

Kurzweil 3000 (Win) v.10.x

Using the Writing Tools

Introduction

Kurzweil 3000 is reading and writing software that has many features designed to support students who are struggling with reading comprehension and written output. The program can be used as a word processor or it can be used to scan documents, like textbooks or worksheets, which can then be read aloud or completed within the program. The program provides a supportive environment for those students who need help with written output. In this tutorial you will learn how to use the various writing tools to support students who struggle with this aspect of literacy.

This tutorial assumes...

- Kurzweil 3000 version 10 for Windows is installed on your computer. If you do not have the program already installed, please refer to the installation and registration instructions that came with your software.
- Your computer system supports audio output either through speakers or a headset.

Learning Objectives

Completion of this tutorial will give you experience with the following:

- Creating a text file
- Using the writing toolbar to format text and spell check a document
- Adjusting the Speak as Typing options to provide customized auditory support
- Adjusting the Spell Check options and creating a personal dictionary
- Using the word prediction feature
- Creating custom vocabulary lists for word prediction

Case Studies

Cody is a Grade 4 student who is writing 2 or 3 grade levels below average. He is not motivated to write and has difficulty catching errors as he is writing. He does not like to edit his work. He uses Kurzweil 3000 as his main word processor, utilizing the Speak as Typing feature to help him catch mistakes and improve his overall written output.

Nick is in Grade 7 but is writing at a Grade 2 level. He has many writing challenges and needs a great deal of support to write even the simplest assignments. He struggles to find words and often loses focus on what he is writing. He uses the word prediction feature with custom vocabulary lists created around themes of personal interest as well as classroom curricular units.

Using the Writing Toolbar and Spell Check Feature

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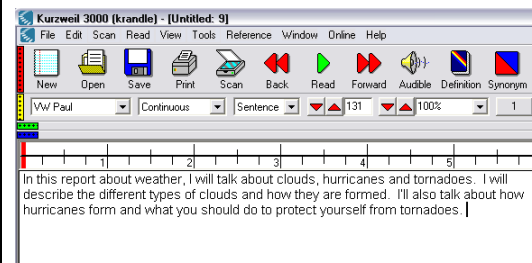
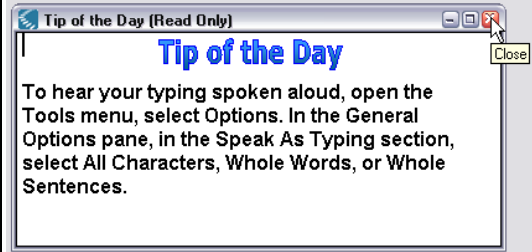
Launch Kurzweil 3000.

When the **Tip of the Day** window opens, close it by clicking in the red close box.

Click the **New** button located on the **Main Toolbar** (red line) to create a new empty text file.

Type a few lines of text like...

“In this report about weather, I will talk about clouds, hurricanes and tornadoes. I will describe the different types of clouds and how they are formed. I'll also talk about how hurricanes form and what you should do to protect yourself from tornadoes.”



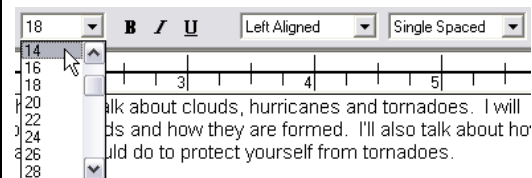
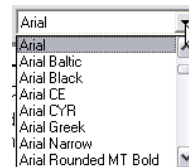
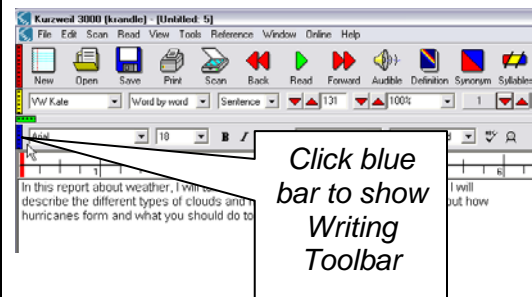
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If the **Writing Toolbar** is not visible, click on the **blue bar** in the toolbar area to show it.

You can change the font by clicking the **Writing font** drop down menu on the toolbar and selecting a different font.

You can also change the **font size**, the **style**, the **text alignment** and the **paragraph spacing** on the Writing Toolbar by clicking the appropriate choices or menus.

As with any word processor, you must click and highlight the text to which you are making these changes **FIRST**.



When working in a text file you may find your margins aren't set up properly for printing. To adjust the margins of your text, you may want to show the rulers at the top of your work.

Go to **Tools** ➤ **Options**.

On the list of available options, click the **General** icon and locate the option to **Show Ruler**.

You can change the ruler units in the drop down menu just below Show Ruler.

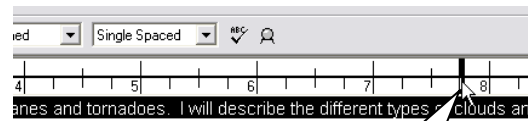
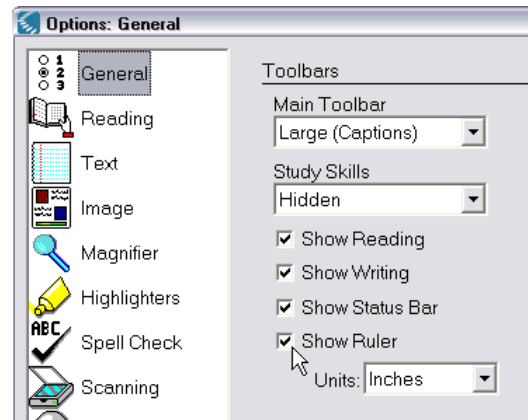
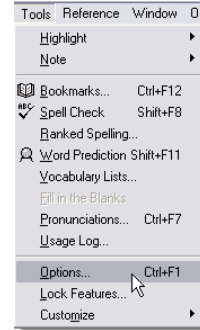
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Click the **Apply** button to save that option change and **OK** to exit the Options window.

You should now see the ruler at the top of your text file. You may notice that your typing is extending beyond the width of a normal printed page.

To change that margin click and highlight your text. Then click and drag the blue margin setter on the ruler to sit at about 7 ³/₄ or 8 inches. Your text will adjust to that new width.

Click off your text. If you print your document now, the text would fit on a standard page.



Click and drag margin setter to desired width.

4

Near the right side of the Writing Toolbar there is a button for the Spell Check. Type another sentence in your document making sure you put in one or more spelling errors.

Click the **Spell Check** button on the Writing Toolbar.

NOTE: The Spell checker is also accessible under the **Tools** menu.

Cluods come in difrent shapes!

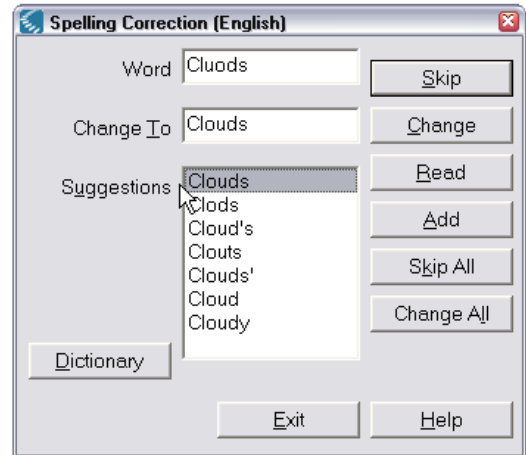


On the Spelling Correction window that opens up, you can click on the words in the **Suggestions** list to hear them read aloud.

You can **Skip** the word if you know it is spelled correctly. You can Read any highlighted word by clicking the **Read** button. You can Add a new word to the dictionary by clicking **Add** and...

you can Change your typed word to one you've selected by clicking **Change**.

Once you have finished spell checking, click **Exit** to leave the Spelling Correction window.



√ Tip...

Once you've set the ruler margins, each time you create an empty text file, those margins may or may not be established. Most users keep the ruler visible in case they need to set the margins in new documents.

Speak as Typing Options

Some students need auditory support while writing, not just when editing their work. Kurzweil 3000 has a Speak as Typing option.

Go to **Tools > Options**.

In the **General** Options area, the **Speak as Typing** options are located on the left side of the window. By default they are not selected.

Select **All Characters**, **Whole Words** or **Whole Sentences** (or any combination of the three) that works best for your student.

Click **Apply** to save the changes.

Click **OK** to exit the Options window.

Try typing more text and notice the level of auditory support you now have when writing.

Speak as Typing

All Characters

Whole Words

Whole Sentences

Miscellaneous

Speak Buttons

Speak Messages

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Customizing the Spell Checker and Personal Dictionary

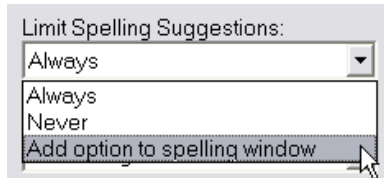
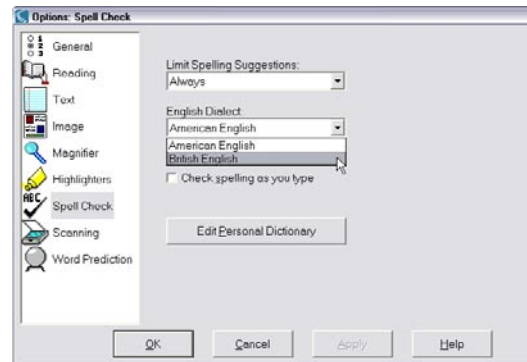
One of the other areas you can customize for your students to ensure they are getting the best possible writing support is the built in Spell Checker.

Go to **Tools > Options**.

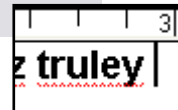
Click on the **Spell Check** area. In this area you can adjust a few key features. You can choose to limit a student's spell check options **Always** (meaning they would get limited suggestions), **Never** (meaning they would get as many suggestions as possible) or you can add that particular option to the Spell check tool (student could select More or Fewer suggestions themselves).

You can also choose between American English or British English dialect.

By selecting **Check spelling as you type**, your student will see a visual clue (red underline) under any misspelled words as he or she types.



Check spelling as you type



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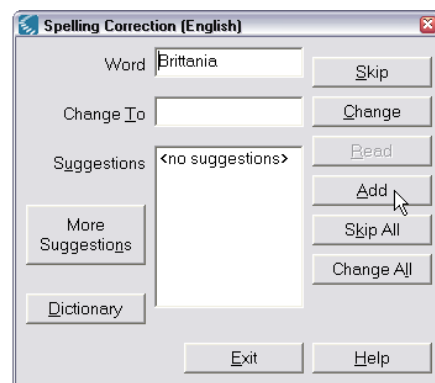
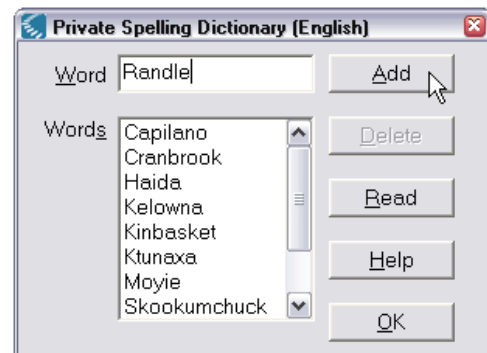
You can also create a **Personal Dictionary** for your students which contain words or names unique to them. By doing so, they won't show up as misspellings when the spell checker is used.

Click on **Edit Personal Dictionary**. On the window that opens, type a unique word in the text field. Click **Add** to add it to the Personal Dictionary. You will see it appear in the dictionary list.

If you want to delete a word from the list, highlight the word and click **Delete**.

Click **OK** to exit this window.

NOTE: You can also add words to the Personal Dictionary through the actual Spell Checker. In this example, the Spell Checker picked up Britannia as a misspelling. By clicking the Add button, it is added to the Personal Dictionary.



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✓ Tip...

Personal dictionaries are particularly helpful when using Kurzweil 3000 with multiple students. Each time a student logs into the program, his or her Personal Dictionary becomes active.

Using Word Prediction

Some students require a great deal of support finding words and writing sentences. Kurzweil 3000's word prediction feature can provide the high level of writing support they need.

To turn on **Word Prediction** in a text file...

- Click the Word Prediction button on the Writing Toolbar
- Go to **Tools > Word Prediction**.

OR

- Press **Shift + F11**

The Word Prediction palette opens on top of the document. You can move the palette to a convenient location by clicking and dragging it by the title bar.

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Begin by typing the letter "T". You should see a list of suggestions or guesses appear in the word prediction list.

You can select a word from that list by...

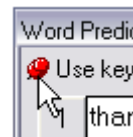
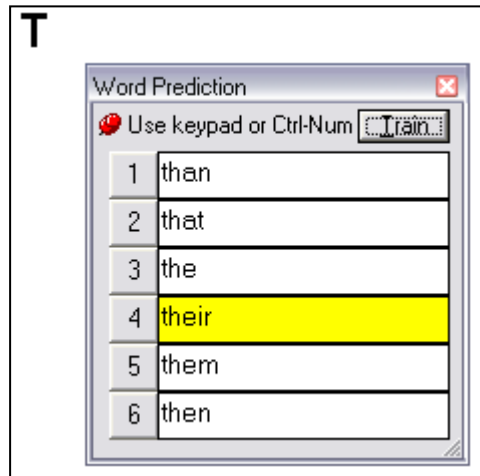
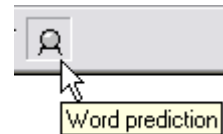
- Clicking on the number next to the word with your mouse

OR

- Pressing **Ctrl + Num** (the number of the word) on your keyboard

Clicking on the words themselves will read the word out loud.

To "**pin**" the word prediction palette to the cursor (so it moves as the student types), click the small red push pin. Click it again to "unpin" it so it can be docked somewhere in one spot.



Word Prediction in Kurzweil 3000 is based on a selected starter list of words. If your student types a word that is not on that list, you can train the word prediction dictionary so that it will add it to future suggestions.

To train a word (add it to the word prediction dictionary), type the word in your document.

Highlight the word and click the **Train** button located on the Word Prediction palette.

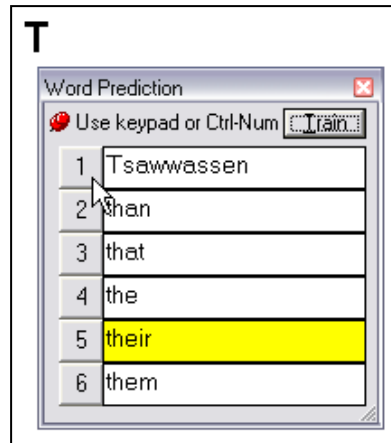
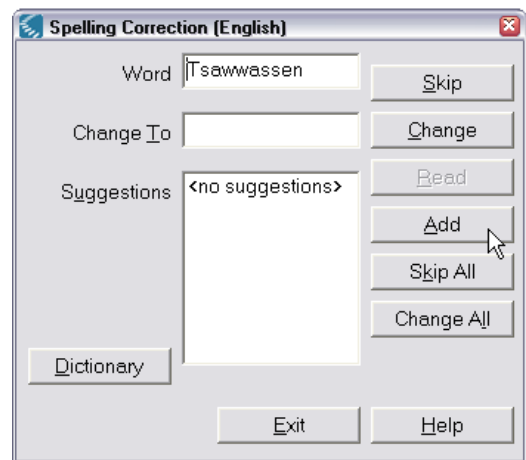
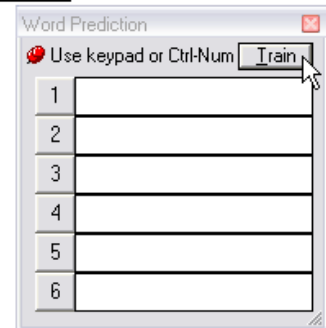
When asked, click Yes to add it to the word prediction training. If the word is not in the spelling dictionary, you will be asked to run the spell checker first. Click **OK**.

With the word still highlighted, run a spell check. It won't be recognized, so click **Add** to add it to the Spelling Dictionary (this is a way of ensuring that misspellings aren't inadvertently added to the word prediction dictionary).

Exit the spell checker.

Back on the Word Prediction palette, click the Train button again. You'll be asked if you want to add it to the word predictor – click Yes. Your word is now added to the word prediction dictionary. The next time you start to type it, it will be included in the list of suggestions.

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The accuracy of the word prediction is important if it is going to be a useful tool for your students. To set up the options for word prediction...

Go to **Tools > Options**.

In the Word Prediction area of Options, you can decide how you want word prediction to work.

Choose – **Add new words as they are typed** if you want any unrecognized words added (not a good idea if your student is a bad speller!)

Choose – **Add new words automatically when checking spelling** if you want this feature (not a good idea if your student is not an accurate spell checker!)

Choose – **Train on words not in spell check dictionary** if you want to avoid the two step process of first adding words to the spelling dictionary then training the word prediction dictionary

Choose – **Use phonetic spelling for word prediction** if your student still uses this type of spelling (good idea for most students!)

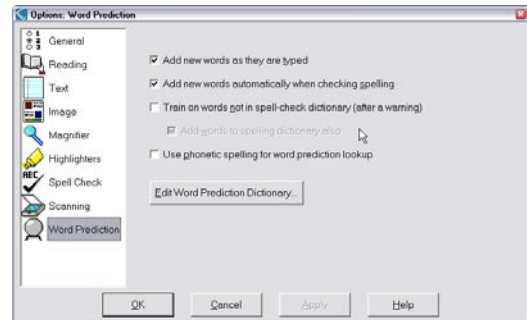
To change the starter list of word prediction words, click the **Edit Word Prediction Dictionary** button.

Here you will find three possible starter dictionaries – small, medium and large. Choose the size of dictionary you think is most appropriate for your student.

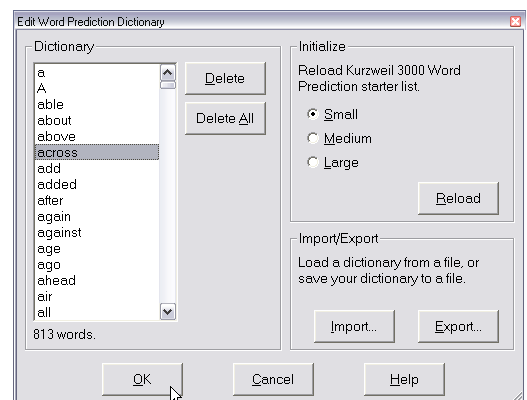
NOTE 1: When you reload a starter list (by selecting it and clicking Reload) you will lose any words you have trained previously.

NOTE 2: The Import feature allows you to import words from an open file (for example a student's journal entry or a piece of student writing on a topic).

NOTE 3: You can highlight and delete



Edit Word Prediction Dictionary...



words in the word prediction dictionary.

Once you have made all your selections, click OK to exit.

Your student's word prediction options should now be set up to provide him or her with the most accurate suggestions possible.

✓ Tip...

It is important to set up the word prediction dictionary as accurately as possible before your student begins writing. If you have to reload your dictionary, you may want to Export the current one so you can save the words that have been added and then import them back into the reloaded dictionary from that file. Doing this will eliminate the need to retrain on your student's personal words.

Creating Custom Vocabulary Lists

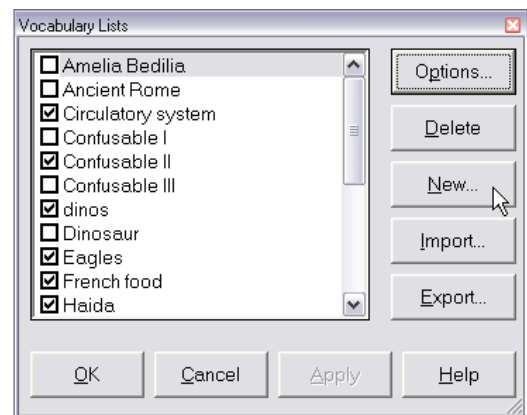
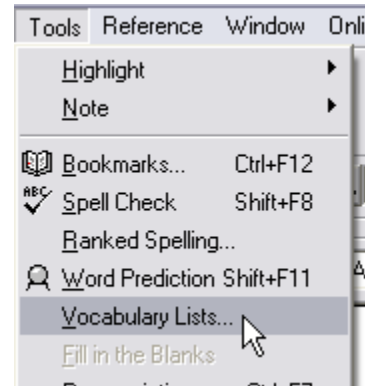
The word prediction dictionary is designed to be writer or student centered. To make the use of the word prediction feature even more powerful for multiple writers, consider creating custom vocabulary lists. These lists can be based on curricular themes, novels, science texts, class field trips and so on. They can be created ahead of time and activated as needed when the student begins writing on that topic.

To create your own custom vocabulary list...

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Go to **Tools** ➤ **Vocabulary Lists**.

On the window that opens you will see a list of Vocabulary Lists that came with the program (Confusables and Homophones). Any that are selected (checked) are active and part of the suggestion lists. To make a new vocabulary list yourself, click **New...**



You can create Vocabulary lists two ways – by typing in words yourself or by importing words from an open file. To create a list by typing in words, select that option and then click **Next**.

Select the options you want for your list...

Choose – **Add these words to word prediction** if you want them available as suggestions (an obvious choice!)

Choose – **Add this list to the Highlight Menu** if you want to give students a quick way of selecting the list themselves

Choose – **Highlight these words in the word prediction window** (and select a highlight colour) if you want the words to stand out from the standard dictionary suggestions.

Click in the word field and type in your first word. Click the **Add** button to add it to the list.

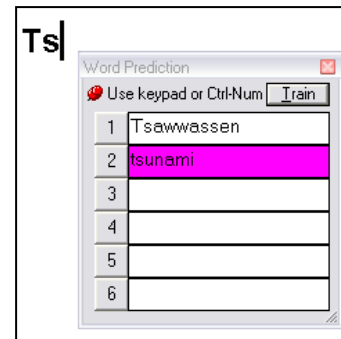
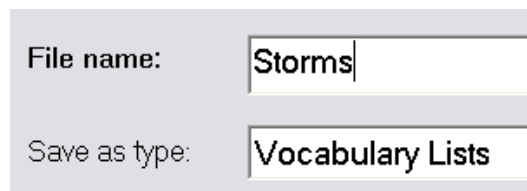
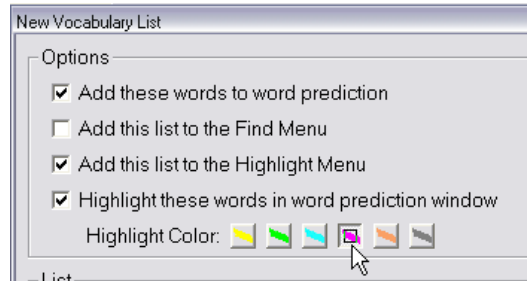
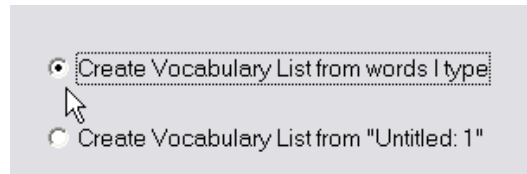
Highlight and type over the word in the word field. Type in your second word and click **Add**. Continue adding words to your list.

If you want to add a dictionary definition or a list of related words for each of your vocabulary list words you can at this stage.

When you have finished typing words into the list, click **Next**. You will be asked to name your vocabulary list – type a descriptive name in the **File name:** field and then click **Save** to save it in the K3000 vocabulary list folder with the others.

Back on the Vocabulary List you will see that it has been added and automatically activated. If you don't want it active at this time, deselect it. Click **Apply** and **OK**.

If you kept the list active, try typing a word from the list – it should appear in the word prediction suggestion list.



√ Tip...

Some suggestions for creating custom vocabulary lists...

- Create them with your student – after instruction or after reading a piece of text, brainstorm vocabulary that would be needed to complete a written assignment, sit with the student and type the words into a new vocabulary list
- Create a list from text that you have found on the internet – copy the text and paste it into a K3000 text file. Use the eHighlighters to highlight the vocabulary words you want. Choose the option of creating a new vocabulary list from the file that is now open in Kurzweil 3000. Select “highlighted words” to import and you will quickly have a topic specific vocabulary list to use.
- If you know what units or themes you will be doing, make vocabulary lists in advance. If you make them on a different computer, copy and paste them onto a flash drive and transfer them onto the student’s computer. You will find the actual vocabulary list files following this path:
C:\Documents and Settings\YourUserFolder\Application
Data\KESI\Kurzweil 3000. Just remember to copy the vocabulary lists into this same location on the receiving computer!

Checklist of Skills Developed in this Tutorial

- Create a new text file
- Format the text – change the font, style, alignment, etc. on Writing toolbar
- Set document margins for printing on standard paper
- Turn on Speak as Typing feature
- Use the Spell Checker
- Adjust Spell Checker options
- Create or Edit Personal Spelling Dictionary
- Turn on and use Word Prediction
- Train Word Prediction by adding a new word
- Adjust the Word Prediction options to suit individual student needs
- Reload a starter Word Prediction list
- Select or activate a Vocabulary List
- Create a new custom vocabulary list by typing in words

Now that you know how to use the writing features of Kurzweil 3000, you may wish to try another tutorial in the series to learn how the program can support reading and study skill development.