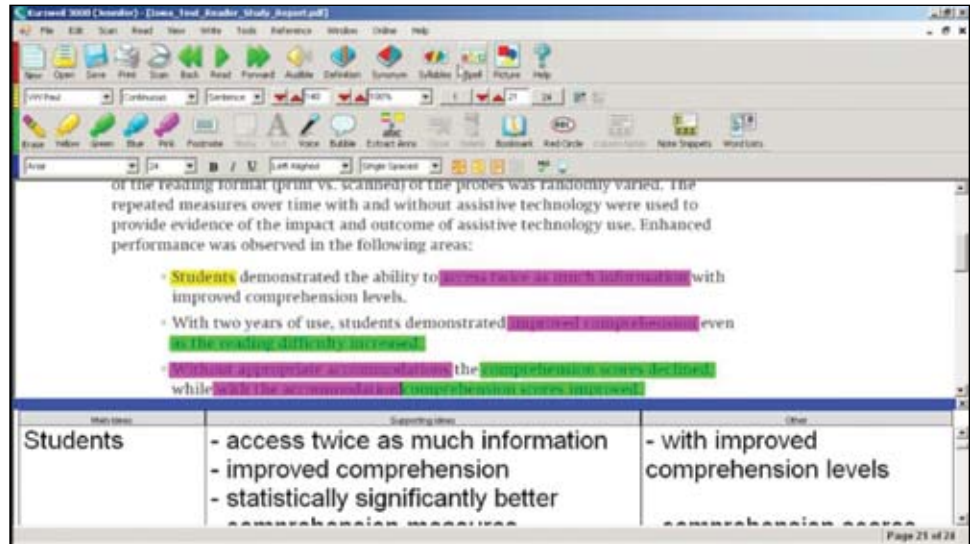


Figure 3a: Using two or three column notes to collect ideas from single or multiple texts.

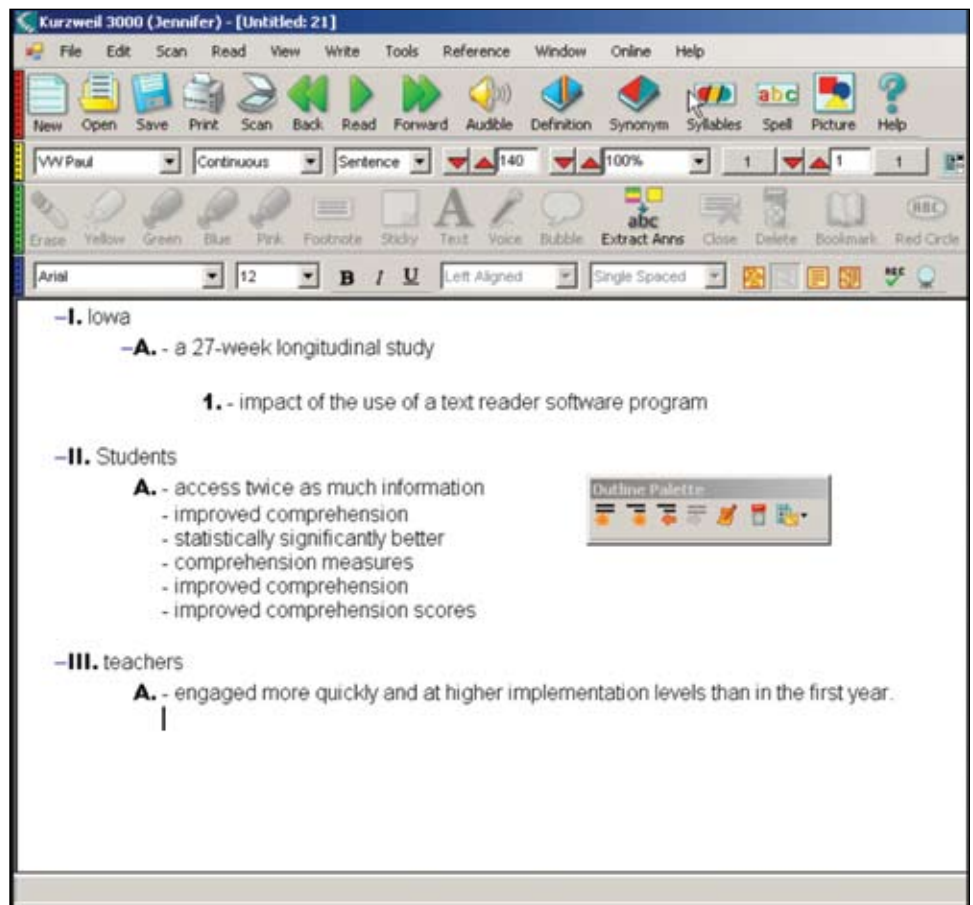


Figure 3b: Extracting column notes into an outline.

for individuals, as well as supporting the teacher for whole class writing instruction.

Kurzweil now has multiple tools to support different entry and exit points in the writing process for all types of learning styles and strategies. Let's take a closer look at how Kurzweil 3000's old and new features in Kurzweil 3000's "writing path" can support the multi-draft, cyclical process of **Prewriting, Drafting, Revising, Editing** and **Publishing** written work. (See Figure 2)

## PREWRITING

Pre-reading with a purpose, brainstorming thoughts, organizing thoughts via outlining or graphic organizers, and most importantly, *planning*.

**Column Notes** – Column notes are used to organize text into meaningful categories and are a really powerful way to actively engage in reading and ensure comprehension. Kurzweil 3000 now provides the ability to take two or three column notes while reading any files within the program. You can type directly into column note cells, extract highlighted text into column

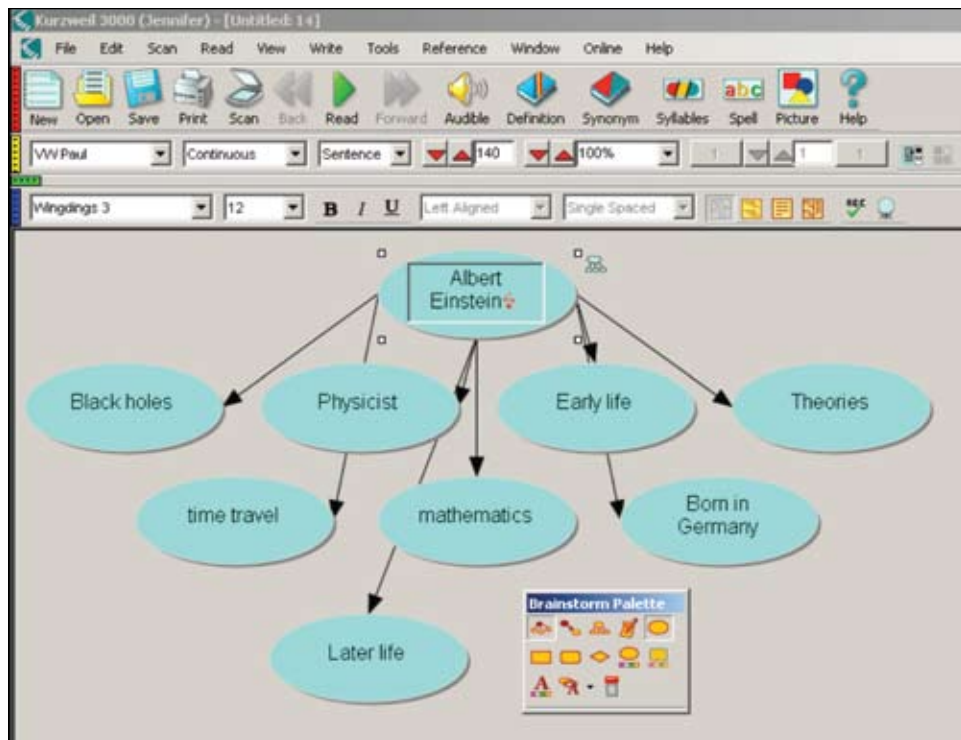


Figure 4: Brainstorming using the "Quick Takes" feature.

Figure 5 (above): Using outline to view and revise ideas.

Figure 6 (below): Sample text-based writing template.

NOTE: To use this template, review the instructions, then type into fields that are in angle brackets <...>. When you are ready to finalize your draft, remove instructional and extra text by selecting or drag-selecting the text and pressing DELETE.

In a book report, you can write about the plot, the setting, a character or a theme, and tell readers what you think about the subject and the book.

Before you begin writing, be sure to:

- Think about a subject you want to talk about in the book report. This could be about the plot or story. Or you could write about a character.
- Brainstorm and list one to three ideas that have to do with the subject.
- Gather as many examples from the book as possible to support those ideas.
- Organize and present the details in logical order.

The book report structure also works well for book and movie reviews.

To help you brainstorm and organize your ideas, you may use the Column Notes available from the Tools menu, or use the table setup below.

Idea #1	Details for Idea #1
Idea #2	Details for Idea #2
Idea #3	Details for Idea #3

Suggested Word List(s): Transitions Word List



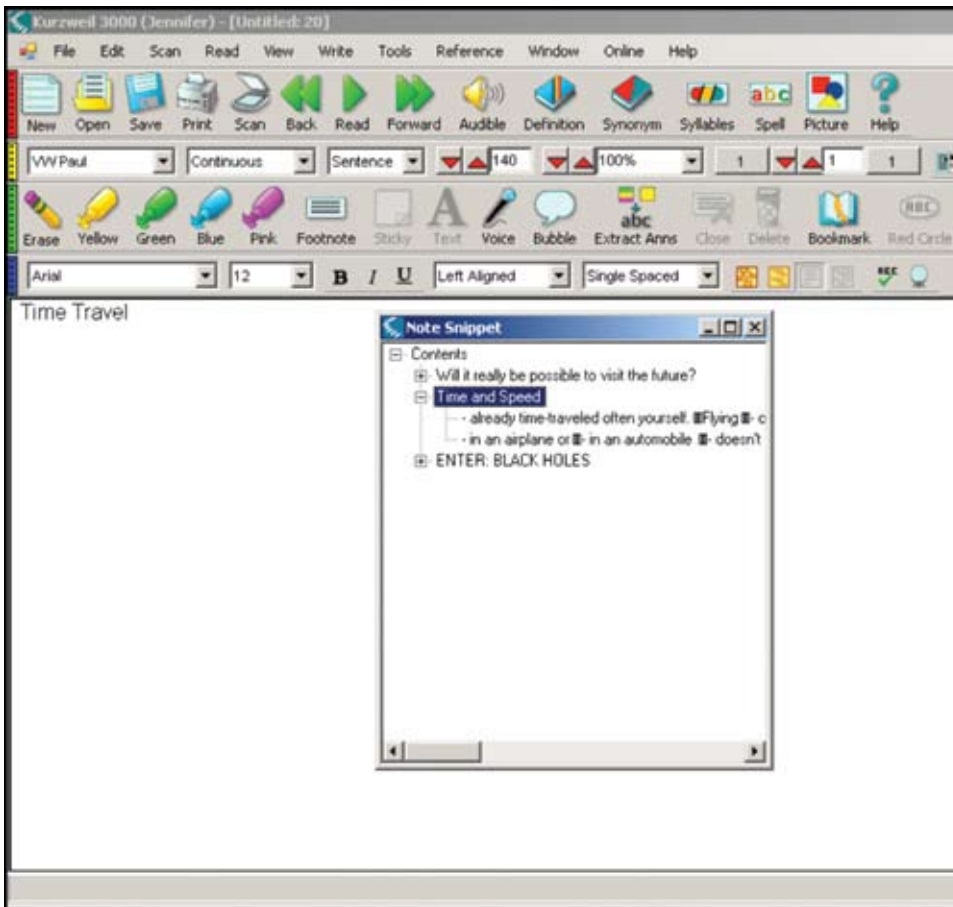


Figure 10: Note Snippets, an alternate way to write a draft from notes collected from readings.

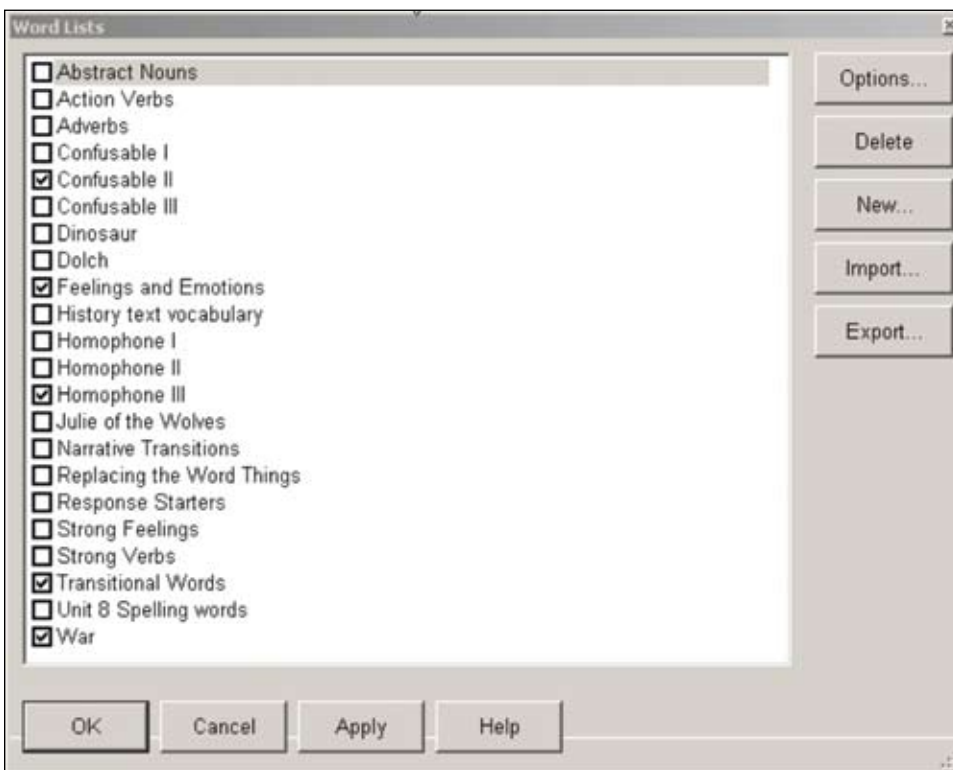


Figure 11a: Custom Word Lists.

## DRAFTING

Getting thoughts on paper without worrying about writing conventions. Focus on content.

**SplitScreen** – This view allows you to see both the Outline and Draft at the same time. Ideas from the outline can be dragged and dropped into the draft. (See Figure 8)

**Actively modify outline while composing a draft** – As you are writing, you can easily add, delete or modify ideas in your outline and return to drafting your paper.

**Word Prediction** – Kurzweil 3000's word prediction is audible and is based on rules of spelling, frequency and recency. Word Prediction can be used to support students with spelling and vocabulary difficulties. For those who struggle with the physical task of typing, it reduces the number of keystrokes required. Custom Word Lists can be created and used to provide students with access to topic specific vocabulary for different writing projects across different content areas. These lists can be highlighted in the word prediction window as an additional visual cue. For example, when writing about "Albert Einstein," typing the letter "p" will quickly come up with "physicist" when that particular custom word list is activated. (See Figure 9)

**Note Snippets** – When you save a Column Note, a Note Snippet is automatically created and available to you for writing support. Note Snippets allow you to view your Column Notes with a hierarchical view in a compact window, while writing in Draft. You can drag and drop needed notes into the Draft for further elaboration. (See Figure 10)



Figure 11a: Custom Word Lists.

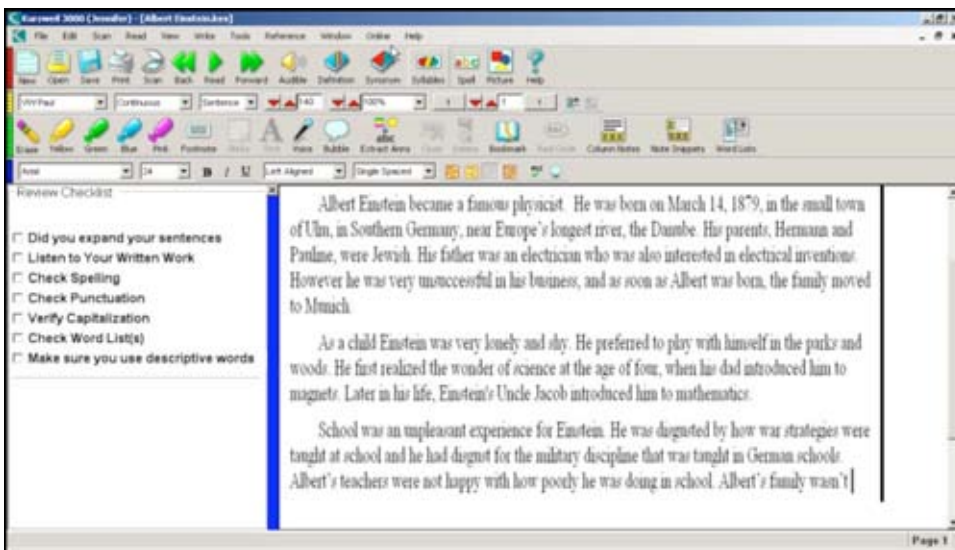


Figure 12: Review Checklist.



Figure 13: Final Draft.

## REVISING

Make changes to organization, expand ideas, enhance word choices, edit ideas, create multiple drafts.

**Thesaurus and Dictionary** – Kurzweil 3000's built-in Thesaurus and Dictionary supports provide students with easy access to alternate word choices.

**Floating Word Lists** – Kurzweil 3000's new Floating Word Lists feature can be used to prompt students to use content specific words, use stronger word choices, or vary their transitional words. Kurzweil 3000 has several NEW Word Lists available, including: Transitional Words, Strong Verbs, Homophones, Dolch Words, Response Starters, and many more. (See Figures 11a and 11b)

**Outline and Brainstorm** – Any modifications or additions made to Outline or Brainstorm mode will immediately be reflected in both views.

## EDITING

Proofread your work, check for mechanics, spelling, word choice, voice and other criteria included in a writing assignment rubric.

**Speaking Spell Check** – Kurzweil 3000's spell check actually speaks, providing students with the opportunity to make a more educated guess about which word they meant to write, rather than simply choosing the first word offered (a strategy that often results in an essay of perfectly spelled words that have nothing to do with one another!).

**Talking Word Processor** – Hearing written work out loud is an enormous part of the proofreading process. When students listen to their work, they hear spelling mistakes, confusing grammar choices, and the overall "voice" of their written work. A talking word processor allows students to independently proofread their work.

**Review Checklist** – This new feature allows teachers to create student-specific Review Checklists as part of the final steps of the writing process. Task-specific or student-specific writing criteria can be embedded in the writing path. Possible checklist items could include: Did you listen to your written work? Did you paint your predicate? Does your concluding paragraph relate to your introduction? Or even the 6+ traits. This is a great way to remind students of the criteria for proficient writing. (See Figure 12)

## PUBLISHING

Finish your work, adjust formatting, add pictures and share written work with the world! Kurzweil 3000 drafts can be saved as .rtf files that can be easily opened in any

word processor for further refinement. Text composed in Kurzweil 3000 can be printed, inserted into a PowerPoint presentation or copied and pasted into an e-mail or blog. (See Figure 13)

It should be noted that Kurzweil 3000 continues to provide Keyboard shortcuts for its features. Full keyboard accessibility allows for the use of keyboard shortcuts in programming a wide variety of alternate access devices, such as alternate keyboards, keyboard emulators, AAC devices, single switch access software, etc. There is even a specific Kurzweil 3000 Writing Overlay for the IntelliKeys Keyboard. ALL students can have independent access to reading, note-taking and writing.

In conclusion, Cambium Learning Technologies believes in the principles of Universal Design for Learning and aims to make software solutions that are necessary for some, but beneficial for all. When working in the classroom, we need to ask ourselves: Are we using the right tools and strategies to represent information to our students, engage them in learning, and help them to express what they know through writing? Could Kurzweil 3000 be an important tool in your toolbox to help your students be successful writers?

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# AT SPECIALIST OR CHANGE AGENT?

By Kathy Schroeder

**A**ssistive technologies enhance the lives of so many students. But at times, the challenge isn't getting the student to adapt to the use of technology, but rather helping the adults that work with the students to understand the why and how of assistive technology.

Julie Cunningham, physical/health disabilities consultant and traumatic brain injury and assistive technology specialist, has been passionate about assistive technology for 15 years. She began her career in Iowa, spending 12 years as a hearing impaired teacher. That role introduced her to what would become a life passion.

While in Iowa, a student with cerebral palsy entered the program. Determined to help this student with hearing challenges access the curriculum, Julie turned to colleagues for advice. The recommendation was that she needed to attend Closing The Gap.

In Cunningham's words, "Closing The Gap saved my life. I never knew that Velcro and hot glue could do so much for you! I fell in love with assistive tech. Then it became a thought process. Eventually, I wanted to do it full time. Presently, I am. My work is divided between assistive technology and part time as a physical/health disabilities consultant. I just love AT, and I love multimedia."

While in a workshop at Closing The Gap, someone said to look at Atomic Learning as a training tool for assistive technology software. She had never heard of Atomic Learning before, but bought a personal subscription. The online resource of one- to three-minute training tutorials on common software applications, including Clicker and Microsoft Office applications, was a big help. "I would have died without it. Initially, Atomic Learning's tutorials supported

me in my master's degree program. I had no experience with either FileMaker Pro or Excel. However, with the tutorials, I was able to learn how to use each program. Now, I use Atomic Learning tutorials to learn assistive technology. It's much faster learning the software on your own," she said.

The use of AT for students has evolved a lot since Cunningham started her career path. She noticed early on that people would get excited as they heard about new tools, and would focus on wanting to get the tool. They didn't think about the task that the student needed to do. She found herself coaching people to step back a little bit and consider what needs the student had first, and then look at AT relevant to those needs instead of vice versa. She found herself assisting teachers to learn the steps of effective AT implementation. Instead of focusing on tools, Cunningham asks teachers to think about the student, the environment, the tasks and finally the tools (SETT Framework, Zabala). Cunningham and her colleague, Jackie Vick's favorite saying is "No tool talk 'til it is time."

She remembers thinking, "They need to talk about AT in IEP meetings, and they're not thinking about it. AT was an afterthought. I would show up for meetings about students with physical impairments, would suggest AT, and the teachers would say 'oh yeah.' Through exposing them and being with them, they started to think about it. But keep mind that at the university level, no one talked about it. We were all taught that the other pieces come first, such as the IEP and testing, and AT later."

She recalls a student with a writing productivity challenge. The student was using Co:Writer, and using it well. Then, when the next school year came, she

found the student wasn't using it. What had happened? The third grade teacher was embracing AT, and now the student was in a classroom where the fourth grade teacher didn't feel the need for AT was there. "I have to respect that

**A**tomic Learning's Assistive Technology Collection includes hundreds of easy-to-understand tutorials focused on helping educators use and apply assistive technology. Searchable by specialization and category, the collection is a valuable resource for training on special education software, assistive technology devices and accessibility features of common applications. Access for parents is included at no charge in annual site license subscriptions. For more information and a full list of available training series, visit [www.AtomicLearning.com/assistivetechology](http://www.AtomicLearning.com/assistivetechology).

teacher," says Cunningham. "I won't push it on a classroom teacher. The teacher needs to buy in as well. I have to build good relationships with people; it's my opinion that the student would benefit from AT, but the teacher is with him or her everyday. I'll say I disagree, but I have

to respect where they are. It's a fine line. I'm going to trust that teachers will do what is the best for their students. I need to respect where someone is in their stage of change. I need to allow people to be who they are, but do my job in advocating for AT even though there are people that aren't ready for change. But I build that relationship in a coaching way, I need to be available to support them when they are."

Over time, her constant reminders to "Think AT" began to influence how team members thought. Now it's a regular part of their IEP meetings. If a student has a print disability, they talk about the AT that can help with his/her specific needs.

What was the key to this change in thinking? Cunningham says the key was that they needed a connection with a person to help them through the process; to guide them to the understanding that this is what they needed to do.

Understanding the process to identify the AT resource best suited for a student's needs was a key step. The other piece was helping staff with the "how do I use this"

training need. Before the district hired her in what was a second AT position, they often bought things and didn't include training.

Cunningham visited each location and looked in their cupboards; she often found things not being used. A common statement in the accommodations portion of the IEP was "AT has been considered and determined the student doesn't need it."

Training teachers was an obvious need. Cunningham found that learning styles varied, and just like AT recommendations needed to suit the student's needs, training recommendations needed to suit the staff person's needs. "I avoid at all costs spending my time sitting down and teaching people software," she states. Using their Atomic Learning subscription, she was able to direct one staff member to the tutorials on the software she needed to learn, and she was off and running on her own. But she acknowledges that she can't do that with everybody, "We all learn differently."

More recently, she had a teacher ask about inserting books from Bookshare.org onto the Classmate Reader. Cunningham didn't know how to do it herself, but she was able to find tutorials about it on Atomic Learning, and she could go through the tutorials with the teacher.

Bridging the gap with parents is a role she also plays. Coaching teachers to know where the parents are at in their stage of change has been helpful. She finds that many are thinking about AT ... and that's a stage. It's contemplative. Then, when and if they're ready, she coaches them as they move into planning and, eventually, the implementation and use of AT.

And when it's successful, it's an amazing thing. Cunningham recalls a particular fifth grade student in a district that didn't use AT. Cunningham spoke with the teacher, who said the student didn't need AT. The parent asked Cunningham to come to their home and install a free text reader. Unbeknownst to Cunningham, she found the student had been using this AT in the home for the past five years. The software she was using was outdated, and Cunningham was able to upgrade her to Read & Write GOLD. The student was then able to convert files to MP3 for her iPod. Cunningham was especially amused at listening to the girl share her frustration with the software pausing after punctuation; it was driving her nuts as she listens at 150 wpm.

When AT is expanded into the home, real change happens. The mother and daughter had been arguing at home. Once they brought in AT, the daughter could do her homework independently, and it rebuilt their relationship. As the parent of this student stated, "Assistive technology saved our lives."

The girl shared with Cunningham, "I have a learning disability, but I don't think it defines who I am."

Assistive technology provides individuals with the ability to change their lives. This statement holds true for Cunningham as well, as she has found her path in the field of AT.

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# Implementing Innovative Uses of ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY in the Classroom

By Jessi Wright, Jamie Hayhurst-Marshall and Hannah Godbey

During the 2007-2008 school year, the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS) began a new initiative for the 2007-2008 school year promoting access to and acquisition of assistive technology for students with disabilities in public schools. The program collaborated with and provided public school teachers and personnel the opportunity to apply for mini-grants of up to \$750 to fund new projects to improve outcomes for students with IEPs or 504 plans. Projects were expected to deliver outcomes by implementing projects in one of the following areas: developing innovative or creative uses of assistive technology for supporting inclusive educational environments; inventing/creating or modifying assistive technology to improve educational outcomes for students; improving social outcomes for students, including recreation, art or other extracurricular activities; and implementing strategies to support assistive technology following the students through transitions during school and from school to adult life. Recipients were expected to collaborate with WVATS project staff to collect data about the project and to submit a final written report. Applications were reviewed by the WVATS staff and advisory council. Selection was based on a required detailed description of the purpose of the project (goals/objectives), required materials, implementation activities, projected outcomes and an evaluation process/procedure(s).

## PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS AND OUTCOMES

Six projects were selected for funding. Educators began their projects October 1, 2007 and completed data collection on May 15, 2008. The following descriptions and final outcomes are for three representative projects as submitted by project leaders.

"Creating a Sensory Integration Room for Students of All Abilities" was awarded \$750 to increase the personal awareness and social participation of students experiencing difficulties with sensory perceptions through creation of a sensory integration room.

School staff identified students who might benefit from these services and purchased appropriate equipment. Staff developed individualized "Sensory Integration Plans" for each student to address individual sensory needs and identified the most appropriate time(s) during the day for use of the room. Through providing appropriate sensory input to replace self-stimulatory (repetitive body movements or repetitive movement of objects) and other inappropriate classroom behaviors associated with sensory deficit, the project leader anticipated the Sensory Integrated Room would allow students to focus more effectively on learning and play



Sensory Integration Room

in the classroom.

Staff used the awarded funds to purchase:

- wall element mountains – a tool used to encourage motor planning, eye-foot or eye-hand coordination and visual processing
- a rain stick – a clear, plastic tube containing plastic beads, which can be used as a reinforcement to perform gross and fine motor tasks; the sound from the product is relaxing to some individuals
- a cuddle swing – a therapeutic swing used to increase calming and organizing input by providing deep touch pressure and vestibular stimulation
- cloud nine – a soft, foam chunk filled product that can be used to increase safety,

work on balance and coordination, or encourage motor planning

- a tube swing kit – which includes a tube swing with tube, a heavy duty tube, and a tube swing harness; the device is designed for flexion and contraction exercises, as well as providing proprioceptive and vestibular stimulation
- a resistance tunnel - used to develop body awareness and motor planning via varying degrees of resistance and deep-touch input.

Outcomes: Eighteen students from grades 2-8 participated in the project with five teachers. An occupational therapist assisted in assessing the needs of participants and developing their Sensory Integration Plans. Over a period of six months, each student used the Sensory Integration Room for approximately 30 minutes a day. After students completed the assigned sensory activities, staff observed and documented the students' behavior. These students had exhibited transition difficulties, sensory input avoidances, poor motor planning and coordination, limited attendance skills, and self-stimulatory behaviors. Following use of the "sensory plans," the project leader reported data indicating significant improvements in the students' classroom participation. A specific example was a child diagnosed with autism, who before implementing the "sensory plan" was on a shortened school week schedule due to violent behaviors. Baseline data reported that the child had 68 aggressive behaviors in a one-day period; within four months of the implementation of this project, the aggressions had decreased to approximately three per day. The project leader plans to continue to expand this sensory area by adding more equipment and materials; she also plans to implement an additional room in another school in a different part of the county.

"Kid Connections" proposed engaging "students in skill-based cooperative and differentiated learning through use of assistive technology and problem solving support in an inclusive group setting to create positive peer relations and empathy toward one another." The project purchased Boardmaker software, a digital camera

package, and other supplies for communication activities with the \$535 awarded. Students from the regular education classroom visited the self-contained special education classroom at designated times and participated in a character building/civic literacy activity that incorporated assistive technology and provided socialization opportunities for the students.

Outcomes: Over the course of nine months, students from the general education classrooms visited the special education classroom each Friday to complete cooperative learning and character building activities with the students in special education classrooms related to the curriculum in general education. The general students learned sign language and how to implement the assistive device created by the project leader to communicate with a nonverbal student. Student reflection assignments indicate the regular education students enjoyed participating in the project. The assistive technology devices used in this project included a word ring, a signing and reading board using sign language, as well as modified and teacher-created books to improve communication skills and social skills. A student who was nonverbal took the devices to the general education classroom to communicate with peers, increasing rates of conversation initiation.

“Sensory Solutions and Auditory Processing” was awarded \$416 to purchase technology to enhance pre-reading skills, social interaction and inclusion opportunities for children in grades K-5, specifically those in a self-contained special education classroom.

The project leader purchased:

- Infrared Music Maker – a dual cassette recorder/player, programmable CD player and AM-FM stereo designed to support phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, ELL, ELD and other language learning programs. The device possesses dual infrared transmitters for wireless listening and a full-function remote for classroom flexibility.

Figure 1. Example of Infrared Music Maker (EnableMart)

- Infrared Headphones (six sets) – for use with the Infrared Music Maker.

Figure 2. Example of Infrared Headphones (Amazon).

- Soundtracks for sensory solutions and auditory processing.

The program design had four steps: 1) introducing technology to one student who exhibited difficulty working in close proximity to peers, 2) including two other students diagnosed with autism, 3) incorporating three regular education students, and 4) taking the technology to a regular education classroom to facilitate inclusion opportunities for chil-

dren assigned to the self-contained classroom.

Outcomes: The headphones were used for reading and math instruction, as well as to allow students to complete tasks without auditory distractions. One child, who was unable to tolerate the presence of peers, gradually accepted peers into her proximity while she wore the headphones and then progressed to accepting peers without wearing headphones. An unanticipated but positive outcome of this project was an increase in the amount of time students maintained their attention on a desired activity using the headphones. The project leader was particularly pleased with the inclusion success and the acceptance of special education students by regular education students.



Figure 1.



Figure 2.

During school-wide testing, the project leader worked with a small group of students who were not participating in the testing. These students had taken the alternate assessment the previous week or were not scheduled for testing (only third and fourth grade students are tested). The group consisted of two students who were diagnosed with autism and one student who was labeled mentally impaired. The students participated in an activity using the purchased equipment, a rhyming activity CD and picture cards. The project leader reviewed the picture cards and

answers with the group, then instructed the students to use the headphones to complete several cards independently. This method of instruction allowed the students to practice listening skills and independent answering. The project leader reported that her students possess excellent imitation skills and often mimic other students. These acts of imitation are sometimes mistaken for independent correct answers. The headphones allowed the educator to independently assess each student’s knowledge. She said, “When I test them independently or in small groups with this equipment, the results are very different from the success that the regular education teachers think they see in group settings.”

## CONCLUSIONS

- Over 180 students, with and without disabilities, received exposure to assistive technology due to the funds provided for these assistive technology projects
- Sixteen educators participated in incorporating assistive technology in the public school environment
- Of the six funded projects, three directly targeted increasing inclusion opportunities for students with IEPs

WVATS continued the Request for Proposal (RFP) initiative for the 2008-2009 school year. Staff reviewed the application requirements and modified the process to include outcomes from recipients on whether the projects were worthy of sustainability and if so, how sustainment could be achieved. WVATS received 14 applications and awarded eight new projects for the 2008-2009 school year. To ensure projects are following guidelines and providing the required feedback, WVATS staff is more involved in the project implementations and data collection processes.

This project was funded by the US Department of Education RSA. WVATS is an inter-agency collaboration between the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Center for Excellence in Disabilities (CED).

## PRODUCT INFORMATION

Figure 1. Infrared Music Maker, [www.EnableMart.com](http://www.EnableMart.com) (\$198)

Figure 2. Infrared Headphones, [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com) (\$49)

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jessi Wright is a Graduate Assistant, WVATS, Jamie Hayhurst-Marshall ATP, CIRS is the Assistant Program Manager, WVATS, and Hannah Godbey is a Graduate Assistant, WVATS.

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# “T.H.E. P.A.C.T.”

## Technology Helps Easy & Practical Adapted Curriculum Teaching

*Designing “Learn About, Read About, Write About, and Talk About” Modules*

By Phyl T. Macomber

Providing curriculum support to students with special needs in a classroom environment can be a challenging task. Inclusion requires us to look at the specifics of how these students can best learn in a least restrictive environment. Teams serving these populations realize that “one size does not fit all” when it comes to adapting curriculum for these learners. Rather, the curriculum needs to be continually adapted to fit each child’s needs and learning style in order for that child to be truly included in their learning community.

### CURRICULUM CHALLENGES OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

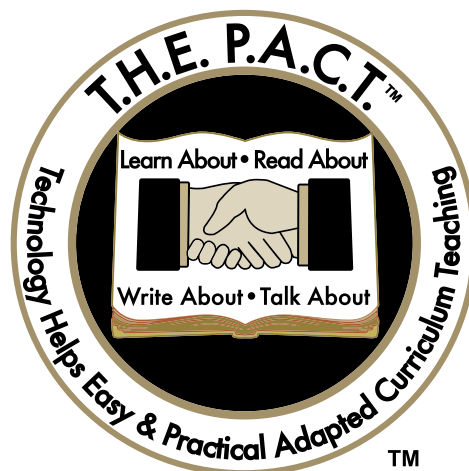
Many of our special needs students cannot physically access classroom materials the way the other children can. For example, a learner with cerebral palsy may need to have page lifts added to customized curriculum books in order to turn the pages of a workbook. To access a classroom computer, this same child may have to use a joystick to emulate a mouse to access a free talking book Web site on the Internet. A special needs learner, with a different developmental disability, may have decreased functional hand use and require classroom worksheet modifications to color or use a pencil or highlighter.

In addition to motor challenges, many of our special needs students have cognitive impairments. For instance, a student with Down Syndrome may need a classroom worksheet customized into a learning workbook, tailor-made with one item on each page – as opposed to having all of the items presented on one sheet of paper like his or her classmates. Or, that same learner may require more of a kinesthetic approach to learning and retain information better if the workbook “comes to life” on a computer screen to further reinforce the targeted learning concepts of the lesson.

Instructional materials in classrooms change as the classroom content varies on

a regular basis. This shifting of instructional formats and classroom tools can sometimes be confusing to our special needs learners. To be taught new information in the classroom, our students sometimes use learning books that page-turn in a horizontal fashion, and other times are presented with flip books in vertical fashion, which require different physical and visual motor patterns.

To learn new vocabulary, these students may be presented with vocabulary cards of varying sizes and symbol representations. When completing worksheets, our learners



frequently have to hold a pencil or marker and circle the answer on the sheet; yet, from time to time, have to cross it out and eliminate it if it does not belong. Or, the word banks on the worksheets for fill-in-the-blank assignments are sometimes presented on the top of the page and other times presented on the bottom of the page. This variation in the type of materials utilized in different display formats can affect the ways many of our learners process information and best demonstrate what they have learned.

### CHALLENGES FOR OUR EDUCATIONAL TEAMS

Teams struggle to find the necessary time to modify classroom lesson content and appropriately tailor the instructional materials to the learner’s developmental level. With the vast number of assistive technology solutions – both low technology tools and high technology supports – available as learning and communication solutions, educational teams can become overwhelmed with having to make a systematic selection of the “best fit” for each child they serve.

Because of time constraints, I often see teams playing catch-up to put their best effort forward to adapt the ever-changing curriculum to the needs of their students. They struggle to put into play the consistent use of practical assistive technology solutions for learning strategies, instructional materials, curriculum content, and assessment procedures. This is not typically due to lack of effort on the part of team members, but simply reflects the multiple demands frequently placed on the professionals by their heavy workloads and taxing schedules.

### SETTING UP CONSISTENT INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND TOOLS: T.H.E. P.A.C.T.

Regardless of all of these challenges, adapting the curriculum is crucial for our special needs populations. It is also essential that the design formats and tools that we select to create and customize when adapting the curriculum are easy to use and practical for the team and the learner. During the more than two decades that I have served as an assistive technology specialist, it has been my experience that the most consistent use and effective application of assistive technology solutions – to enhance learning and communication – follow a predictable, step-by-step format for teams to use when serving these populations.

I have developed a framework for teams to use when adapting the curriculum in such a fashion for a special needs learner. It is called **T.H.E. P.A.C.T.**, which stands for:

- T = Technology**
- H = Helps**
- E = Easy**
- &**
- P = Practical**
- A = Adapted**
- C = Curriculum**
- T = Teaching**

T.H.E. P.A.C.T. offers a step-by-step method of adapting the curriculum for teams by implementing four essential, easy-to-design-and-use modules: **Learn About, Read About, Write About and Talk About**. This framework uses predictable assistive technology supports for each of the four modules of the process - which are identified based on the profile of the student - when adapting *any* curriculum unit for the learner.

In other words, when new content needs to be adapted for a learner, the team does not start from scratch. They will no longer play "catch up" with the ever-changing curriculum, frequently asking themselves, "How will I present this information to the student in a meaningful way?" or, "Which support would be best for *this* part of the lesson?!" Instead, the team follows and implements a carefully planned and customized program for the learner using T.H.E. P.A.C.T. framework. The result is that the team knows what to teach, in what format to teach it, and what they will use to teach it - similar to following a recipe.

T.H.E. P.A.C.T. model identifies:

1. The I.E.P. objective(s) targeted for the educational content of each module;
2. The consistent learning activities and formats used for each educational objective; and
3. The corresponding assistive technology solution for each learning activity.

(Below: An example of T.H.E. P.A.C.T.)

\*\*\*\*\*

**T.H.E. P.A.C.T.  
LEARN ABOUT**

**Educational Objective #1:** Will learn (identify and express) 5-10 new curriculum-based vocabulary words per classroom unit

**Learn About Activity:** Vocabulary Label Identification: Comprehension Check

**Assistive Technology Solution:** Boardmaker Plus! - "Find The" (interactive on touch tablet and print)

**Unit Example:** All About The Farm

(See Figure 1)

\*\*\*\*\*

T.H.E. P.A.C.T. incorporates the use of the following four language-based modules:

1. *The "Learn About" Module:* First, the learner needs to expand his or her receptive language skills to understand the language of any adapted curriculum lesson. This involves *learning about* all the concepts and content vocabulary related to the lesson.
2. *The "Read About" Module:* Second, the learner needs to further build his or her receptive language skills with more sophisticated language structures and forms by *reading about*, or listening to, these concepts and content vocabulary in a simple book format.

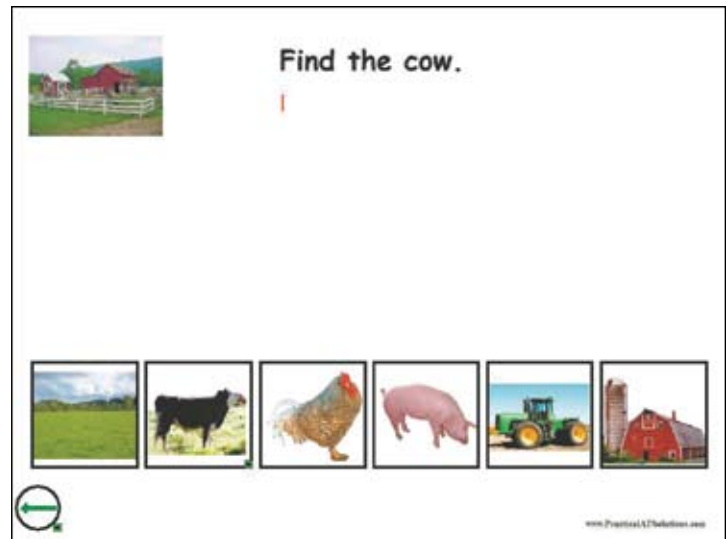


Figure 1.

This targets listening and reading comprehension in a narrative form, even if this form is scaffolded down to a simple repetitive line sentence.

3. *The "Write About" Module:* Next, the learner needs to express his or her understanding of what he or she has learned and *write about* the curriculum lesson. This step offers expression in a concrete, tangible visual format, with the option of printing out the expressed thoughts of the learner if this occurs on the computer.

4. *The "Talk About" Module:* Finally, the student needs to be able to *talk about* what he or she has learned by providing information and participating expressively in the learning environment. For our augmented users requiring visual and auditory supports, the curriculum concepts and content vocabulary need to be available in either low tech or high tech form so that the student can participate in class, whether that class is a small group of four learners or in the elementary school classroom.

**WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?**

For each step in this process, the team needs to identify a limited number of assistive technology supports for the learner to use when learning classroom information and expressing their knowledge of curriculum content. This way, regardless of what the student is learning *about*, the instructional material formats will be consistent for each step in the process.

For example, if the learner is going to *"Read About"* a certain curriculum topic, the consistent assistive technology supports identified may be a simple talking photo album and a corresponding "build a book" low technology solution. These tools would then be used when *"reading about"* any curriculum lesson, e.g., penguins, butterflies, the farm, or the State of Vermont. The unit tools should be consistent for the learner, so he or she develops consistent motor patterns quite early on in the learning process, and, in turn, develops a more reliable response pattern and increased independence in using the tool.

This approach also places less cognitive demand on the learner and sets up predictable learning formats for the special needs student. By setting up consistent assistive technology supports for each step outlined in the learning process using T.H.E. P.A.C.T. model, the learner is able to focus on the *new curriculum content* - with each changing classroom unit - in a *familiar learning format*. And, if the educational team has a set of identified practical supports for each step of this process for a specific learner, it allows for better

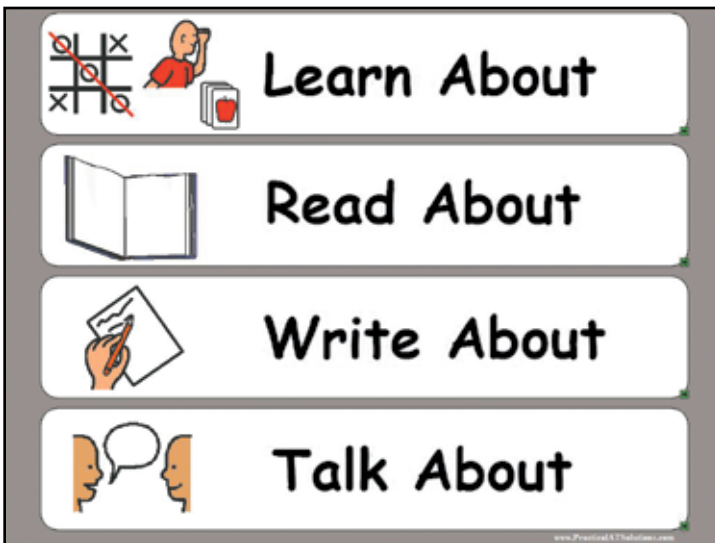


Figure 2: An example of a student tool using T.H.E. P.A.C.T. four-module framework with Boardmaker Plus! on a touch tablet.

time management related to materials development on the part of the educational team. Throughout the course of the school year, this practical approach streamlines adapting the curriculum for the educational staff.

(See Figure 2)

### ZACH'S SUCCESS STORY: "ALL ABOUT THE FARM"

Zach is a third grade student with cerebral palsy and cognitive challenges. He is integrated into his third grade curriculum and uses a consistent, predictable set of assistive technology supports that are utilized for each curriculum unit. Although Zach has decreased functional hand use and limited oral speech, he is able to use a touch screen tablet with a right index pointer finger to access a variety of computer-based activities to enhance his learning and communication. In the afternoon, he transitions his computer access to using a joystick due to fatigue.

In addition, Zach has the strength to remove items, affixed with a very small amount of Velcro, from a learning or communication display and place them in appropriate locations on his display formats. He functions at approximately a 4-5 year old developmental level across most skill areas. Simply put, Zach loves to learn and talk!

Based on his educational plan, T.H.E. P.A.C.T. was put in place for the team to use when adapting the curriculum for Zach. It highlighted the importance of using consistent assistive technology tools for each part of the learning process. Zach's educational team was very comfortable using *Boardmaker* from the Mayer-Johnson Company to print materials for their special education population. The school district had also recently upgraded their software to *Boardmaker Plus!* to set up interactive materials, with the staff being in the initial stages of learning how to use this version of the software.

Specific to Zach and his classmates learning "All About the Farm" – a very popular northern New England curriculum unit - a consistent set of targeted vocabulary was identified for this learner as a starting point for adapting this third grade curriculum unit.

The following tables outline the customized adapted curriculum approach used by the team for adapting any curriculum unit for Zach for each part of the step-by-step learning process. Embedded in the tables are examples of how the "All About The Farm" unit was designed by the team related to his customized, predictable learning formats.

## T.H.E. P.A.C.T. LEARN ABOUT ZACH

**Educational Objective #1:** Will learn (identify and express) five to ten new curriculum-based vocabulary words per classroom unit

**Learn About Activity:** Errorless Explore through Visual Scenes

**Assistive Technology Solution:** Boardmaker Plus!  
"Explore the Visual Scene" (interactive on touch tablet)

**Unit Example:** "All About The Farm"

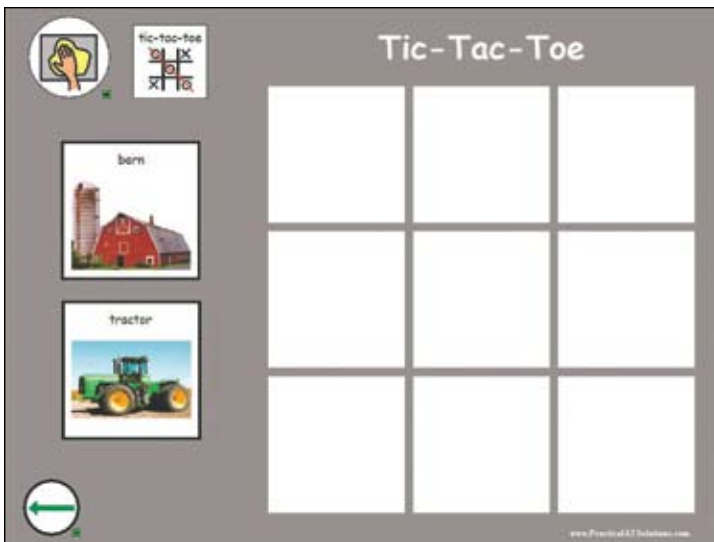
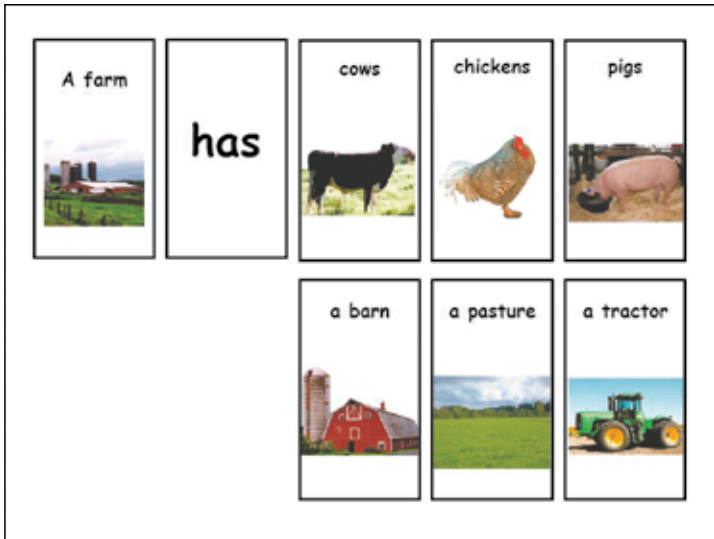


**Learn About Activity:** Vocabulary Cards for Language-Based Activities: Matching, Memory Game, Card Game, and Tic-Tac-Toe

**Assistive Technology Solution:** Boardmaker Plus!  
"Vocabulary Cards" (interactive on touch tablet and print)  
"Tic-Tac-Toe" Activity Set (interactive on touch tablet and print)

**Unit Example:** "All About The Farm"

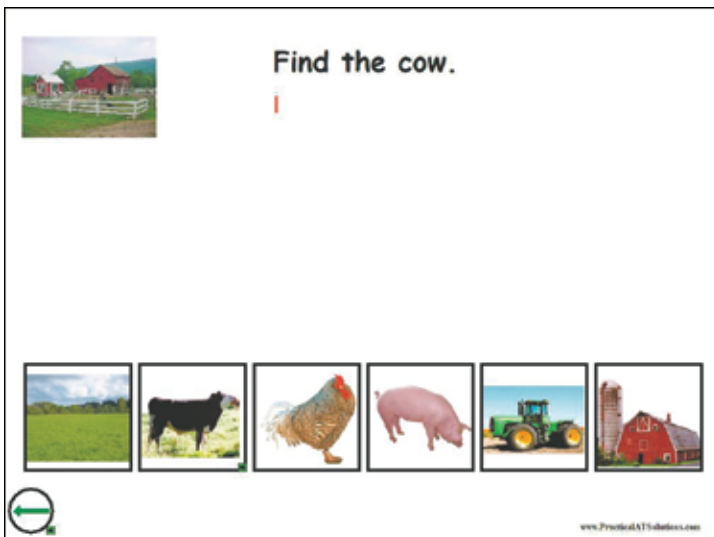
**T.H.E. P.A.C.T.  
READ ABOUT  
ZACH**



**Learn About Activity:** Vocabulary Label Identification: Comprehension Check

**Assistive Technology Solution:** Boardmaker Plus! "Find The" (interactive on touch tablet and print)

**Unit Example:** "All About The Farm"



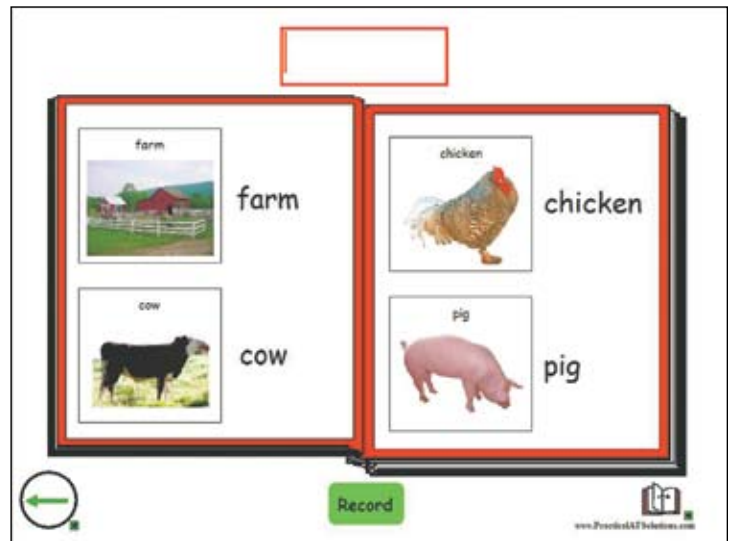
**Educational Objective #1:** Will independently access an adapted book on curriculum content: right index finger and/or joystick access

**Read About Activity:** Accessible Six-Page Book and Vocabulary Dictionary

**Assistive Technology Solution:** Boardmaker Plus! "Talking Book and Dictionary" (interactive on touch tablet)

**Unit Example:** "All About The Farm"

**Educational Objective #2:** Will match a word to a curriculum-based



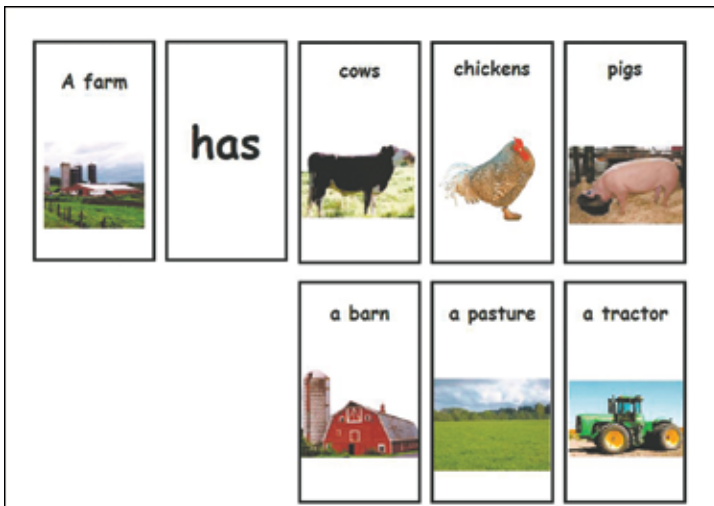
picture-word card

**Read About Activity:** Vocabulary Word-Picture Match

**Assistive Technology Solution:** Boardmaker Plus! "Vocabulary Cards" (print materials) paired with Low Tech Literacy Folder

**Unit Example:** "All About The Farm"





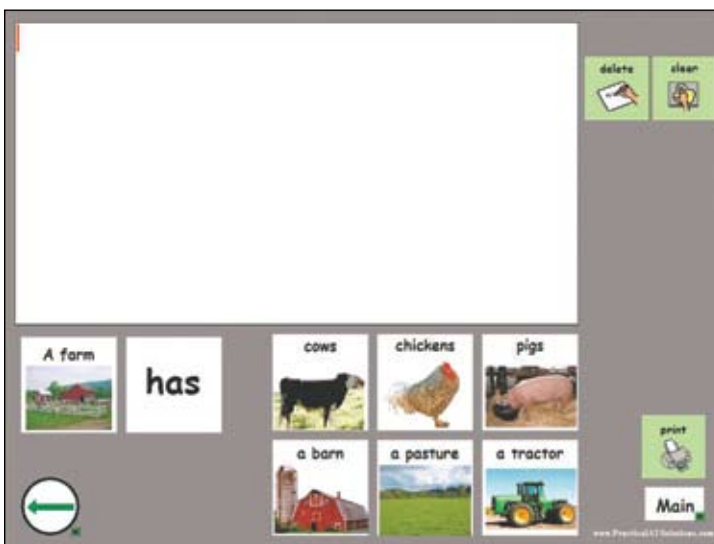
## T.H.E. P.A.C.T. WRITE ABOUT ZACH

**Educational Objective #1:** Will write three simple sentences, through picture-assisted writing, using "Subject + Verb + Object" language structures and print out assignment independently

**Write About Activity:** Picture-Assisted Writing

**Assistive Technology Solution #1:** Boardmaker Plus! "Write About" (interactive on touch tablet with "print" button available on-screen)

**Unit Example:** "All About The Farm"



**Assistive Technology Solution #2:** Customized Low Tech Writing Folder. (print version of Boardmaker Plus! activity above and student turns in writing page of folder)

## T.H.E. P.A.C.T. TALK ABOUT ZACH

**Educational Objective #1:** Will gain attention when knowing the answer in class

**Talk About Activity:** Classroom discussion group

**Assistive Technology Solution:** LITTLEmack Communicator "I know the answer!" recorded message (teacher selected message)



**Educational Objective #2:** Will respond to two questions about the curriculum content using a picture-word communication board (print and interactive) to build a message using "Subject + Verb + Object" language structures

**Educational Objective #3:** Will use attributes when describing curriculum content

**Educational Objective #4:** Will describe a preference of curriculum content using a picture-word communication board (interactive) to build a message using "Subject + Verb + Object" language structures

**Talk About Activity:** Classroom discussion group

**Assistive Technology Solution:** Boardmaker Plus! "Talk About the Farm" on touch tablet (interactive)

**Unit Example:** "All About The Farm"



In addition to learning content related to the third grade curriculum, Zach is also learning new vocabulary under the life skills umbrella related to domestic living skills, leisure and recreation, early vocational training and community access skills. T.H.E. P.A.C.T. can be easily used to map out content related to a life skills curriculum to assist with incorporating valued life outcomes for a student.

### KELLY'S SUCCESS STORY: "PENGUINS"

Kelly is a first grade student with Down Syndrome. He is creative, energetic and loves technology. Kelly has moderately intelligible oral speech, with his communication partners often having trouble understanding him because he has a fast rate of speech and articulation errors. He is integrated into his first grade curriculum using a consistent, predictable set of assistive technology supports that are used for each curriculum unit in the first grade. Kelly also spends time in a learning center classroom during various parts of his day for pre-teaching purposes.

When engaged in an instructional lesson, Kelly needs to be active in the learning process to maintain his attention. He loves the computer and demonstrates increased attention to task when involved in computer-assisted learning. Kelly works well when using manipulatives in his lessons – whether these are actual physical tools that he moves around or are on the computer in a virtual representation.

Based on his educational plan, T.H.E. P.A.C.T. was put in place for the team to use when adapting the curriculum for Kelly. It highlighted the importance of using consistent assistive technology tools for each part of the learning process. Kelly's educational team was learning to use *Classroom Suite* from IntelliTools to create computer-assisted learning activities for students. In fact, the school district had just recently purchased several site licenses as part of a district-wide attempt to encourage their special education staff to use a handful of consistent assistive technology solutions from Kindergarten through higher grades.

Kelly's learning center in his elementary school had also recently purchased a *LEO* communication device from TobiiATI to serve as a learning center technology support. The team was not only interested in using the *LEO* for communication and assessment purposes, but also in utilizing this easy-to-use communication device for teaching activities tied to various curriculum content – both in grid-based and visual scene format. Although this device was not individually purchased for Kelly, he had daily access to it – like some other students in the learning center – during various language-building lessons. Kelly's educational team also consistently used *Boardmaker Plus!* from the Mayer-Johnson Company to create learning activities for their students.

In order to teach Kelly about the theme of "Penguins," a consistent set of targeted vocabulary was identified for this learner as a starting point for adapting this first grade curriculum unit.

The following tables outline the customized adapted curriculum approach used by the team for adapting any curriculum unit for Kelly for each part of the step-by-step learning process. Embedded in the tables are examples of how the "Penguins" unit was designed by the team related to his customized, predictable learning formats.



**Educational Objective #1:** Will learn (identify and express) four to five new curriculum-based vocabulary words per classroom unit

**Learn About Activity:** Multimedia Video Explore

**Assistive Technology Solution:** Boardmaker Plus!

"Flat Screen TV Visual Scene: Watch a Movie" board sets (interactive)  
Four educational videos in the board set

**Unit Example: "Penguins"**

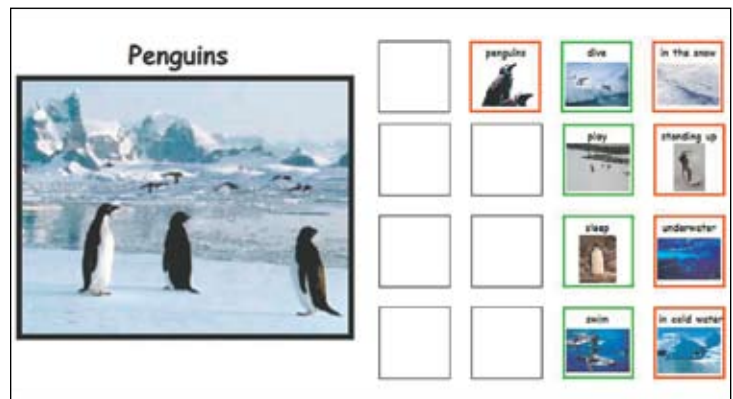


**Learn About Activity:** Vocabulary Building Lessons through Visual Scenes paired with vocabulary grid targets: individual instruction and classroom group

**Assistive Technology Solution:** *LEO communication device*

"Visual Scene with Vocabulary Banks" (interactive)

**Unit Example: "Penguins"**



**Educational Objective #2:** Will match a picture to a curriculum-based picture

**Learn About Activity:** Vocabulary Cards for Language-Based Activities: Matching Lesson and Card Game

**Assistive Technology Solution:** *Writing Bin – Early Skills/ IntelliTools Classroom Suite*

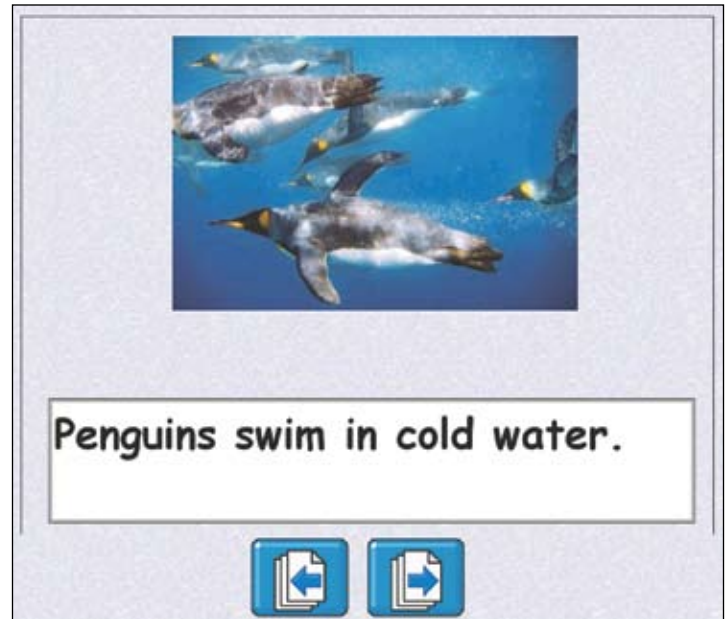
"Pic to Pic" Level (interactive and print)

**Unit Example: "Penguins"**



"Content Lead-In" Level which allows you to create a talking book (interactive and print)

**Unit Example: "Penguins"**



**Learn About Activity:** Vocabulary Identification: Comprehension Check

**Assistive Technology Solution:** *Writing Bin – Early Skills/ IntelliTools Classroom Suite*

"Vocabulary Workbook" (print vocabulary cards)

**Unit Example: "Penguins"**

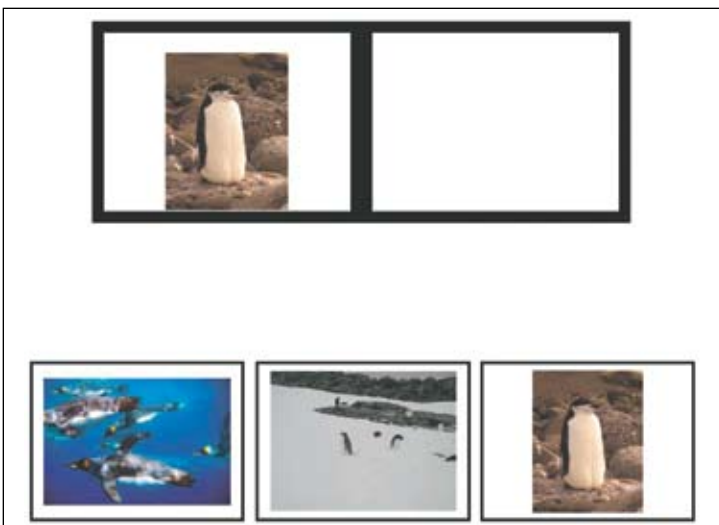
**Educational Objective #2:** Will match a picture to a curriculum-based picture-word

**Read About Activity:** Vocabulary Picture and Picture-Word Match

**Assistive Technology Solution:** *Writing Bin – Early Skills with IntelliTools Classroom Suite*

"Pic to Pic and Label" Level (interactive and print)

**Unit Example: "Penguins"**

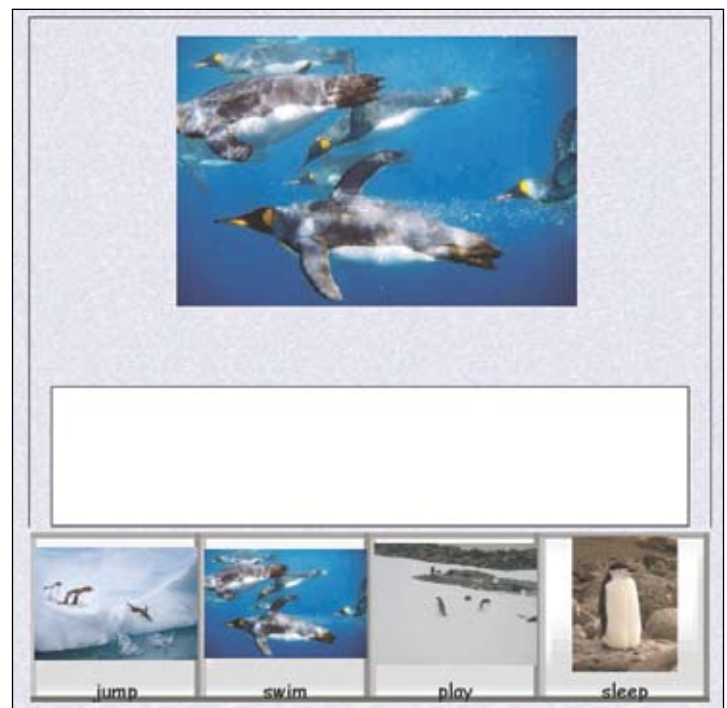


**T.H.E. P.A.C.T.  
READ ABOUT  
KELLY**

**Educational Objective #1:** Will create an adapted book on curriculum content

**Read About Activity:** Build-A-Book

**Assistive Technology Solution:** *Writing Bin – Early Skills with IntelliTools Classroom Suite*



**T.H.E. P.A.C.T.  
WRITE ABOUT  
KELLY**

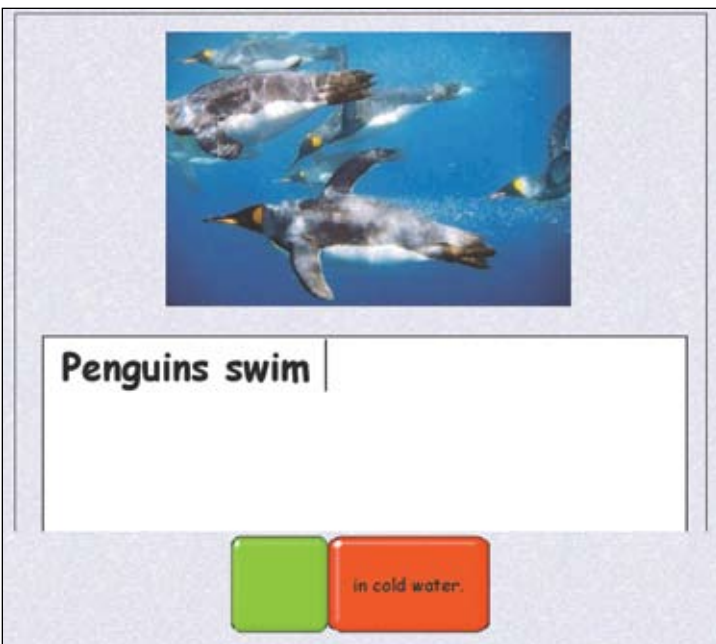
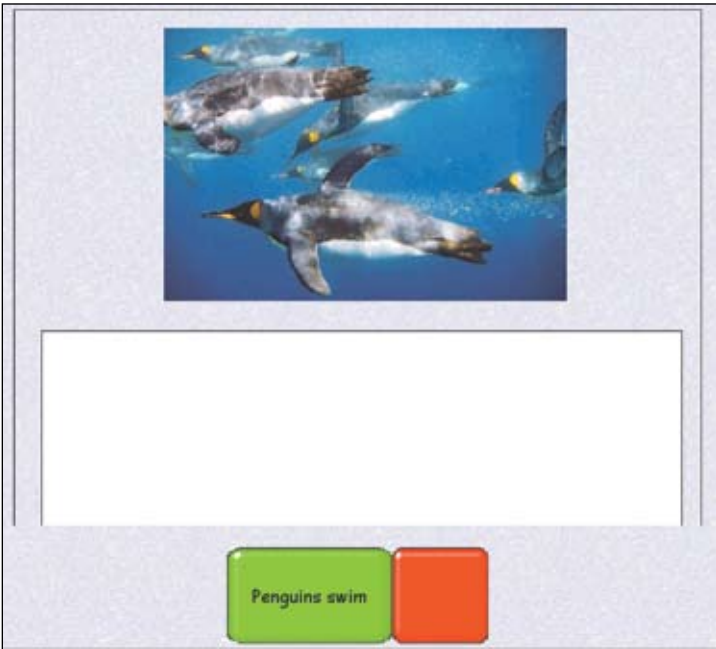
**Educational Objective #1:** Will write four simple sentences, through computer-assisted writing, using "Subject + Verb + Object" language structures

**Write About Activity:** Computer-assisted Writing

**Assistive Technology Solution:** Writing Bin – *Early Skills with IntelliTools Classroom Suite*

"Forced Order" Level (interactive)

**Unit Example:** "Penguins"



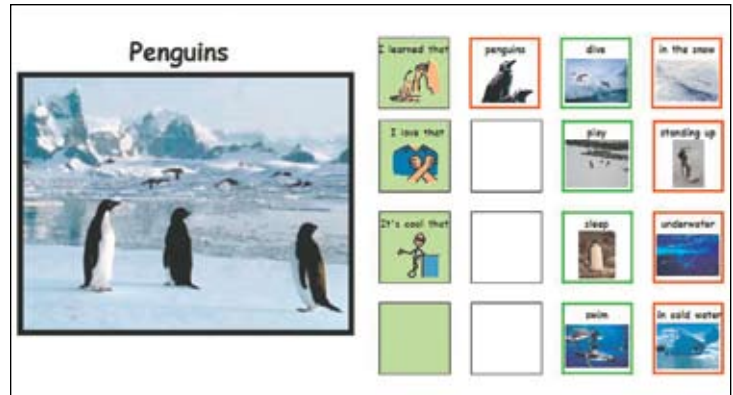
**T.H.E. P.A.C.T.  
TALK ABOUT  
KELLY**

**Educational Objective #1:** Will share three to four facts about the curriculum content using a picture-word communication board (print and interactive) to build a message using "Subject + Verb + Object" language structures

**Talk About Activity:** Classroom Discussion Group using AAC Supports

**Assistive Technology Solution #1:** *LEO communication device*  
"Visual Scene with Vocabulary Banks"(interactive)

**Unit Example:** "Penguins"



**Assistive Technology Solution #2:** *Topic-based Low Tech Communication Board*

(printed version of Talk About LEO communication board)

Kelly showed an increase in his language acquisition and independence throughout the school year. The team discussed that they felt this was, in part, because Kelly knew his learning formats and predicted what his support tools were for each activity. For example, when his speech-language pathologist referenced "time to learn new vocabulary words," Kelly would walk (or often run with excitement!) to the bin on the learning center shelf and get the LEO communication device. He then showed that he was ready to learn by sitting on the rug next to his speech-language pathologist. And, when his teacher instructed that the class was going to "write" about that curriculum topic, Kelly would go and sit at the computer, log on to IntelliTools Classroom Suite independently, and open up the curricular activity and begin his writing assignment - unassisted.

**THE BENEFITS OF USING T.H.E. P.A.C.T. MODEL**

Effectively adapting the curriculum should be done in a way that does not require an unreasonable amount of time. To meet the needs of diverse learners, we need to provide these students with a variety of ways to process information and demonstrate what was learned through differentiated instruction. But ... let's not make our jobs more difficult than they have to be.

In order to make a meaningful difference in a child's educational life, we must set up realistic expectations and goals to implement using a practical adapted curriculum approach that will be used consistently. We need to identify how technology can help our special needs learners, and most importantly, identify the way in which each child learns most effectively so that we can "match" this with the most efficient assistive technology tool.

This can easily be mapped out using a predictable step-by-step framework when adapting the curriculum for our special needs students. Consistent use and application of instructional materials, strategies, and assistive technology supports provide families with the necessary accountability they often inquire about at team meetings. Your team can further achieve this by embracing **technology** that **helps** the learner and the educational team implement **easy** and **practical adapted curriculum teaching** activities.

To receive additional information and regular updates related to T.H.E. P.A.C.T., go to [www.AboutTHEPACT.com](http://www.AboutTHEPACT.com) or [www.PracticalATSolutions.com](http://www.PracticalATSolutions.com) and subscribe to my free AT Solutions At-A-Glance newsletter. Free downloads and AT resources are also available at this Web site. If you would like to schedule a complimentary phone conference with me about T.H.E. P.A.C.T., or have any questions you would like answered, you can e-mail me at: [Phyl@PracticalATSolutions.com](mailto:Phyl@PracticalATSolutions.com).

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Phyl T. Macomber, Assistive Technology Specialist, is the owner and President of PracticalATSolutions.com. Since completing a fellowship at Johns Hopkins Hospital's Kennedy Krieger Institute in 1988, Phyl has provided customized consultation and skill-building training to teams serving individuals with varying disabilities. Phyl currently resides in Vermont and does work regionally in New England and on a national basis. She can be reached at [Phyl@PracticalATSolutions.com](mailto:Phyl@PracticalATSolutions.com)

## PRODUCT INFORMATION

### **Boardmaker Plus!** – \$399

Mayer-Johnson LLC, 2100 Wharton Street Suite 400, Pittsburgh, PA 15203; Telephone: 800-588-4548; Fax: 858-550-0449; [www.mayer-johnson.com](http://www.mayer-johnson.com).

### **Classroom Suite** – \$345

Intellitools, 4185 Salazar Way, Frederick, CO 80504; Telephone: 800-547-6747; Fax: 781-276-0650; [www.Intellitools.com](http://www.Intellitools.com).

### **The Writing Bin – Early Skills** – \$99.95

Learning Magic, Inc., 1139 Vista Place Suite 203, Edmonds, WA 98020; Telephone: 425-712-3141; Fax: 425-744-4571; [www.learningmagicinc.com](http://www.learningmagicinc.com).

### **LEO Communication Device** – \$799

Tobii ATI, 333 Elm Street, Dedham, MA 02026; Telephone: 800-793-9227; Fax: 781-461-8213; [www.tobiiati.com](http://www.tobiiati.com).

### **LITTLEmack Communicator** – \$109

AbleNet, Inc., 2808 Fairview Avenue North, Roseville, MN 55113; Telephone: 800-322-0956; Fax: 651-294-2222; [www.ablenetinc.com](http://www.ablenetinc.com). ■

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# VIRTUALLY REAL ACTIVITIES

By Ann Brundige

I hope everyone has found the free activity sets on Annie's Resource Attic ([www.annbrundigestudio.com](http://www.annbrundigestudio.com)). If not, let me invite you to come and see what I've posted for you to download!

Many of these activities are a little different from the usual lessons. Whenever possible, I give the user a virtual reality experience. This could be going somewhere and exploring, or building something on-screen. Because we most often use computers to digitize books and worksheets, it's easy to forget that our multimedia applications can do so much more. Here are some strategies I use in building activities where students can explore and interact. You can see these in action when you download the free activities I mention.

## TAKE ME ALONG

I talk directly to the student, and if possible, include the student in a journey, an exploration, or a project, rather than telling a student about something. It's the difference between hearing a lecture, even one with lots of slides, compared to the vivid memories you form when you go there. For example, a typical lesson on mountain bike racing might tell about the special features of mountain bikes, explain how the racers get those bikes to the top of a mountain, and so on. Instead, in *Mountain Bike Race*, readers are invited to participate. They experience the race and see it from a racer's viewpoint.

Sometimes I must struggle to carry out this principle. How *Things Get Invented* is history, so much of the anchor book is of, necessity, a traditional lesson about the inventor of Velcro, with text and illustrations. But the book starts by addressing the student: "Did you ever wonder how things get invented?" I was also able to bring the focus back to the student in the writing activities that follow. Students write about events in their lives that demonstrate their curiosity, imagination, and perseverance, the three traits an inventor needs.

## MAKE IT LOOK REAL

Photos and artwork in my activities reinforce the illusion of first-hand experience. In *Mountain Bike Race*, you see the handlebars of the bike and the trail ahead on each page. In *Showertime!*, a life skills activity, I used a CAD program to create a realistic shower backdrop and all the stuff you need--soap, towel, washcloth, etc. If I hadn't had that CAD program, I would have used photos for that activity as

well. I think it's especially important for special needs students, whose everyday world is often restricted, to work with real, three-dimensional artwork in these activities.

## LET'S HEAR IT!

In *Showertime!*, you hear the water running. In *Snow*, you hear the snowplow going by, the snowblower roaring up and down the driveway, and the panting of the poor fellow who is shoveling the white stuff. Ambient noises promote the illusion of being there. Even better, have things in the activity make a logical sound when they are used by the student. In *Log Cabin*, each toy log piece makes a sound when the student adds it to the cabin being built. Later, students put a number of objects back onto the shelves. As they place each item, it makes a sound. The metal lantern clanks, the plates clink, the metal

## LET ME MAKE IT HAPPEN

Including the student in the narrative, presenting the experience from a participant's rather than an observer's viewpoint, and including sound and motion all add up to an experience that engages students in multiple ways. But enabling the user to control the activity is even more important.

In *Jack O' Lantern*, students choose the features for their creations. Then the jack o' lantern they created lights up and makes a scary sound. In *Holiday Wreaths*, they choose decorations to make their own custom wreath. When they add lights, they get to see the finished creation. All the elements of these building activities look solid and real. A student chooses something, and hears it snap into place. This is cause and effect carried far beyond early learning.

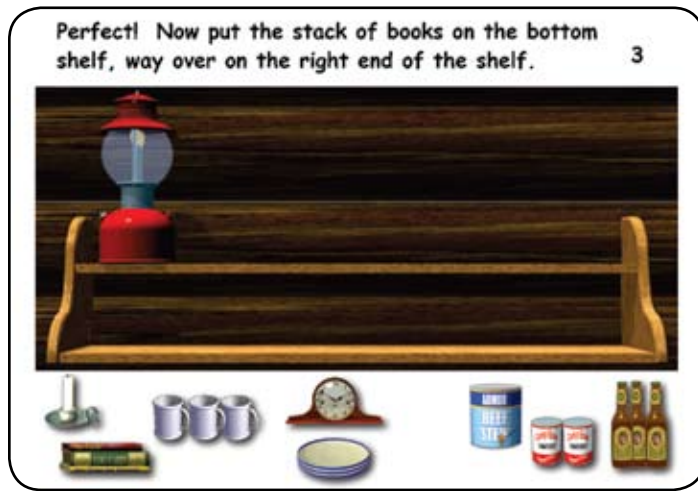
In the *Tide Pools* activities I'm constructing now, users can wander at will over a wide area. There is no right way to go. Giving students control, a chance to choose what they experience, and to see and hear results from their choices is one of the most powerful ways to use multimedia!

## PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

Whatever multimedia application you use, you can create vivid and real experiences for your students. For example, I was able to add internal hypertext links with Adobe Acrobat® so that the PDF version of *Log Cabin*, while it doesn't have sounds, still gives the student the chance to choose the pieces to build the cabin. Even a test can be created using these strategies. In *The Animal Game*, the student chooses an animal, and helps the computer guess what it is.

The student is in control, but while giving the computer clues, is answering comprehension questions.

Keeping these strategies in mind, your multimedia activities can make the whole world accessible to your students! ■



The above illustration is a page from *Fill The Shelves*, a follow-up book that is part of the *Log Cabin* set.

mugs sound like metal and the glass root beer bottles sound like glass. All these sounds are an integral part of the simulated real world experience.

## LET THE EXPERIENCE MOVE ME

Applications like *My Own Bookshelf*, *Clicker 5*, and *Classroom Suite*, can run short movies (and in the case of *Classroom Suite*, animation) to provide even more realism. Videos in *Showertime!* carry the student's viewpoint into a shower stall, show the shower curtain closing, and display water running once the student turns it on. In *Snow*, readers see a snowplow pass them (very close, too!) and watch someone using a snowblower. In *Log Cabin*, animation takes them into a toy log cabin they've built, something only possible on a computer. In each activity, the movie or animation is not a decoration or distraction, but carries the action along.

### \*\*\*EDITOR'S NOTE\*\*\*

Here's your chance to share your quick tips and tricks – whether they're high tech, low tech or no tech – that are making a difference.

Your ideas can make a difference too. Submit your contributions to [mturek@closingthegap.com](mailto:mturek@closingthegap.com) or visit [www.closingthegap.com/submit\\_article.lasso](http://www.closingthegap.com/submit_article.lasso) to learn more.

# Texthelp Systems Announces Read&Write GOLD for Mac Version 3 - Providing Comprehensive and Flexible Literacy Support for a Wide Range of Learning Abilities

New Version Offers Powerful Features and Enhancements to Help all Readers and Writers Succeed

Read&Write GOLD for Mac Version 3, the award winning literacy software solution, provides even more support for the variety of learning styles found in today's classrooms, through a comprehensive toolbar that works alongside many Apple Macintosh applications, including Microsoft Word, Safari and Adobe Reader. Read&Write GOLD for Mac offers struggling students access to any curriculum with a set of support tools for reading, writing, studying and research.

## NEW AND ENHANCED FEATURES IN READ&WRITE GOLD FOR MAC VERSION 3 INCLUDE:

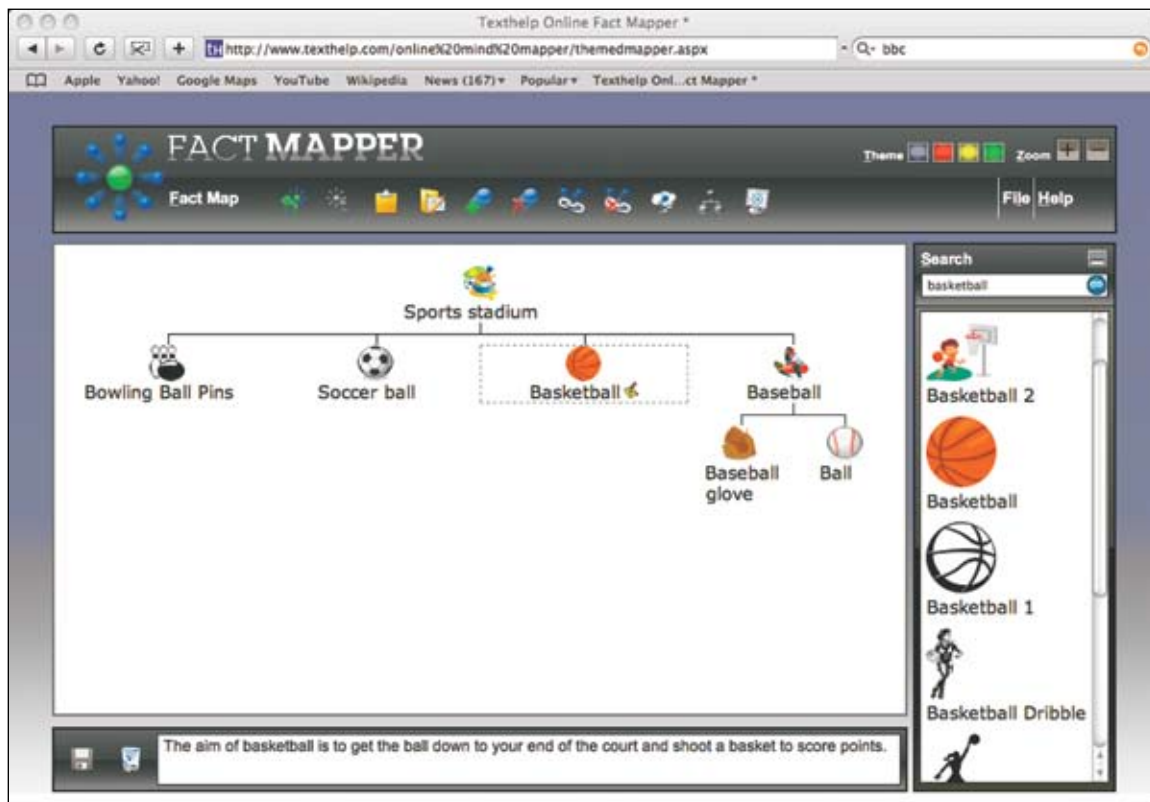
**New Floating Toolbar** – Read&Write 3 GOLD for Mac has a floating toolbar that can be accessed from Microsoft Word for Mac 2008 and Safari. This flexible toolbar allows the user to add or remove features to suit their own preferences. Therefore, the toolbar can be as comprehensive or as simple as the user wishes. Alternatively, Read&Write GOLD can be used as a free standing application.

**New Texthelp Voices** – Custom, natural sounding male and female voices developed especially for Texthelp are now available. "Texthelp Jack" and "Texthelp Jane" offer a refreshing alternative to the array of voices currently available in text-to-speech software by accurately decoding the text so that the learner can concentrate on comprehension.

**New Integration with Microsoft Word for Mac 2008** – Read&Write GOLD is now tightly integrated with Microsoft Word, with the following literacy support tools available: Read aloud with dual color highlighting, Phonetic Spell Checker and Homophone Checker, Word Prediction, and Study Skills Tools.

**New Read the Web Directly from the Read&Write GOLD Toolbar** – Read aloud Safari Web content with dual color highlighting. The reader simply hovers their mouse over the text and it is read aloud with high quality voices. The words are highlighted as the text is read to reinforce comprehension. Study Skills tools are also now available while reading the Web.

– Continued on next page



New Online Fact Mapper – Allows students to graphically organize information on the screen – perfect for visual learners.

**New Online Graphic Organizer** – The Fact Mapper tool allows users to graphically organize information on screen, perfect for visual learners. Students can use this feature when brainstorming, revising and drafting work. With flexible customization included, students can write text directly on the mapped elements, upload images from the Fact Mapper image library, add sticky notes and export the elements into Microsoft Word.

**New Online Translator** – The on-line Translator translates words from English into Spanish, French, German or Italian. This is an ideal tool for ESL students who wish to quickly check the meaning of an English word in their own language. The word can be read aloud in the selected language to reinforce meaning.

**One Touch Scanning with new OCR engine** – Paper-based documents can be converted to MS Word, PDF or HTML at the click of a button using ABBYY FineReader and the 'one touch' scanning in Read&Write GOLD. The digital text can then be read aloud or converted to MP3 or AIFF sound files for working or learning on the go, an important feature in improving learning through the multi-sensory experience.

**Improvements to Spelling, Word Prediction, Dictionary, and Homophone Support** –

**a) Phonetic Spelling** – Improved phonetic map, which returns more suggestions for common spelling errors, was developed by educators and learning disability experts to ensure that even the most unusual spelling errors are recognized. Mirror letters and phonetic errors are among those identified.

**b) Prediction Dictionary** – Augmented to include more frequently used words. This helps individuals build their vocabulary as they compose text using the prediction tool.

**c) Dictionary** – More definitions have been added to the basic dictionary, an essential tool for improving comprehension when reading text. Users can also create their own user dictionary definitions.

**d) Homophone Support** – Identifies 'like sounding' words that may cause confusion for those with learning disabilities. Improved definitions returned for homophones, and users now have the ability to add to or remove words from the homophone ignore list.

**Access to Mac Calculator from Read&Write GOLD toolbar** – Users now have easy access to the Mac calculator directly from the toolbar.

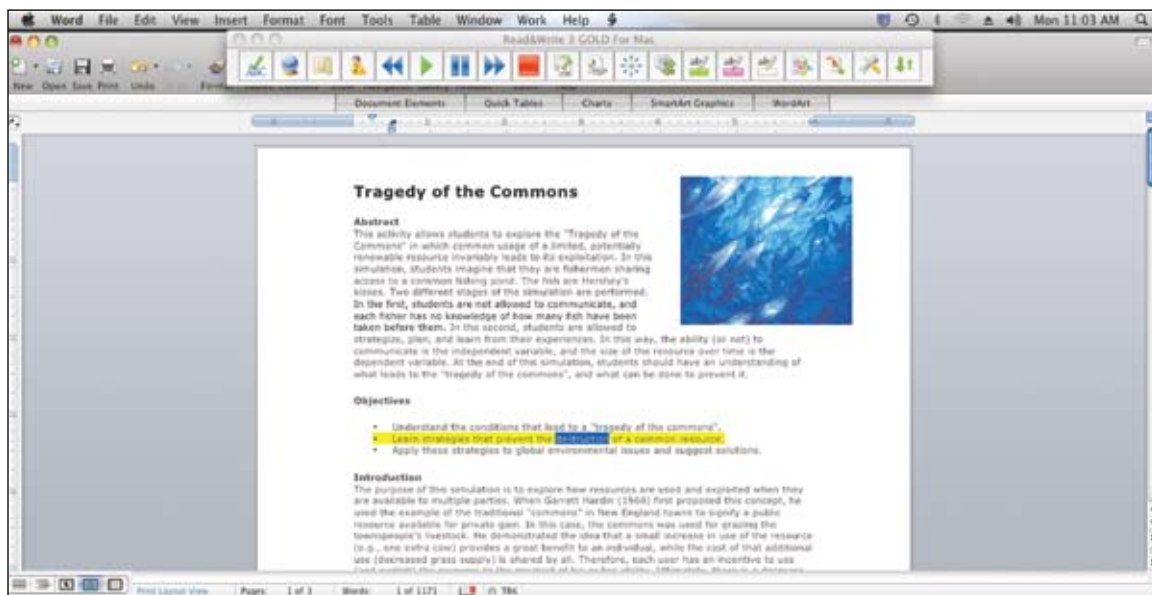
With Read&Write GOLD for Mac Version 3, Texthelp is continuing in its commitment to ensure that all students, in class and at home, can access curriculum content and complete reading, writing, and research assignments, as well as tests, independently, thereby giving them the edge in learning and studying.

Texthelp offers multiple deployment and licensing options for Read&Write GOLD for Mac Version 3, including unlimited site licensing, starter packs, and single user.

**PRICE**

Multiple pricing options available for single users, schools, and districts.

For more information on Read&Write GOLD Version 3 or to request a FREE 30-day Trial DVD, please call 888-248-0652, e-mail [u.s.info@texthelp.com](mailto:u.s.info@texthelp.com) or visit us at [www.texthelp.com](http://www.texthelp.com). ■



*Read&Write GOLD Floating Toolbar - Now tightly integrated with Microsoft Word, students can directly access the literacy support tools available: Read aloud with dual color highlighting, Phonetic Spell Checker and Homophone Checker, Word Prediction, and Study Skills Tools.*



## ZoomText 9.18 Now Available!

Improved performance, smooth panning, scripting and support for Vista 64-bit

Yup, this one's big! It's a ZoomText update that's packed with new features and enhancements that are too important to ignore.

For starters, we've given ZoomText a major tune-up that provides **improved performance** across the board. How major of a tune up is this? Well, early adopters of 9.18 are telling us that ZoomText and their applications are running faster . . . and that we've fixed some nagging problems that we weren't even aware of.

Next, we've added a cool new feature called **Smooth Panning** (patent pending) that allows you to comfortably navigate your applications without all that abrupt jumping around in the magnified view.

As you type text, arrow key through menus and dialogs, and switch windows, ZoomText smoothly pans from one location to another.

But there's more: **ZoomText Scripting** is now included in every license of ZoomText Magnifier and Magnifier/Reader. With ZoomText Scripting, you can automate tasks in ZoomText and most applications, allowing you to work faster than ever before. Just imagine cutting 10 steps down to one or two! To learn more about ZoomText Scripting, go to [www.aisquared.com/scripting](http://www.aisquared.com/scripting).

We've also added **support for 64-bit editions of Windows Vista**, which is rapidly becoming the standard on new laptops and desktops. With ZoomText 9.18, when you're ready to upgrade to one of these new systems, ZoomText is ready to go with you.

### GET ZOOMTEXT 9.18 TODAY

Already own ZoomText 9.1 or later? If so, get on the fast track and download the free ZoomText 9.18 update right now. Just go to [www.aisquared.com/updates](http://www.aisquared.com/updates).

Still using ZoomText 9.0 or earlier? No problem. Low cost upgrades start at just \$75 for ZoomText Magnifier and \$99 for ZoomText Magnifier/Reader. To place your order, call Ai Squared toll-free at 800-859-0270.

### USE OUR NEW "EASY PAY" PLAN

For those with vision impairments and who need ZoomText to use their computer, Ai Squared wants to help in any way we can. So if money is an issue, our sales staff will work with you to set up a graduated payment plan to make purchasing ZoomText easier.

Plans start at \$37 per month for Magnifier and \$55 per month for Magnifier/Reader and are available for end-user purchases of our domestic single-user products (U.S. and Canada only). To learn more about the Easy Pay plan and to place your Easy Pay order, call our sales department at 800-859-0270.

### GET MORE INFORMATION AND A FREE ZOOMTEXT TRIAL

Want more information on ZoomText and the new 9.18 release? Please visit [www.aisquared.com](http://www.aisquared.com) for the ZoomText product page, 9.18 info page, product release information and to download a free 60-day trial. Check out everything that ZoomText has to offer on your computer. ■

## Enabling Devices Introduces the Phonics Fun Communicator

Enabling Devices has announced the release of its latest communicator, the Phonics Fun Communicator.

According to Steven Kanor, Ph.D., President of Enabling Devices: "We developed the Phonics Fun Communicator at the request of special education teachers who were looking for a fun, easy way to teach phonics. The communicator allows students to hear letter sounds by pressing activation squares. The goal is for students to learn the most common sound-spelling relationships so they can decode, or sound out, words. This decoding is fundamental for reading success."

Gail Cocciardi, Director of Product Development, says: "The communicator has four activation squares. This allows for teaching three letter words or four letter words that contain blends or digraphs. The first three activation squares are used for teaching the phonetic sound of a letter. The fourth square is used to play the complete word. For example, to teach the word CAT, program square one with "kuh" then "C"; square two with "ah" then "A"; square three with "tuh" then "T"; and square

four with "CAT". For reinforcement, the device can be preset to play each phonic sound from one to four times."

### FEATURES INCLUDE

- 18 Levels
- 300 Seconds of Recording Time
- Incredible Sound Quality
- Level Announcer

### PRICING

Phonics Fun #3059 – \$239.95

### CONTACT INFORMATION

For more Information, please visit [www.enablingdevices.com](http://www.enablingdevices.com) or contact: Elizabeth@enablingdevices.com; Phone: 800-832-8697 ext.36. ■

## Ultratec Announces New IP-Based Captioned Telephone Option for People with Hearing Loss

### New Model of CapTel Phone Provides Captions Over the Internet

Ultratec, Inc. has announced the CapTel 800i telephone – a new addition to the company’s Captioned Telephone line of products and services that help people with hearing loss use the phone. Designed specifically for use with high-speed Internet service, the CapTel 800i gives people the advantage of written text captions to help understand what their phone callers say.

Unlike previous CapTel models, which rely on only an analog telephone line, the new CapTel 800i connects to both a telephone line and an Ethernet / IP connection. The telephone line carries the voice portion of the call, in the same way as any other typical telephone conversation. At the same time, the Ethernet / IP connection automatically links the CapTel 800i over the Internet to the CapTel Captioning Service. Operators at the Captioning Service use voice-recognition technology to transcribe everything the caller says into text, which is instantly transmitted to the CapTel 800i over the Internet connection. The captions appear on the phone’s display screen, giving users the ability to hear what they can of the phone conversation and read what they need to on the display screen.

This seamless, behind-the-scenes connection to the Internet automatically gives CapTel 800i users captions on any call – incoming or outgoing. Captions can be turned on or off at any time during the call, so they are available to help clarify things whenever the user has difficulty hearing what a caller says.

The new CapTel 800i features a large five-inch screen that displays captions in a variety of sizes and colors for easy reading. The phone includes other convenience features, such as powerful amplification (up to 40dB), a phone book to quickly dial frequently-called phone numbers, and one-touch access directly to CapTel Customer Service for convenient on-demand help\*. The phone’s menu system follows a simple Yes-No format that makes settings easy to change.

This is the latest offering in Ultratec’s CapTel line, joining the CapTel Model 200 – a captioned telephone designed for use with traditional analog phone lines. An Internet-based service, WebCapTel, is also available to let people view captions of any telephone call in their computer’s Web-browser window.

#### REQUIREMENTS

The new CapTel 800i requires both telephone service and high-speed or broadband Internet access. The telephone connection can be any telephone service, including standard analog line, VOIP connection, DSL or cable modem telephone

service (an analog port is required for use with a digital PBX). The Ethernet connection can be any basic broadband Internet service (it does not work with dial-up connections). People who do not already have Internet access should consider the CapTel 200, an alternative that relies on standard analog telephone lines instead of an Internet connection.

#### AVAILABILITY

The new phone is expected to be available later this summer.

#### ABOUT ULTRATEC, INC.

Considered the world’s leading developer of text telecommunication (TTY) products for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, Ultratec, Inc. has been dedicated to making the telephone more accessible since 1978. Headquartered in Madison, Wis., the company has been instrumental in developing new technologies and services for people with hearing loss, including its standard-setting series of TTYS, the Simplicity line of visual signalers, and its CrystalTone family of amplified phones. The company’s most recent innovation, CapTel – which is now available on a variety of platforms, has dramatically improved telephone access for people nationwide, as well as created extensive new job opportunities to help support the service.

Ultratec works with Relay services, 911 and emergency services, state and federal agencies, and local and national advocacy groups to ensure greater accessibility for people with hearing loss.

\*On demand Customer Service will be available during standard business hours only (Mon-Fri, 8:00 am-5:00 pm CST). A help center is available online 24 hours a day at [www.CaptionedTelephone.com](http://www.CaptionedTelephone.com).

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, contact Jackie Morgan, Ultratec, Inc., 450 Science Drive, Madison, WI 53711; Phone: 800-482-2424; E-mail: [Jackie.Morgan@Ultratec.com](mailto:Jackie.Morgan@Ultratec.com).

#### RELATED RESOURCES

Please visit: [www.captionedtelephone.com](http://www.captionedtelephone.com), [www.ultratec.com](http://www.ultratec.com). ■

## ClaroRead V5

Senior high school student, Makenzie Kozojet, 17, of New Orleans, has been using ClaroRead for two years. A dyslexic and auditory learner, Makenzie plans to go to college next year, where she hopes to continue using ClaroRead.

Makenzie says "I read slowly. I can mix letters up and I struggle with some words. But ClaroRead reads text out and helps with your comprehension, without the need to have someone read out loud for you.

"I did use another product before, which had the same basic process of reading words out – but it was more complicated to use, and it couldn't scan in text and books.

"Reading 30 pages a night would basically take me about two hours. But with ClaroRead, I can do it in 30 minutes to an hour. So it more than halves my reading time.

"When I am doing research, or making notes, it is a lot more useful to have text read out to me. ClaroRead can also read my own stuff back to me. Hearing my mistakes helps me fix them much more easily.

"My grades are all As and Bs. I am not sure what I want to do – perhaps I will study something to do with either science or art.

"I have a 3.5 grade point average. Based on my academic grades, the colleges I've applied to are offering me scholarship support, that is, financial help to go to college. I'm just not sure which one I want to go to yet!

"ClaroRead has made me a lot more focussed and helped

me save time. It has definitely made a difference in my comprehension and reading and writing."

Makenzie's mom, Christine, says "It is incredible the difference ClaroRead has made in Makenzie's schoolwork. I used to have to read to her all the time – but as you get older, you don't want your mom reading to you!

"It has been a real confidence boost for Makenzie, and as a result, she is getting great grades at school. She used to struggle with a lot of her reading. It was really laborious, but ClaroRead just takes that away from her. And by having words read out, her comprehension has really improved.

"She and her friend were studying the same material together for a test recently and they were using ClaroRead. Makenzie ended up doing better on the test than her friend. She never gets a C – her grades are great.

"Imagine you are sitting in a classroom and the teacher asks you to read out loud and you can't read as fast as the other kids. It's terrifying, the other kids think you are stupid. It could really affect your self-esteem.

"Now that Makenzie uses ClaroRead, her grades are as good or better than her classmates, and she doesn't have these issues any more. Since we bought the program, she has used it everyday – and that is a real testimony to the quality of the product. ClaroRead really has been a lifesaver."

For more information, please visit [www.clarosoftware.com](http://www.clarosoftware.com). ■

## PCI Education Launches Turbo Solutions Builder for Stimulus Funding

### Online Tool Helps Schools Leverage IDEA and Title I Funding Opportunities

To help districts, schools and educators take advantage of funding available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), PCI Education ([www.pcieducation.com](http://www.pcieducation.com)) launches the Turbo Solutions Builder. PCI Education is the number one provider of resources for students with special needs. The online tool saves valuable time, quickly revealing the safest and most popular selections for educators looking to purchase instructional materials with IDEA and Title I stimulus funding. Products from more than 200 vendors are available through the Turbo Solutions Builder.

The Turbo Solutions Builder allows an educator to view products based on the specific needs of their students. The online tool begins by asking each user to select a combination of criteria, including grade level, disability category, subject area, and funding type. Based on these selections, the Turbo Solutions Builder searches a relevant portion of the PCI Education offering to provide educators with a list of the top product recommendations. The company offers instructional materials for a wide range of students with special needs, including significant or developmental disabilities, such as autism. Educators also turn to PCI Education products for English language learner and adult literacy classes, and to help students performing below grade level.

"Educators have told us they are under pressure to make choices about ARRA funds rapidly - fast implementation is

one of the explicit goals of the program. The Turbo Solutions Builder offers educators an easy way to implement funding, by narrowing the search field quickly to deliver a list of the most relevant products available," said Lee Wilson, CEO and President of PCI Education. "With products from more than 200 of our partners in the system, the Turbo Solutions Builder is a one-stop-shop that saves educators time and helps them address both the letter and spirit of the law."

According to the U.S. Department of Education, the ARRA funds provide an unprecedented opportunity for states, local education authorities, and early intervention services programs to implement innovative strategies to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Under ARRA, the IDEA Part B funds are provided under three authorities: \$11.3 billion available under Part B Grants to States; \$400 million available under Part B Preschool Grants; and \$500 million available under Part C Grants for Infants and Families. In addition, states are receiving \$10 billion in Title I funds under ARRA this year. The U.S. Department of Education awarded each state 50 percent of Title I and IDEA funds last month, and expects to award the remaining funds by Sept. 30, 2009, after each state submits a plan.

For more information on the Turbo Solutions Builder, visit [www.pcieducation.com/solutionsbuilder.aspx](http://www.pcieducation.com/solutionsbuilder.aspx). ■

## Proloquo2Go 1.0 for iPhone a Break-through in Augmentative Communication

AssistiveWare has announced the release of Proloquo2Go for iPhone and iPod touch. Proloquo2Go is the first full-featured communication solution for people who have difficulty speaking, that doesn't cost thousands of dollars. Finally, powerful augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) comes within reach of consumers and schools without access to funding. Never before was using a communication device so portable and so cool as with Proloquo2Go and the iPhone or iPod touch. Proloquo2Go is a true break-through in price and technology, bringing natural sounding text-to-speech voices, up-to-date symbols, powerful automatic conjugations, a default vocabulary of over 7000 items, full expandability and extreme ease of use to the iPhone and iPod touch.

Proloquo2Go is a perfect solution for anyone who cannot afford spending thousands of dollars on an augmentative and alternative communication device and yet wants a solution that, in terms of sheer communication power and ease of use, rivals solutions typically priced over 10 times as high. It is also perfect for teenagers and young adults who want a device as cool as the iPhone or iPod touch. Not to mention, this a great solution for children and adults with autism, cerebral palsy, down syndrome, developmental disabilities or apraxia. Proloquo2Go can also serve adults with acquired disabilities, such as ALS, stroke or traumatic brain injury. It can be a useful solution in hospital and rehabilitation settings.

"The price is so compelling," said Dan Herlihy, owner of Connective Technology Solutions, "and the software and hardware platform Proloquo2Go runs on so radically improved over current devices in its category that if not quite a paradigm shift, markedly raises the bar for accessibility, ease of use, and affordability."

Special educators, speech language pathologists and occupational therapists have found Proloquo2Go a proven communication solution for children and adults who can access the iPod and iPhone touch interface. Educators see it as a cost-effective solution for special education. Speech therapists and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) specialists love the ease of programming and customization. Users love Proloquo2Go because it is not only powerful, but it runs on the iPhone and iPod touch. Parents appreciate the system because it is easy to program and makes their children cool. Proloquo2Go can be used as a companion to a table top device or as a user's sole AAC device.

"When we set out to design Proloquo2Go, we knew we wanted to provide the kind of power typically only found in desktop

applications," said David Niemeijer, AssistiveWare's CEO. "The iPhone has allowed us to do just that, develop a full-featured, fully customizable communication solution that fits right in your pocket."

Proloquo2Go uses Acapela Group's state-of-the-art Text-to-Speech voices. The current version includes North American English male, female, girl and boy voices. British English voices will soon be available as an option. Support for other languages and voices is in the pipeline. Proloquo2Go provides the innovative, new VocaSpace vocabulary that is built on an extremely flexible organizational system and includes close to 8000 symbols from SymbolStix LLC. Conjugation support is provided through Ultralingua's Grammatica technology.

### KEY FEATURES

- Full communication solution with a default vocabulary of over 7000 items
- Choice of list or grid view
- Built-in natural sounding text-to-speech voices (one language, initially only American English)
- Picture and/or text-based communication
- Close to 8000 built-in symbols
- Automatic conjugation of verbs and automatic plurals and possessives for nouns
- Extensive customization options: item size, color, interactivity, restrictions, speech.
- One button addition of new vocabulary items and categories
- Easy cut, copy and paste of items
- Quick access to recently spoken items for the last 15 minutes, last hour, all the way up to one week back
- Typing view for typing full paragraphs

For more information, screen shots, tutorials and videos visit the product site at [www.proloquo2go.com](http://www.proloquo2go.com).

For further information, contact AssistiveWare directly or one of our partners, such as Origin Instruments Corporation for North America or Spectronics for Australia and New Zealand.

### PRICING AND AVAILABILITY

Proloquo2Go is available on the App Store (<http://itunes.com/apps/Proloquo2Go>) for an introductory price of \$149.99. After a limited time, the price will be \$199.99. ■

## RJ Cooper Introduces Two New Products

### SWITCH-ADAPTED DIGITAL CAMERA

Just what it sounds like, along with accessories that I've found to be useful! Bear in mind that I do not just go out and buy a camera and adapt it. I go through many cameras, all their features, their quality, their \*picture\* quality, durability, and how well I can adapt them. It takes me several months for this process. I put time, money, and energy into finding just the right item for the job, and adapting it strongly. I've packaged it \*with\* the accessories that people wanted. For more information, please visit [www.rjcooper.com/digital-camera](http://www.rjcooper.com/digital-camera).

### APPLICATION CLICKER

Instigated by an OT friend in Norfolk, VA (Thanks, Ynez!), she wanted a way to make programs that just play without stopping, like online books at [www.mightybook.com](http://www.mightybook.com), to require more learner control, for cause/effect and also, simply, more learner interaction. There are other online book/activity sites that I refer you to at the Web page, but this technique, and my software, also work well with Windows Media Player (or \*any\* media player) or QuickTime Player, for DVD's, music, and even YouTube! Please read through the text at [www.rjcooper.com/application-clicker](http://www.rjcooper.com/application-clicker). ■

# 27<sup>th</sup> Annual CONFERENCE

## Assistive Technology in Special Education and Rehabilitation

## Closing The Gap

OCTOBER 15-17, 2009

Preconference Workshops

October 13-14, 2009

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

### COME, NETWORK, LEARN – AND RETURN HOME WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND TOOLS TO IMPLEMENT ALL THAT IS GAINED

Over the years, the annual Closing The Gap Conference has become known as the best educational AT conference in North America. Through shared best practices and research, networking, training, hands-on opportunities and an expansive exhibit hall, participants have found information, strategies and products that have proven beneficial and, oftentimes, unsurpassed for use in their work and in their lives.

The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference runs Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup> and is held in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Preconference workshops are scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, and the Conference officially begins with a preview of the exhibits on Wednesday evening, followed by three days of presentations, hands-on labs and exhibitions. Varied levels of participation are available, with registration options listed on page 14 of this brochure.

Inside the next few pages, you'll find detailed listings of the 25 all-day preconference workshops, exhibitors contracted to date and academic credit/CEU, air travel, hotel and registration information. The titles and descriptions of the over 200 one- and two-hour presentations and the additional contracted exhibitors will be available online and in print in August.

We have tried to keep conference costs down and have been sensitive to any and all price increases. The group discounts, presenter and exhibitor discounts, parent and student discounts and early registration (June 30<sup>th</sup>) all apply; and NEW for 2009 are bundled pricing for two preconference workshops, a one-day registration rate and an exhibit hall only registration rate. Graduate-level academic credit and CEUs will again be offered.

***We invite you to participate and encourage you to bring your team.***

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

**ANYONE** interested in finding practical and readily available AT solutions for ALL disabilities, mild to significant, infant through adult.

- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Administrators
- ❖ Speech Language Pathologists
- ❖ Occupational Therapists
- ❖ Physical Therapists
- ❖ AT Consultants
- ❖ Technology Specialists
- ❖ Consumers
- ❖ Parents
- ❖ Students

### WHY ATTEND?

- ❖ Participants will have numerous and unique opportunities to learn, first-hand, from experts in the field, network, ask questions, and see and try the latest AT products and strategies available today.
- ❖ Participants will have opportunities to search for answers to their specific needs. Presenters are approachable; participants are interactive; exhibitors are knowledgeable.
- ❖ Participants can earn academic credit and CEUs.
- ❖ In the end, participants will return home with creative ideas, renewed enthusiasm and a greatly enhanced skill set that will help them easily, effectively and, oftentimes, immediately implement that which was gained through their conference experience.

### CLOSING THE GAP

P.O. Box 68, 526 Main Street, Henderson, MN 56044

Phone: 507-248-3294 • Fax: 507-248-3810

E-mail: [info@closingthegap.com](mailto:info@closingthegap.com) • Web site: [www.closingthegap.com](http://www.closingthegap.com)

### PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Closing The Gap preconference workshops are all-day, in-depth workshops presented by experts in the field in very practical and effective ways. The content and delivery are unsurpassed and the resulting outcomes for persons with disabilities are overwhelmingly positive and bright.

Many of this year's workshops are new, some advanced, with state-of-the-art technologies being addressed and best practices demonstrated and taught.

### OVER 200 PRESENTATIONS

Practical and expert-lead presentations during the Closing The Gap Conference will include over 200 one- and two-hour sessions that describe and/or demonstrate successful applications of assistive technology for persons with disabilities. Handouts will be available onsite and online following the conference.

*A second brochure detailing the over 200 presentations will be available on or about August 1, 2009. Details will also be posted at <[www.closingthegap.com](http://www.closingthegap.com)>*

### STATE-OF-THE-ART COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS

Companies exhibiting at Closing The Gap represent an impressive and varied scope of AT products and strategies from around the world, including knowledgeable reps and professionals with substantial experience in the field to best explain and demonstrate their solutions.

Products on display will range from low tech to high tech and represent solutions for all disabilities and ages. Daily regular AND exclusive hours are scheduled to give participants quality time to explore, try, learn and ask questions, first-hand and face-to-face.

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### Monday, October 12

5:00 pm - 8:00 pm .....Registration Desk Open

### Tuesday, October 13

7:00 am - 8:00 pm .....Registration Desk Open

8:00 am - 4:30 pm ..... Preconference Workshops

### Wednesday, October 14

7:00 am - 9:00 pm .....Registration Desk Open

8:00 am - 4:30 pm ..... Preconference Workshops

5:30 pm - 8:00 pm ..... Preview of Exhibits

### Thursday, October 15

7:00 am - 5:30 pm .....Registration Desk Open

8:00 am - 10:30 am ..... Presentations

10:00 am - 12:00 pm ..... Commercial Exhibits

10:30 am - 12:00 pm ..... Exclusive Exhibit Hours and  
Lab Presentations

12:30 pm - 4:30 pm ..... Presentations

1:30 pm - 5:30 pm ..... Commercial Exhibits

### Friday, October 16

7:30 am - 5:30 pm .....Registration Desk Open

8:00 am - 10:30 am ..... Presentations

10:00 am - 12:00 pm ..... Commercial Exhibits

10:30 am - 12:00 pm ..... Exclusive Exhibit Hours and  
Lab Presentations

12:30 pm - 4:30 pm ..... Presentations

1:30 pm - 5:30 pm ..... Commercial Exhibits

### Saturday, October 17

7:30 am - 2:00 pm .....Registration Desk Open

8:00 am - 1:30 pm ..... Presentations

9:00 am - 2:00 pm ..... Commercial Exhibits



## STATE-OF-THE-ART COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS

Wednesday evening through Saturday, October 14-17, 2009



## DON'T MISS THE PREVIEW OF EXHIBITS

Wednesday, October 14 • 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Great Hall, Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

Open to preconference and/or conference registrants only.

### EXCLUSIVE EXHIBIT HOURS

**Wednesday, October 14** 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm (*Preview of Exhibits*)  
**Thursday, October 15** 10:30 am - 12:00 pm | 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm  
**Friday, October 16** 10:30 am - 12:00 pm | 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm  
*(A limited number of lab presentations run concurrently from 11:00 am - 12:00 pm.)*

### REGULAR EXHIBIT HOURS

**Thursday, October 15** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm | 1:30 pm - 5:30 pm  
**Friday, October 16** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm | 1:30 pm - 5:30 pm  
**Saturday, October 17** 9:00 am - 2:00 pm (Open to the public at no charge)



## ACADEMIC CREDIT

Graduate-level academic credit from Hamline University is available for a variety of levels of conference attendance. Participants will have the option of one, two or three full semester credits.

Attend all five days and earn up to three graduate-level academic credits and up to 34 IACET CEUs!

### One full semester credit

Cost: \$119

#### Requirements:

- 12 contact hours
- An outside assignment

(12 Contact hours require one preconference workshop and conference participation; two preconference workshops; OR conference participation only.)

### Two full semester credits

Cost: \$238

#### Requirements:

- 24 contact hours
- An outside assignment

(24 contact hours require at least one preconference workshop (minimum) AND conference participation.)

### Three full semester credits

Cost: \$357

#### Requirements:

- 36 contact hours
- An outside assignment

(36 contact hours require two preconference workshops AND conference participation Thursday - Saturday.)

### Outside Assignments

Outside assignments will need to be turned in to Closing The Gap by November 15th, 2009. Within a few weeks, grades will be issued and then maintained by Hamline University.

To register for academic credit, please indicate your preference as to one, two

or three semester credits on the registration form, pay the appropriate fee, and complete and return the Hamline academic credit form that will accompany your confirmation letter in the mail.

Any questions regarding academic credit and the procedure involved should be directed to Closing The Gap's registration department.



## IACET CEUS

AAC Institute is an Authorized Provider of IACET (International Association for Continuing Education and Training) CEUs. CEUs are being offered for all conference learning sessions without charge. IACET CEUs that relate to the practice of speech-language pathology and audiology can be used for ASHA certification maintenance. RESNA accepts IACET CEUs for ATP/ATS credential maintenance. Most state licensure systems accept IACET CEUs or other forms of self-reporting. Preconference workshops are offered for up to 1.4 CEUs. The conference is offered for up to 2.0 CEUs. For additional information visit [www.aac institute.org/CEUs](http://www.aac institute.org/CEUs).

CEU details and documentation will be available at the Closing The Gap registration desk located on the second floor of the Sheraton.



## CERTIFICATES OF ATTENDANCE

Closing The Gap-issued Certificates of Attendance for conference participation will be available upon request at no additional fee.

# PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Tuesday and Wednesday, October 13-14, 2009

## Tuesday, October 13, 2009

### ❖ PC-1 Students with Significant Disabilities as Writers, Readers and Communicators: Yes They Can!

Developing successful literacy and communication instruction for students with significant disabilities, including deaf-blindness, is a challenging feat. The Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, NC has worked with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to develop model demonstration classrooms that provide effective instruction for this population. This workshop will describe the emergent literacy activities being used and the methods of student progress monitoring. Case studies, classroom videos, assistive technology and student writing samples will be shown, supported by small group activities. Participants will receive a CD full of great activities and resources.

*Gretchen Hanser, Ph.D., is the Associate Director of School-Aged Services, Center for Literacy and Disability Studies, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC and Toy Dills Booth, M.Ed., NBCT, is a Special Educator, The North Shelby School, Shelby, NC.*

### ❖ PC-2 Wiggle Your Way Through Web 2.0

What is Web 2.0 and how will these tools assist me as a special educator or assistive technology provider? Web 2.0 is all about communication, collaboration and creation of information. Throughout this beginner hands-on workshop, we will explore Web-based tools for communication and collaboration, including nings, wiki's, blogs, social bookmarking tools and micro-social networking (Twitter). Specific tools will include assistive technology nings, Twitter, pbwiki, voice thread, wordle, webspiration, interactive learning objects, social bookmarking, flowgrams, video sharing sites and free educational applications for the iPod. This workshop will provide hands-on exploration and instruction on how to use these free Web 2.0 tools for the assistive technology professional. (Hands-on activities will be conducted on both PC and Macintosh computers - one computer for every one participant; or, participants are welcome to bring their own laptop with Web browser and wireless networking card.)

*Paula Walsler, M.S., CCC-SLP, is the Director of E-Learning, CESA 6, Oshkosh, WI.*

### ❖ PC-3 Every Move Counts, Clicks and Chats Assessment Strategies: Getting the Information You Need for Individuals with Significant Sensory-Motor Differences

This workshop will present nontraditional assessment strategies appropriate for the development of communication and successful AT applications in individuals having severe multiple differences, developmental differences and/or autism. Tools that can be used to identify content, symbol systems, access, switch and voca appropriate for individuals with significant sensory-motor differences will be presented. Information is relevant to the needs of those individuals who are currently unable to communicate their wants and needs spontaneously in their environment, regardless of age or severity of physical and/or cognitive differences. Techniques incorporate current research in the areas of communication, education and sensory integration. There is a \$50 materials fee (program manual) in addition to the cost of the workshop. (Note: Although not mandatory, it is strongly recommended that this Assessment workshop be followed up with Every Move Counts, Clicks and Chats Implementation Strategies [on

Wednesday] to better understand and apply the Every Move Counts philosophy.)

*Jane Korsten, M.A., is a Speech Language Pathologist, EMC, Inc., Leawood, KS; Terry Foss, M.Ed., is an AT Resource Facilitator, Lee's Summit, MO; and Lisa Berry, OTR/L, is a Pediatric Occupational Therapist, Blue Valley School District, Lenexa, KS.*

### ❖ PC-4 Developing Communication Skills for Children Who Face Severe Multiple Challenges: Partner-Assisted Scanning with Pragmatically Organized Dynamic Displays (PODD)

Children who face severe or profound physical, complex communication, and multiple challenges, such as cerebral palsy, rett syndrome or traumatic brain injury, often struggle with trying to juggle the challenges of motor coordination, sensory processing, communication, language, vision and cognition needed to effectively communicate what they are thinking. For many of these children, direct access, using their hands to operate a communication device, is not an effective strategy. Where do you start? How do you tap into the child's communicative intent? How do you develop language skills so that children can begin to communicate what they are thinking? How do you provide a comprehensive adapted communication and learning environment for children who face such significant challenges? This workshop will demonstrate the use of a variety of light tech partner-assisted communication books and strategies that can help give a child a means of interactive communication. Organization of vocabulary by pragmatic intent, (PODD) based upon the work of Gayle Porter (Melbourne, Australia), will be discussed. Strategies for children who have cortical visual impairment in addition to other multiple challenges will also be shared.

*Linda J. Burkhart, B.S., is a Special Educator/Augmentative Communication Specialist/Technology Integration Specialist in private practice, Eldersburg, MD and Dale Gardner Fox, M.S., RPT, is an Assistive Technology Consultant, Hampshire Educational Collaborative, CCATT, Northampton, MA.*

### ❖ PC-5 Putting the Pieces Together: Positioning, Access and Speech Generating Devices

Have you ever worked with a child who is communicating below his/her potential because someone underestimated his/her abilities? Or perhaps all the pieces of the puzzle weren't put together during the assessment to provide a successful outcome? This intermediate workshop will address the critical interconnection and integration of assistive technology systems for individuals who have complex communication needs, significant physical and visual impairments, and rely on speech generating devices (SGDs). Assessment, positioning for access, access methods and specific strategies to build skills and independence will be addressed. Several case studies will be presented to illustrate these points. Participants will have the opportunity to bring their own case studies for group problem solving. Be ready for a fast moving and interactive session that will help you help your clients reach their communication and participation potential!

*Michelle L. Lange, OTR, ABDA, ATP, is the President, Access to Independence, Arvada, CO and Jill Tullman, M.S., is a Speech Language Pathologist/AAC Specialist in private practice, Denver, CO.*

## BUNDLED PRICING AVAILABLE

TWO WORKSHOPS FOR \$480 – A \$60 SAVINGS!

- ❖ \$270 for one all-day workshop 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
- ❖ Preconference workshop registration INCLUDES Preview of Exhibits
- ❖ Academic credit and CEUs available!

### ❖ PC-6 Setting Up and Working with Switch Interfaces

In this hands-on PC lab, participants will explore, set up and/or program four programmable switch interfaces: IntelliSwitch, StealthSwitch AT, SwitchHopper and the Crick Switch Interface. Each switch interface will be configured for Clicker 5, Classroom Suite and simple switch-activated software to compare programming strategies and features. Strategies will also include using the IntelliKeys keyboard as a switch interface for the selected software. Participants will decide appropriate key content for the switches and IntelliKeys and configure all hardware for each application. Guided practice will include step-by-step tutorials and a comparison sheet of interface features to guarantee success after the workshop. To generalize skills, participants will examine various switch activated software programs, determine required switch content and independently set up and program the interfaces of choice. The emphasis will be placed on how the interfaces will work with all the selected software and provide extensive tutorials, tips and techniques to guarantee success. (Hands-on activities will be conducted on PC computers - one computer for every two participants.)

*Patti Rea, M.S., is a Technology Consultant, Adaptive Technology, Celina, TX and Kathleen Post, M.S., CCC-SLP, is the Manager, Assistive Technology Dept., Easter Seals DuPage and Fox Valley Region, Villa Park, IL.*

## WHAT PRECONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS HAVE SAID:

"The concrete ideas, examples and easy-to-understand and real-life applications for students and teachers were fabulous."

~AT Consultant

"I was thrilled with the preconference workshops that I attended and have most definitely acquired valuable information and skills to take home with me."

~Special Education Consultant

"Extremely knowledgeable presenter, MANY excellent practical ideas to take home."

~Parent/Pharmacist

"Great ideas that can be implemented in my classroom. Absolutely excellent!"

~Special Ed Teacher

"Great hands-on -- good explicit instructions, great application, CD to take home."

~Speech Language Pathologist

"Terrific instructor – able to discuss techniques by using examples. Very good teacher, lots of experience."

~Pediatric Occupational Therapist

### ❖ PC-7 Got Grants(manship)? ... Upgrading Your Grant Seeking Toolbox to Support Tech Initiatives

Have you tried writing a grant proposal but gotten lost in the process? Or tried your hand at writing, and received "not funded" messages from funders? Grants offer our districts and organizations both financial support and flexibility to pursue needed technology initiatives. But, without a "formula" for both finding and compiling proposals, grant seeking and grant writing often feel like climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro. This workshop has two foci: 1) finding grants that are doable and meet targeted needs; and 2) getting the grant proposal out the door. This session will give participants hands-on work on efficient grant seeking, as well as strategies for making good decisions after sorting through grant possibilities. An equal emphasis will be on smart strategies for getting the grant compiled and submitted. We will use free tools, and participants will leave with an online toolbox of resources, tools and strategies for their future grant work. (Hands-on activities will be conducted on Macintosh computers - one computer for every two participants; or, participants are welcome to bring their own laptop with Web browser and wireless networking card.)

*Kathleen Gradel, Ed.D., is an Associate Professor, Language, Learning and Leadership Dept., College of Education, SUNY-Fredonia, Fredonia, NY.*

### ❖ PC-8 Gathering Evidence About the Effectiveness of Technology for Enhancing Academic Performance

As schools seek to implement effective instructional interventions, technology (in the form of assistive technology, instructional technology and universal design for learning) may or may not be considered as a critical strategy. The purpose of this workshop is to explore templates, tools and strategies that can be used to measure and report on the effectiveness of technology for enhancing student achievement. Whether your school is implementing RTI, or your technology team is simply looking for evidence to enhance its decision making, this workshop will equip you with new tools and resources. We'll focus our attention on technology interventions in five areas (reading, writing, research and report writing, math, and study guides and quizzes/tests), grades 4 through post-secondary, that can be used with individual students or an entire class. At the end of the day, you'll have a new toolkit of technology interventions that have been designed to support the academic performance of struggling students and you'll have quantifiable evidence about the academic gains that result from their use. Note: Given the practical nature of this hands-on workshop, participants MUST bring their own laptop computer (Windows XP or Vista or Macintosh OS X) that includes a wireless card, a Web browser and Microsoft Word to the workshop.

*Dave L. Edyburn, Ph.D., is a Professor, Dept. of Exceptional Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.*

### ❖ PC-9 Teaching AAC

This hands-on workshop is a must for anyone who supports, evaluates or works with AAC students. Emphasis will be placed on improving the quality of instruction available to all students who use alternative and augmentative communication (AAC), from inclusive situations to special education programs with a range of student ability levels. Participants will have hands-on experience using AAC devices. Practical strategies, teaching tips and instructional strategies will be highlighted. A variety of systems will be available for hands-on use throughout the day, including DynaVox, Blink Twice and Prentke Romich systems. Practical strategies for monitoring student progress, writing learning objectives and data collection ideas will be shared. In addition, light tech methods to support AAC during "the waiting period" and/or to determine potential use of more sophisticated systems will be addressed. Videotaped examples of students will be used to illustrate concepts

and strategies. Each participant will receive a CD full of activities and a light tech AAC system, The Classroom Communication Flip Book. There is a \$30 materials fee in addition to the cost of the workshop.

*Pati King DeBaun, M.S., is a Speech Language Pathologist/Consultant specializing in assistive technology, Creative Communicating, Park City, UT; Karen Biggerstaff, M.S., is a Speech Language Pathologist/Consultant, San Antonio, TX; and Sue Alderfer, B.S., is a Speech Language Pathologist, Montgomery County, Perkiomenville, PA.*

### ❖ PC-10 Next Steps and New Frontiers with Classroom Suite 4!

Some upgrades are minor tweaks from the previous version. Classroom Suite 4, however, takes a big leap in power and possibilities! Learn new hidden features, utilize new actions, and learn how to work with tables to create journals, adapted books or customized fact books for student report projects. Work with scriptable bins, timers, new math tools and more. Create labeling quizzes containing drop down selection lists, along with new student reporting features. An introduction into the new advanced scripting features will take you along the first steps of creating powerful, interactive activities. Imagine it, design it! Sample activities and templates will be provided. This is an intermediate to advanced level workshop. Participants must be proficient with the basics of Classroom Suite 4. (Hands-on activities will be conducted on both PC and Macintosh computers - one computer for every three participants.)

*Dan Herlihy is an Assistive Technology/Technology Resource Specialist, Connective Technology Solutions, Inc., Hoosick, NY.*

### ❖ PC-11 Adding to Your Bag of Tricks ... and Treats!

Teaching children with autism includes many modifications and accommodations to insure that the students are successful. These should take place from the second the bell rings in the morning until the moment you finally get to sit down and take a deep breath at the end of the day as the children leave. This workshop will teach you many "tricks" to meet the needs of children with autism all day. These will include physical setup, visual strategies, social skills strategies, academic modifications, and much more. I will share many "treats" as well, including free Web sites and free professional development modules to use with all staff working with children with autism and other low incidence disabilities. We will view many modifications and make some as well. You will go home with a bag full of new tricks to use in your classroom. There is a \$35 materials fee in addition to the cost of the workshop.

*Mo Buti, M.A., is the Chicago Public Schools Autism Coordinator, Chicago, IL.*

### ❖ PC-12 Switch Access to Writing

Would your user of switch access technology like to blog? You bet! We all need writing motivation. This intermediate to advanced level workshop will address the issues that impact the user of switches and how to approach and support the writing process through this alternative access method. We will have a wide variety of hardware and software technologies to demonstrate advanced properties of switches and will describe how users of switches can gain efficient access to all writing environments through strategies of using word prediction, abbreviation expansion and other writing tool enhancements. This lecture and demonstration will cover strategies and technologies for scaffolding the written requirements for all students in the curricular areas. We will give examples of switch access to written work supports in language arts, literature, science, social studies and history topics, as well as writing for leisure, e-mail, blogging and on the job.

*Kelly Fonner, M.S., is an Assistive/Educational Technology Consultant, Lake Geneva, WI and Scott Marfilus, M.S., is an Assistive/Educational Technology Consultant, Bayside, WI.*

### ❖ PC-13 Using the iPhone and iPod touch as Assistive Technology: From AAC to Planning Tool and Beyond

With brilliant graphics, great audio, a multi-touch interface and over 15,000 third party applications, the iPhone and iPod touch offer a wealth of possibilities for assistive technology. In this hands-on lab, you will learn about and get to try all the terrific applications that can make a difference for your students and clients. We start with Proloquo2Go, a completely customizable AAC solution for the iPhone/iPod, followed by applications for sign language, for planning/organization, for story telling, for reading/writing and much more. You will learn how the iPhone/iPod can make a difference to people with various disabilities, such as traumatic brain injuries, autism, down syndrome, fluency disorders, dyslexia, mild CP, ALS and others. At the end of the day you will know how and when to recommend an iPhone/iPod; you will know what applications are available; and you will have learned to use some of the most promising AT applications. (Hands-on activities will be conducted on iPod touches - one iPod for every one participant.)

*David Niemeijer, Ph.D., is the CEO, AssistiveWare, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Samuel Sennott, M.S. Ed. in Assistive Special Education Technology, is a Ph.D. Candidate, The Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA; and Eric Sailors, M.A., CCC-SLP, is a Speech Language Pathologist and Assistive Technology Specialist, La Mesa-Spring Valley School District and Crimson Center, San Diego, CA.*

### ❖ PC-14 Talking in Class: Helping Students Using AAC Devices

How do you support classroom learning and participation with students using sophisticated AAC devices, especially with all the vocabulary and programming demands? The answer to that question can be found in The Descriptive Teaching Model. This beginning workshop will demonstrate the Model and will outline key requirements for its successful implementation. The Model focuses on the teaching-talking-testing of content vocabulary through the descriptive use of 50 - 350 critical core words. Participants in this workshop will be given a list of those words and will be taught strategies for curriculum standards. The use of a Natural Aided Language Board will be demonstrated, along with a variety of other visual support materials. Speech language pathologists and teachers are encouraged to attend this session as collaborative teams to learn how to implement this model in their classrooms.

*Gail M. Van Tatenhove, M.A., is an AAC-focused Speech Language Pathologist in private practice, AACell, Inc., Orlando, FL.*

### ❖ PC-15 Every Move Counts, Clicks and Chats Implementation Strategies: Where Do You Go After Assessment?

Selecting instructional strategies that lead to student success is frequently challenging for those who live and work with individuals having severe and profound sensory motor differences. This workshop will build on the previous Assessment workshop, providing strategies for incorporating information gathered during assessment into implementation and the development of appropriate programs for students with the most significant sensory motor differences. This session will address ways to design an effective individualized communication program that builds on the abilities identified through the Every Move Counts, Clicks and Chats assessment protocols; the relationship of switch use, symbol understanding, low tech communication and assistive technology (including voca); recognize five levels of sequential strategies that support the development of communication and purposeful switch use; effectively integrate communication training into daily activities by providing appropriate choice-making opportunities; and progress through a hierarchy of alternate and augmentative



communication systems in order to identify and provide the communication system (no tech through high tech) that best meets an individual's needs and abilities. (Note: Although not mandatory, it is strongly recommended that the Every Move Counts, Clicks and Chats Assessment Strategies workshop [on Tuesday] be taken first to better understand and apply that which will be taught in this Implementation workshop. The manual is included in the cost of the Tuesday Assessment workshop.)

Jane Korsten, M.A., is a Speech Language Pathologist, EMC, Inc., Leawood, KS; Terry Foss, M.Ed., is an AT Resource Facilitator, Lee's Summit, MO; and Lisa Berry, OTR/L, is a Pediatric Occupational Therapist, Blue Valley School District, Lenexa, KS.

#### ❖ PC-16 Designing Two-Switch Early Literacy Activities for Computer Access: Hands-On Computer Lab - Classroom Suite

Would you like to create your own early and emergent literacy activities using IntelliTools Classroom Suite? This full day hands-on computer lab will take out some of the mystery and teach you tips and tricks for creating custom activities. Templates will be specifically for students who use switches to access the computer, based on "Two Switches to Success" (Burkhart). We will guide you through the process of modifying templates that have been cleverly designed and authored to make modifications simple. You will be able to customize the software for a variety of Early Literacy activities. (Hands-on activities will be conducted on both PC and Macintosh computers - one computer for every two participants.) NOTE: If you plan to bring your own computer, you will be responsible for having Classroom Suite 4 installed with the latest update from IntelliTools' Web site, along with Overlay Maker 3. If you are still using Classroom Suite 3.2, that is fine, but please also install a demo version of Classroom Suite 4 on the same computer. Plan to arrive 20 minutes prior to the start of the workshop to set up your computer. There is a \$35 materials fee in addition to the cost of the workshop.

Linda J. Burkhart, B.S., is a Special Educator/Augmentative Communication Specialist/Technology Integration Specialist in private practice, Eldersburg, MD; Susan Garber is the Executive Director, AT:LAST, Inc.: The MD AT Cooperative, Columbia, MD; Jeanne Noorisa is a Special Educator, AT Team, Baltimore County Public Schools, Monkton, MD; Jan Kurtz, M.S., is an Occupational Therapist, AT Team, Baltimore County Public Schools, Hampstead, MD; and Marsye W. Kaplan, M.S., CCC-SLP, ATP, is an Assistive Technology Team Leader, Baltimore County Public Schools, Owings Mills, MD.

#### ❖ PC-17 Make It Age Appropriate: Structuring Environments and Routines to Engage Your Adolescent and Adult AAC Users in Age Appropriate Communication

Are you exasperated with trying to identify and find or make age appropriate materials, books and resources to meet the needs of your adolescent or adult communicators (AAC), whether they have severe/profound developmental disabilities or acquired complex communication needs? Given the ultimate goal of offering a functional system for communication in the daily environment, all persons involved with individuals with complex communication needs are well served in examining their practices in this area. During this workshop, rationale and criteria for selecting age appropriate topics, activities and materials will be discussed. The basic elements of a structured environment, which includes assessment, effective communication, communication partners and physical environment, will be defined. Mechanisms for assuring provision of person centered, age appropriate communication services will be included. Strategies for structuring daily environments, settings and routines in which the AAC user must function will be shared. Methods and applications for fostering social, intellectual, communicative and emotional development for these individuals will be addressed. Attendees will make one of several different,

new kits utilizing a thematic approach to communication programming for adolescents and adults with complex communication needs. Participants will receive a CD containing materials to make all kits, as well as a guide to over 300 commercially available materials, software and AT devices, with brief descriptions, possible applications and vendor information. There is a \$30 materials fee in addition to the cost of the workshop.

Elizabeth (Libby) S. Rush, M.A., CCC-SLP, CPM, is an AAC Consultant in private practice, Durham, NC and Celeste Helling, M.A., CCC-SLP, ATP, is a Speech Language Pathologist, North Carolina Assistive Technology Program, Charlotte, NC.

#### ❖ PC-18 Reaching More Staff: Digital Tools for 21st Century Technology Training

This hands-on computer workshop will focus on 21st century technology training. It will begin with a discussion of the changing role of today's technology specialists, and how important it is to think beyond the face-to-face method of training in order to build capacity. We will engage our audience in a discussion of 21st century professional development strategies that include more digital options, shifting us from the "sage on the stage" to more of the role of facilitator/moderator. You will have hands-on opportunities to use screen capture software to create on-demand training, and learn how to conduct effective webinars. Online training options, including the use of wikis, blogs and podcasts, will be practiced. Frustrated that you can't train staff often enough or fast enough? This workshop is for you. (Hands-on activities will be conducted on PC computers - one computer for every two participants.)

Denise C. DeCoste, Ed.D., is an Assistive Technology Specialist and a High Incidence Accessible Technology Team Leader; William McGrath, M.S., is an Occupational Therapist and Assistive Technology Specialist; and Beth Poss, M.A., M.S., is a Speech Language Pathologist and Assistive Technology Consultant, all, Montgomery County Public Schools, Bethesda, MD.

#### ❖ PC-19 The Power of PowerPoint in Special Education

This hands-on, intermediate to advanced level workshop is designed to show participants some tricks and templates for more complete use of PowerPoint with their students. We'll look at older, as well as the newest, versions of this highly popular program with the aim of producing a variety of activities for a wide range of students with special needs. This work will be task-based and will include a wide variety of lesson samples and templates that have been tried and tested with actual students. Participants will learn how to make one-click lessons, make templates, add students to modified lessons to ensure interest, make puzzles, create cross curriculum lessons, have students show what they know in layout mode, create games, create on-screen books with multiple strand choices, make labeled diagrams, create talking maps and more! While creating these lessons, participants will also learn some of the advanced features of the program and tricks that work with particular student needs. Participants are encouraged to bring a flash drive so they can take their work with them at the end of the day. (Hands-on activities will be conducted on Macintosh computers - one computer for every three participants.)

Judith P. Sweeney, M.A. Special Education, is an AT Consultant and the President, Onion Mountain Technology, Inc., Canton, CT.

#### ❖ PC-20 Scanning and AAC Systems: Sharing Strategies that Can Help End the Struggling (for both the adult therapist/teacher and the child/AAC user)

This intermediate workshop will explore points we should consider when planning, designing, selecting vocabulary and teaching elements of AAC systems to be used by children who rely on scanning as their access method. We

will review known information and discuss components of scanning AAC systems, such as motor tasks required, display design, vocabulary selection, teaching strategies, physical configuration, types of switches needed and used, and seating. Central to this workshop will be the question, "Can the majority of children who use scanning as their AAC system access method become generative in their language and communication use?"

Michele Bishop, B.A., ATP, is a Teacher/Assistive Technology Specialist in private practice, San Francisco, CA and Karen M. Kangas, B.S., ATP, is an Occupational Therapist in private practice, Shamokin, PA.

#### ❖ PC-21 The Balanced Literacy Club: Supporting Literacy in Classrooms and Districts

The prospect of teaching students with significant disabilities to read and write may seem daunting. We chose to start a Balanced Literacy Club, working as a team to support all teachers, therapists, and paras. This project included a full-day presentation, short monthly presentations, including make-it projects, in-class modeling and coaching, and team celebration of successes. So far, the clubs have spanned seven school districts and 33 classrooms, and include a range of students (with cognitive impairments, autism spectrum disorders, physical impairments, and those using AAC devices). Throughout this workshop, we will share assessment ideas, videos, data, specific strategies for all parts of balanced literacy (word study, guided reading, writing and self-selected reading), and tips for getting EVERYONE onboard and excited about pushing for quality, research-based literacy instruction. Presenters will also focus on ideas for replicating this project. Participants will receive a CD with multiple forms for setting up your own club and sample intervention templates. There is a \$15 materials fee in addition to the cost of the workshop.

Caroline Ramsey Musselwhite, Ed.D., CCC-SLP, is an Assistive Technology Consultant and Author, AAC Intervention, Litchfield Park, AZ; Patty Ashby, M.N.S. in Speech Language Pathology, is an Assistive Technology Consultant, Washington Elementary School District, Sweetwater School, Glendale, AZ; Laurel Richardson, M.A. Ed., OTR, is an AT Specialist, Buckeye School District, Goodyear, AZ; and Deanna K. Wagner, M.S., CCC-CLP, is an Assistive Technology Specialist, Madison Elementary School District, Phoenix, AZ.

#### ❖ PC-22 Assessment Defining Instruction: Autism and Literacy

This full-day workshop will provide information on assessing and teaching children with autism to read and write. A brief overview of the Four Block Model will be provided and participants will be lead through an overview of practical and functional literacy assessments that provide critical information to inform effective literacy instruction. This workshop will distinguish between three types of children with ASD and their unique reading needs. Students illustrated will include children with hyperlexia and limited comprehension, children who are nonverbal and reading, and children with severe auditory processing and language issues who are verbal. Extensive videos will be shown to illustrate key points, techniques, and the integration of literacy and AAC. The day will include small group problem solving and a CD packed with assessment materials. The day guarantees that participants will leave with an abundance of new ideas and increased appreciation for the breadth of literacy instruction for students with ASD. There is a \$25 materials fee in addition to the cost of the workshop.

Susan Norwell, M.A., is an Educational Specialist in private practice/Focused Learning Solutions and Instructor, Northeastern Illinois University, Buffalo Grove, IL.

### ❖ PC-23 Teaching the Three Rs for Students with Significant Disabilities in the Inclusive Classroom

Although the practice of inclusion has opened classroom doors to students with more severe disabilities, many of these students are still not learning the basics. This hands-on workshop will combine both instructional theory and computer technology that support systematic strategies for teaching students with severe disabilities in an inclusive setting. Specific attention will focus on the three Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic). Assistive technology and tools that accommodate learning and incorporate universal design will be emphasized for a range of disabilities. A variety of programs and ideas will be explored that scaffold learning, that help with the assessment of learning and that create opportunities for independent student practice. This workshop will include a CD full of supportive materials, activities and assessment templates. (Hands-on activities will be conducted on both PC and Macintosh computers - one computer for every three participants.) There is a \$20 materials fee in addition to the cost of the workshop.

*Pati King DeBaun, M.S., is a Speech Language Pathologist/Consultant specializing in assistive technology, Creative Communicating, Park City, UT and Dan Herlihy is an Assistive Technology/Technology Resource Specialist, Connective Technology Solutions, Inc., Hoosick, NY.*

### ❖ PC-24 "But What If the Teachers Won't Do It?" Making a Difference with Your Consultative Services

If you find that the professionals you work with can be more challenging than the kids, this workshop is for you! We feel your pain and we're here to help. As veteran consultants ourselves, we are very familiar with the struggle of promoting change with individuals and site teams in the public school setting. We work directly with teams at over 100 schools and consult with many professionals about students with considerable needs and even extreme behaviors. This, of course, can result in sometimes challenging consultative situations. We have developed tools and techniques for consulting with teachers, para-professionals, related service providers and parents that have been largely successful and resulted in favorable evaluations from our "customers." Participants will have direct opportunities to practice the strategies we use to facilitate success, not only with implementing use of AT, but also with other necessary interventions. Networking, problem solving and brainstorming will be an integral part of this workshop, so bring your good ideas to share. Ample resources on the topic area will be disseminated.

*Keri Huddleston, M.A., CCC-SLP, is an Assistive Technology Consultant, Teru Langsdale, M.S., CCC-SLP, is a Special Education Consultant, and Moira Soulia, M.S., CCC-SLP, is an Assistive Technology Specialist, all, Washoe County School District, Reno, NV.*

### ❖ PC-25 It's All About Independent Functioning! Using Technology to Develop Critical Life Skills for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Are you struggling with teaching your students (and the adults who support them!) independent functioning skills? If so, this beginner workshop is for you! A primary goal when teaching students with ASD is to decrease dependence on adults. However, this can be quite challenging in school-based settings where the educational climate fosters adult support. For our students with ASD, who by the nature of their disability can become quite "prompt-dependent," this instructional style can be extremely detrimental, resulting in lifelong ramifications. This workshop will address how to appropriately use adult support to teach independent functioning skills. Numerous practical, evidence-based techniques using various modes of technology will be shared, designed to increase the independent functioning skills of our students with ASD. A unique educational planning guide will be shared, designed to assist teams in identifying contexts and situations that require adult support, necessitating the need for instruction and development of independent skills.

*Susan L. Stokes, M.A., CCC-SLP, is an Educational Autism Consultant and Trainer in private practice, Fond du Lac, WI.*

## STATE-OF-THE-ART COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS

Wednesday evening through Saturday, October 14-17, 2009

### ❖ AAC Institute

[www.aac institute.org](http://www.aac institute.org)

AAC Institute is a resource for AAC families and professionals. Products, services and resources support evidence-based practice and promote the highest performance communication possible.

### ❖ AbleNet

[www.ablenetinc.com](http://www.ablenetinc.com)

AbleNet offers a complete line of assistive technology products, including communication aids, switches, environmental control, computer access and mounting devices. We also offer research-based special education curricula that meet state and federal mandates.

### ❖ Accelerations Educational Software

[www.dttrainer.com](http://www.dttrainer.com)

Activity Trainer Video Modeling program with 150 task-analyzed videos allows modifications, collect data, add videos. The DT Trainer instructional software has over 165 programs, data-collection, reinforcers.

### ❖ Adaptation

[www.adaptation.com](http://www.adaptation.com)

Adaptation manufactures communication aids, environmental controls and switches. Stop by our booth to see new products and application ideas!

### ❖ Adaptive Switch Laboratories

[www.asl-inc.com](http://www.asl-inc.com)

ASL is dedicated to designing and adapting devices that allow individuals with severe disabilities to achieve movement, environmental control and communication/computer access.

### ❖ Alliance for Technology Access

[www.ATAccess.org](http://www.ATAccess.org)

The Alliance for Technology Access (ATA) is a national network dedicated to providing support and information to people with disabilities. The ATA seeks to redefine human potential by making technology accessible to all.

### ❖ Atomic Learning

[www.AtomicLearning.com](http://www.AtomicLearning.com)

Atomic Learning provides Web-based software training and is an integral part of a professional development program, a curriculum supplement and a software training resource. [www.AtomicLearning.com](http://www.AtomicLearning.com)

### ❖ Attainment Company

[www.AttainmentCompany.com](http://www.AttainmentCompany.com)

Attainment Company produces an affordable line of Augmentative Communication devices, 'GoTalks', books, videos, software, print and hands-on-materials. Research-based literacy, math, and science curriculums are now available!

### ❖ Augmentative Resources

[www.augresources.com](http://www.augresources.com)

Velcro-receptive communication books, display boards, picture schedules, behavior and time management products and literacy aids. Use pictures on our devices to improve communication, language and literacy skills. Check out our Create-a-Book, Literacy Strips, Squeeze & Find Mat, Slide & Follow Schedule and Talking Pockets - new versatile voice output device.

### ❖ Beacon-Ridge

[www.beacon-ridge.com](http://www.beacon-ridge.com)

Beacon-Ridge specializes in providing innovative and standard low tech solutions for handwriting, reading, math, and organization. Skills required in school settings and the work place.



### ❖ Benetech/Bookshare.org

[www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org)

Bookshare is the world's largest online library of accessible books available to individuals with print disabilities. Currently, through an award from the U.S. Department of Education, qualified U.S. students of any age can get a free Bookshare membership.

### ❖ Blink Twice

[www.blink-twice.com](http://www.blink-twice.com)

Blink Twice produces the Tango, an AAC device that offers the quickest communication and personalization possible, with multiple modes to address a broad range of individuals.

### ❖ C.J.T. Enterprises

[www.cjt-yes.com](http://www.cjt-yes.com)

Modular mounting systems allowing AT devices to be optimally positioned to accommodate an individual's unique needs. Come see our NEW products for 2009.

### ❖ Cadan Computers dba Technology For Education

[www.tfeinc.com](http://www.tfeinc.com)

Keyboard Communicator, Smart Speaker, Stealth Switch interface, Chester Creek Keyboards, Scientific Calculator and Zonco Arm Support.

### ❖ Cambium Learning Technologies

[www.cambiumlearningtechnologies.com](http://www.cambiumlearningtechnologies.com)

For over 25 years, IntelliTools and Kurzweil Educational Systems, division of Cambium Learning Technologies have been leading sources for educational technology to help students learn to their fullest potential, serving students who use assistive technology, have reading or learning disabilities, struggle with limited English proficiency, or need additional instructional support for any other reason.

### ❖ Chester Creek

[www.chestercreek.com](http://www.chestercreek.com)

Chester Creek designs, markets and manufactures specialty computer keyboards and mice for children, special education departments and assistive technology markets worldwide. Our colorful, color-coded standard and large-key keyboards, as well as our tiny mice meet stringent RoHS and U.S. environmental standards.

### ❖ Closing The Gap

[www.closingthegap.com](http://www.closingthegap.com)

Discover, Solutions, the many resources that Closing The Gap has to offer. Try, first-hand, the online subscription tool that allows users to search for and compare the latest in AT products and allows users to find, read and share articles that highlight product use and effective AT strategies.

❖ **Cognitopia**

[www.cognitopia.com](http://www.cognitopia.com)

Cognitopia Software presents Picture Planner, the innovative software that uses pictures, symbols, and text-to-speech prompting in an icon-based personal activity scheduler for individuals with little or no reading ability. Picture Planner is a customizable application compatible with Apple OSX, Windows XP/Vista and Windows Mobile phones and handhelds.

❖ **Creative Communicating**

[www.creativecommunicating.com](http://www.creativecommunicating.com)

Creative Communicating is dedicated to creating fun, simple and universally accessible resources for communication, early literacy and creativity for students with disabilities. Adapted books, classroom materials and electronic books, as well as support materials for teachers.

❖ **Crick Software**

[www.cricksoft.com](http://www.cricksoft.com)

At Crick software our mission is to improve literacy achievement for students of all abilities by providing educators with innovative, research-based solutions that are easy to use and cost-effective.

❖ **DO-IT, University of Washington**

[www.washington.edu/doiit](http://www.washington.edu/doiit)

DO-IT serves to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in challenging academic programs and careers. It promotes the use of computer and networking technologies to increase independence, productivity and participation in education and employment.

❖ **Dolphin Computer Access**

[www.YourDolphin.com](http://www.YourDolphin.com)

Dolphin Computer Access delivers independence to people with visual impairment and learning disabilities with complete access solutions with Dolphin SuperNova and the ultimate alternative format tool EasyConverter.

❖ **Don Johnston**

[www.donjohnston.com](http://www.donjohnston.com)

Don Johnston empowers educators with accessible instructional, assistive and intervention solutions to help the widest range of student build core literacy skills.

❖ **DynaVox and Mayer-Johnson**

[www.dynavoxtech.com](http://www.dynavoxtech.com)

[www.mayer-johnson.com](http://www.mayer-johnson.com)

DynaVox and Mayer-Johnson offer a full spectrum of AT solutions for individuals with communication and learning challenges, including the V/Vmax, EyeMax and Board-maker Software family.

❖ **Exceptional Parent (EP Global Communications)**

[www.eparent.com](http://www.eparent.com)

EP Global Communications is a 38-year-old, award winning publishing and communications company that provides practical advice and emotional support to families of children and adults with disabilities and special health care needs as well as the physicians, allied healthcare and educational professionals who are involved in their care and development.

❖ **Eye Response Technologies**

[www.eyerresponse.com](http://www.eyerresponse.com)

ERICA is a communication system controlled through eye movement alone. The ERICA Dedicated Communication System is 100 percent funded by Medicare and MDA/ALSA funding.

❖ **Freedom Concepts**

[www.freedomconcepts.com](http://www.freedomconcepts.com)

Working with medical professionals and families since 1991. Freedom Concepts custom-builds each mobility device for individuals with disabilities. Recently we have expanded our existing product line-up to include new devices that compliment and continue our goal of creating fun, therapy and most of all ...Freedom!

❖ **HumanWare**

[www.humanware.com](http://www.humanware.com)

Humanware products are designed to last, to grow with the user, giving them the independence to compete effectively with peers, to feel connected, to be a vital part of the global information age in which we live.

❖ **InfoCor**

[www.infocor.com](http://www.infocor.com)

As an A/V designer and integrator, InfoCor also developed and manufactures the Satalight interactive learning station for assistive technology, academic, corporate and government clients.

❖ **Judy Lynn Software**

[www.judylynn.com](http://www.judylynn.com)

Switch software for students nine months cognitive and up. Age appropriate software features lively graphics and captivating sounds. Stop by booth 274 for a catalog and demo.

❖ **LiftVest**

[www.liftvest.com](http://www.liftvest.com)

LiftVest makes dangerous painful gait belts obsolete! Stylish vest with attached webbing harness for transferring and ambulating the mobility impaired with safety and dignity. Prevents staff back injuries and student and patient injuries. New product 2 - way deep pressure autism vest.

❖ **Lightspeed Technologies**

[www.lightspeed-tek.com](http://www.lightspeed-tek.com)

The New Sound of Achievement check out the all-in-one REDCAT. This quick-set system saves the teacher's voice and raises academic achievement. Free evaluations available.

❖ **Marblesoft-Simtech**

[www.marblesoft.com](http://www.marblesoft.com)

For over 25 years, Marblesoft has produced outstanding special needs software for infants through adults. Our Simtech switch training software is also the best-kept secret in assistive technology!

❖ **ModularHose.com**

[www.ModularHose.com](http://www.ModularHose.com)

Loc-Line Modular Hose is a unique plastic hose system that is flexible but yet self-supporting and repositionable. Great for holding switches and utensils.

❖ **Monarch Teaching Technologies**

[www.monarchtt.com](http://www.monarchtt.com)

Monarch Teaching Technologies introduces VizZLe: State-of-the-art Web-based Special Education software for quick and easy creation of customized interactive visual lessons. Over 10,000 visuals, shared lesson libraries. Available online at: [www.MonarchTT.com](http://www.MonarchTT.com)

❖ **Nasco**

[www.eNasco.com](http://www.eNasco.com)

Nasco's Special Education Catalog offers a full line of products and resources for the special education teacher K-12, including software and assistive technology.

❖ **Origin Instruments**

[www.orin.com](http://www.orin.com)

Origin Instruments delivers hardware and software solutions for computer access, switch-based access, speech and low vision. The HeadMouse Extreme is the company's flagship product.

❖ **Prentke Romich Company**

[www.prentrom.com](http://www.prentrom.com)

Easy yet powerful communication aids by Prentke Romich Company. Come see how easy it is to speak with ECO-14, SpringBoard Lite, Vantage Lite and Vanguard.

❖ **ProxTalker.com**

[www.proxtalker.com](http://www.proxtalker.com)

Manufacturer of the Logan ProxTalker AT communication device. The first picture exchange communication system that actually talks! Movable tags form voice output picture sentences.

❖ **Quillsoft, Ltd.**

[www.wordq.com](http://www.wordq.com)

Quillsoft produces WordQ and SpeakQ software for helping people write independently. Our software helps you to improve your writing using word prediction, speech feedback, and text to speech capabilities.

❖ **Read Naturally**

[www.readnaturally.com](http://www.readnaturally.com)

Read Naturally provides reading solutions for struggling readers, including fluency, comprehension, phonics and assessment. The flagship program has been used nationwide for over 17 years.

❖ **Renaissance Learning**

[www.renlearn.com](http://www.renlearn.com)

Neo is the lightweight, portable, easy-to-use laptop that builds excitement for writing and helps students succeed across the curriculum.

❖ **RJ Cooper & Assoc.**

[www.rjcooper.com](http://www.rjcooper.com)

RJ has been developing products for our special needs since 1984! Come see what he's developed lately.

❖ **Salttillo**

[www.salttillo.com](http://www.salttillo.com)

Salttillo Corporation manufactures and distributes augmentative communication devices, specializing in products for ambulatory individuals. Chat PC, Chat Box, and Bluebird are in our product line.

❖ **NEW for 2009 —**

Exhibit hall only registration \$150. See page 44 for details.

❖ **NEW for 2009 —** Single-day conference registration options. See page 44 for details.

❖ Time spent in the exhibit hall can be applied toward required contact hours for academic credit.

❖ Commercial exhibits open to the public, Saturday only, at no charge, 9:00 am — 2:00 pm.

❖ **Silver Lining Multimedia**

[www.silverliningmm.com](http://www.silverliningmm.com)

We create distraction-free educational materials for visual learners including Picture This photo CDs, the Great Action Adventure interactive program, adaptive worksheets and the Teaching Hands Clock.

❖ **Slater Software**

[www.slattersoftware.com](http://www.slattersoftware.com)

Slater Software offers, Picture It and PixWriter. Both software programs utilize Literacy Support Pictures to promote literacy growth. Slater also offers ready-to-use curriculum materials including Simply Science and Read and Tell.

❖ **Switch In Time**

[www.switchintime.com](http://www.switchintime.com)

Fun, accessible music and games for all ages.

❖ **Talking With Baby**

[www.talkingwithbaby.com](http://www.talkingwithbaby.com)

Talking With Baby offers a unique way to teach and learn sign language to be shared with babies and children with disabilities.

❖ **Texthelp Systems, Inc.**

[www.texthelp.com](http://www.texthelp.com)

Texthelp Systems provides award-winning literacy software solutions for individuals with reading and writing difficulties such as dyslexia, or who are English language learners.

❖ **The Writer Learning Systems**

[www.writerlearning.com](http://www.writerlearning.com)

Fusion now offers MATH 101! Build recall and break the finger counting habit. Math Facts, number patterns and much more.

❖ **Tobii ATI**

[www.tobiiati.com](http://www.tobiiati.com)

Tobii ATI is a premier developer of solutions for people with physical, cognitive and speech disabilities, including the latest in eye tracking and speech generating devices and software. Stop by our booth and be one of the first to preview our new line of Tobii C-Series devices and new Sono Suite of Software!

❖ **Words+**

[www.words-plus.com](http://www.words-plus.com)

Words+ was founded in 1981 from a desire to help one person communicate. Today, it continues to touch the lives of individuals dependent on durable Words+ products to help them communicate today.



## CONFERENCE REGISTRATION - OCTOBER 15-17, 2009

(Includes Preview of Exhibits – Wednesday, October 14, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm)

Registration Received On or Before	June 30	September 10	October 1	October 15
<b>Standard Rate</b> <b>Group Discount 5+</b> <b>NEW! Group Discount 10+</b> <i>All group registrations must be received at the same time.</i>	\$395 Groups 5+ Deduct \$20 Groups 10+ Deduct \$30	\$435 Groups 5+ Deduct \$20 Groups 10+ Deduct \$30	\$465 Groups 5+ Deduct \$20 Groups 10+ Deduct \$30	\$495 Groups 5+ Deduct \$20 Groups 10+ Deduct \$30
<b>Parent Rate</b> (A letter describing your child's disability must accompany registration)				\$305
<b>Full-time Student Rate</b> (Proof of full-time status must accompany registration)				\$305
<b>Presenter Rate</b>				\$305
<b>Exhibitor Rate</b>				\$305

### NEW! SINGLE-DAY REGISTRATION

One-day Conference Registration Friday, October 16 – \$250  
One-day Conference Registration Saturday, October 17 – \$125

### NEW! EXHIBIT HALL ONLY REGISTRATION

Exhibit Hall Only, Wednesday evening through Saturday, October 14-17 – \$150

A Certificate of Attendance is available upon request at no additional fee. Graduate-level academic credit and CEUs are available. All who register by October 1, 2009 will receive confirmation by mail.



## PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS - OCTOBER 13-14, 2009

(Includes Preview of Exhibits – Wednesday, October 14, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm)

Tuesday, October 13 – \$270  
Wednesday, October 14 – \$270

**NEW!** Tuesday and Wednesday Bundle – \$480 (\$60 savings)

Some preconference workshops carry an additional fee for materials. There is no additional fee for the Closing The Gap-issued, presenter-signed Certificate of Preconference Workshop Attendance.

## CONFIRMATION

All who register by October 1, 2009 will receive confirmation by mail.

## CONFERENCE DIRECTORY

The official Closing The Gap Conference Directory will be given to registrants at the conference site; many of the conference details will be posted on Closing The Gap's Web site.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations must be received in writing by Closing The Gap on or before October 1, 2009. There will be a \$75 cancellation fee for each one-day preconference workshop, each one-day conference registration, or each exhibit hall only registration; a \$125 cancellation fee for each three-day conference registration. Replacements are welcome and must be submitted in writing.

No refunds after October 1, 2009. Unpaid balances are due in full.

A SECOND CONFERENCE BROCHURE DETAILING THE PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS, OVER 200 PRESENTATIONS AND THE COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON OR ABOUT AUGUST 1, 2009. DETAILS WILL ALSO BE POSTED AT <WWW.CLOSINGTHEGAP.COM>.



## SCHOLARSHIPS

A limited number of scholarships are available for persons with disabilities or parents/guardians of children with disabilities. These scholarships cover registration fees for the conference only (Thursday - Saturday), and do not cover preconference workshops, food, lodging or travel. Scholarships are awarded on a first come, first served basis and one time only

per person. Persons that have previously received a scholarship from Closing The Gap are not eligible.

To apply, complete a conference registration form, indicating your scholarship request. Submit the form and attach a letter describing your/your child's disability and telling us why you would like to attend the conference. Applicants will receive written notification of acceptance or denial.



## CONFERENCE HEADQUARTERS

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel and the adjacent Hotel Sofitel are the official hotels of the conference. All conference activities are held at these two hotels located just 10 minutes west of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Limo, taxi, and mobility assistance services are available. Hotel-airport shuttles are available for Sheraton Bloomington Hotel.

## HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Hotel reservations can be made by contacting the conference-site hotels directly. Please refer to the "Closing The Gap Conference" when making your reservations to receive conference room discounts when and where applicable. Both hotels have a limited number of handicapped accessible rooms. If required, state your needs when making your reservations and reserve your room early to better insure a room that will best accommodate you.

### Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

7800 Normandale Blvd.  
Bloomington, MN 55439  
**Phone:** 952-835-7800; **Fax:** 952-893-8419  
**\$149** - single occupancy  
**\$159** - double occupancy  
(Both are in South Tower)

### Hotel Sofitel

5601 W. 78th St.  
Bloomington, MN 55439  
**Phone:** 952-835-1900  
**Fax:** 952-835-0545  
**\$159** - single, double, triple or quad occupancy

Cancellation policy for both hotels: A deposit of one night's room rate plus tax is required to reserve a guest room for the Closing The Gap Conference. Guest rooms may be cancelled up to September 10, 2009, with no cancellation penalty and your total deposit refunded to you. Any guest room cancelled after September 10, 2009, will be subject to forfeiture of the entire deposit.



## TRAVEL

Closing The Gap has arranged for Northwest Airlines to handle air travel needs for the conference.

For the lowest possible air fares, in the United States and Canada, call Northwest at 800-328-1111 and ask about special Closing The Gap fares (I.D. code NM336). Northwest hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 am - 7:30 pm Central Daylight Time.

## ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION

To arrange for accessible transportation while visiting the Minneapolis area, have your ADA certifying agency fax your certification information along with the address where you will be staying and dates you plan on being in Minneapolis to 651-602-1660 four weeks prior to your arrival date. Riders must be ADA certified in the state in which they live. For questions regarding certification, call Jim Nieman at 651-602-1665. If you are not ADA certified, call Airport Taxi at 612-331-8294 (special assistance provided if requested).

# 2009 CLOSING THE GAP CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (home/work - please circle one) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State / Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code / Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your first time attending the conference?  Yes  No How did you hear about the conference? \_\_\_\_\_

**SPECIAL SERVICES** (for persons with disabilities only – must be requested by September 1, 2009)

MS DOS text file  Macintosh text file (Text file will be e-mailed.)  Sign interpreter

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION - OCTOBER 15-17, 2009** (Includes Preview of Exhibits – Wednesday, October 14, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm)

Registration Received On or Before	June 30	September 10	October 1	October 15
Standard Rate	\$395	\$435	\$465	\$495
Group Discount (Groups of five or more)	Groups 5+ Deduct \$20	Groups 5+ Deduct \$20	Groups 5+ Deduct \$20	Groups 5+ Deduct \$20
Group Discount (Groups of ten or more)	Groups 10+ Deduct \$30	Groups 10+ Deduct \$30	Groups 10+ Deduct \$30	Groups 10+ Deduct \$30
<i>All group registrations must be received by Closing The Gap at the same time.</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent (A letter describing your child's disability must accompany registration form.)				\$305
<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time Student (Proof of full-time student status must accompany registration form.)				\$305
<input type="checkbox"/> Presenter (Presentation title: _____)				\$305
<input type="checkbox"/> Exhibitor (Company name and booth number: _____)				\$305

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**SINGLE-DAY REGISTRATION**

One-day Conference Registration Friday, October 16 – **\$250**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

One-day Conference Registration Saturday, October 17 – **\$125**

**EXHIBIT HALL ONLY REGISTRATION**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Exhibit Hall Only, Wednesday evening through Saturday, October 14-17 – **\$150**

**CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIP** (See page 44 for complete information.)

\$ n/a

I am applying for a conference scholarship. A letter describing your/your child's disability and telling us why you would like to attend the conference must be included.

**PRECONFERENCE WORKSHOPS - OCTOBER 13-14, 2009** (Includes Preview of Exhibits – Wednesday, October 14, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm)

Tuesday, October 13 – **\$270** 1<sup>st</sup> Choice PC- \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice PC- \_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday, October 14 – **\$270** 1<sup>st</sup> Choice PC- \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice PC- \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Tuesday and Wednesday Bundle – **\$480 (\$60 Savings)**

Participants in PC-8 **MUST** bring their own computer.

I will bring my own computer for:  PC-2  PC-7  PC-16  I will use Closing The Gap's computer.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**MATERIAL FEE(S), IF APPLICABLE** (The materials fee equals the cost of the materials provided.)

PC-3 - **\$50** materials fee    PC-11 - **\$35** materials fee    PC-17 - **\$30** materials fee    PC-22 - **\$25** materials fee  
 PC-9 - **\$30** materials fee    PC-16 - **\$35** materials fee    PC-21 - **\$15** materials fee    PC-23 - **\$20** materials fee

**ACADEMIC CREDIT** (See page 38 for complete information and requirements.)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

One Semester Credit **\$119**     Two Semester Credits **\$238**     Three Semester Credits **\$357**

**SUBSCRIPTION - AN ADDITIONAL NON-CONFERENCE OPTION** (See page 46 or Web site for more information.)

One-year ONLINE subscription – **\$50**     One-year PRINT subscription – **\$36** (In the US); **\$52** (To Canada)     Combination Subscription

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

One-year ONLINE student subscription – **\$40**     Two-year PRINT subscription – **\$64** (In the US); **\$92** (To Canada)    One-year PRINT and ONLINE subscription – **\$75**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT** (Payment or purchase order must accompany registration.)

My check # \_\_\_\_\_ for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Please Charge to my  Visa  MasterCard Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Exp Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Cardholder Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please bill my agency or school district PO # \_\_\_\_\_ (Purchase order must accompany registration.)

**Mail or fax form with payment or purchase order to:** Closing The Gap, P.O. Box 68, Henderson, MN 56044; Fax 507-248-3810. **Or register on-line at:** <www.closingthegap.com>. All who register by October 1, 2009 will receive confirmation by mail. The official Closing The Gap Conference Directory will be given to registrants at the conference site; many of the conference details will be posted on Closing The Gap's Web site. For additional information call 507-248-3294 or e-mail <info@closingthegap.com>.

**Cancellations** must be received in writing by Closing The Gap on or before October 1, 2009. \$75 cancellation fee for each one-day preconference workshop, each one-day conference registration, or each exhibit hall only registration; \$125 cancellation fee for each three-day conference registration. No refunds after October 1, 2009. Unpaid balances are due in full. Replacements are welcome and must be submitted in writing.

# SUBSCRIBE TODAY



**NEW!**

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**FREE 14-day Trial at:**  
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## Electronic Textbook

College and university instructors across the country have been choosing Closing The Gap Online Solutions as their textbook of choice!

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Assistive Technology Resources for Children and Adults with Special Needs

### Assistive Technology Resources for Children and Adults with Special Needs

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# Closing The Gap SOLUTIONS

## PRINT SUBSCRIPTIONS:

### In the United States

- One year (six issues) \$36
- Two years (12 issues) \$64
- Combination, One-year Print and Online Subscription \$75 (U.S. and Canada)

### Canada – Airmail

- One year (six issues) \$52 (U.S. Funds)
- Two years (12 issues) \$92 (U.S. Funds)

Receive a **Free** Resource Directory with a NEW 2-year subscription to *Closing The Gap*

### Resource Directory

\$16.95 plus postage and handling  
 (\$5 in the United States; \$5 to Canada)

### Quantity Discounts:

1-9 .....	\$16.95
10-24 .....	\$14.50
25-49 .....	\$12.25
50-99 .....	\$10.50
100-999 .....	\$9.50
1,000 or more .....	\$8.00

### Free shipping and handling

If check in full payment accompanies an order for 10 or more directories (shipped within the United States only) Closing The Gap will pay shipping charges. Shipping and handling charges will be added to all invoices and credit card payments. Purchase orders will be accepted.

## ONLINE SUBSCRIPTIONS:

### Single subscription:

- One-year Subscription \$50
- One-year Student Subscription \$40  
 (Proof of current enrollment must accompany order. E-mail or mail statement to Closing The Gap.)
- Combination, One-year Print and Online Subscription \$75 (U.S. and Canada)

### Site license:

Site License – number of users: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Purchase orders accepted.)

Number of Users	Discount	Unit Price
10-49	25%	\$37.50
50-99	50%	\$25.00
100-299	60%	\$20.00
300+	70%	\$15.00

### Please complete the following:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State / Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zip / Postal code \_\_\_\_\_  
 \* Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
 \* E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\* Required for Online Subscription and/or credit card orders

Where did you hear about Closing The Gap? \_\_\_\_\_

**Check is enclosed \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please charge \$** \_\_\_\_\_ to  Visa  MasterCard

Credit card account number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cardholder signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cardholder address \_\_\_\_\_

Purchase order attached # \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Allow 8 - 10 weeks for delivery of your first issue.)

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- Meets the needs of students **at school and at home**.

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