

SECTION 1.1 TALKING WORD PROCESSORS WRITE:OUTLOUD

Introduction

This section will address the needs of students with low vision who require access to electronic text materials. Text materials which have been digitized into e-text can be accessed through talking word processors with speech and font enlargement capabilities.

This section will focus on the talking word processor Write:OutLoud. Issues regarding file formats, customization for specific needs, classroom implementation strategies, and identification of common barriers to use will be covered.

Description of student need

- Student needs enlargement of text materials and text displayed on computer screen.
- Student needs access to curriculum materials or reference materials.
- Student needs tools for accessing and working independently with printed materials.
- Student may need help with reading and/or typing of text.
- Student needs speech output to process large quantity of materials.

Prerequisites

- Student requires familiarity with computer and word processing skills.
- Student requires basic operating skills for their particular talking word processor program.
- Student must have hearing and auditory discrimination to be able to understand materials read by synthesized speech if speech feedback features are used. Initially, students may have difficulty understanding, but with time, students do become accustomed to synthesized speech. Voice options are available that may improve discrimination.

Classroom strategies

- Provide electronic worksheets to the student with visual impairments. Worksheets created by the teacher for other students can be saved as a text file on a disk and imported into Write:OutLoud.
- Scan in newspaper, magazine articles and other print materials, save as a text file and import into Write:OutLoud.
- Copy and Paste materials and information researched on the Internet into Write:OutLoud.
- Use the Find feature to help locate keywords quickly, rather than having to read the entire document.
- Use the speech to facilitate reviewing materials.
- Use the read function to help edit own work. Students can pick up on errors very quickly.

- Provide popular novels as e-text for independent leisure reading. There are many sources for electronic books.
- For some students, Braille technology is an option that could be explored.

Common barriers or challenges that might occur

- In the classroom speech output will prove to be disruptive. Earphones are simple solutions.
- Availability of e-text or lack of may be an issue. Contact your Vision Resource teacher to assist with access to electronic texts.
- Staff's lack of computer skills may be an obstacle to accessing e-text from websites or from scanning in text materials.
- Difficulties will arise if two talking programs are running simultaneously. Eg. Write:OutLoud with ZoomText for full screen magnification.
- Staff is not familiar with computers or with the software to be able to troubleshoot when problems occur.

Team support needed to implement technology

- The team will need to customize the software for the student's vision and hearing needs.
- For the older or more experienced user, the team will need to teach the user to customize features available in the software program.
- Team will need to provide appropriate e-text from various sources.
- Team will need to teach student how to search and download e-text files.

System Requirements

- **Mac:** PowerMac, OS 7.6.1- 9 (not Mac OS X), 16 MB RAM, 20 MB Hard Drive
- **Windows:** Pentium/150, Win 95/98/ME/00/XP, 16 MB RAM, 20 MB Hard Drive

Websites:

- <http://www.ibiblio.org/gutenberg/>
- An FTP site is just a computer on the Internet that specializes in holding files for downloading and sending them to people on request. You can find a list of FTP sites that hold Gutenberg texts.

Information and Instructions for Write:OutLoud

E-text File Format

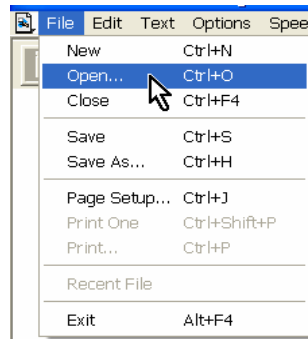
Electronic or digitized text, e-text for short, is readable electronic text that may be a duplicate of print text such as a textbook, a novel or journal articles. E-text also refers to text that is typed into a talking word processor. E-text comes in a variety of file formats.

Points for consideration:

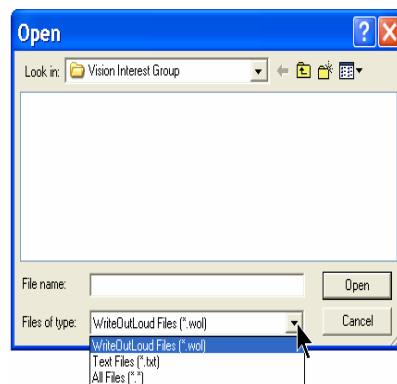
- Software programs work with different file formats.
- Files to be opened must be compatible with the formats of that specific software application.
- Write:OutLoud can open its own Write:OutLoud files, identifiable by its .wol extension in the filename.
- Write:OutLoud also imports electronic text that is saved in a text file format, usually identified by the extension .txt in the filename.
- Scanned-in worksheets, newspaper and magazine articles and other print materials can be opened by Write:OutLoud as long as they are saved in a Text (.txt) file format.
- Write:OutLoud is capable of handling large text files, such as novels, text books from resource centres for the visually impaired, as well as from various websites.

To Open compatible e-text files in Write:OutLoud

- Go to **FILE → OPEN**



- In the box below, click on the Down Arrow button in the Files of Type edit bar.



- A drop down list of various file formats that are compatible with Write:OutLoud is displayed.
- Select **Write:OutLoud Files (*.wol)** or **Text Files (*.txt)**. Files saved in that file format will be displayed.
- Browse to select the file you want and then click on the **OPEN** button.

A shortcut to opening compatible e-text files from Windows

- As only WOL files or Text files can be opened by Write:Outloud, there are two ways to determine the file format from Windows.
 1. Individual Files
 - Right Click on the file
 - Go to Properties
 - Near the top, it lists the type of file this document is.
 - It also tells you the application it opens with
 2. A list of documents in a folder
 - Students with visual impairments, particularly those who use the Read function, find it easier to view the files in List View
 - The files are listed alphabetically making it easier to read and easier to navigate
 - Go to VIEW and down to LIST
 - To view document type, go to VIEW, down to DETAILS
 - Now you can see very quickly which ones are WOL files, which ones are TEXT files and which ones are other file types.
- Find the TEXT or WOL file you wish to open.
- Simply drag and drop the file onto the WOL icon and it will automatically open WOL and the document, ready for reading.

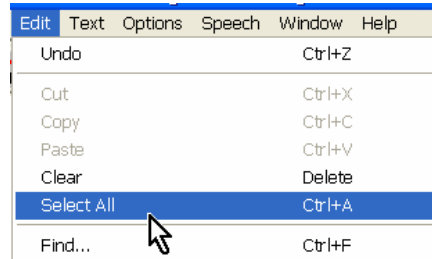
To Save text as a Text file

- Saving any document as a Text file is the key in using WOL for e-text.
- You can save articles from the Internet as a Text file for example.
- Find the article
- Go to FILE
- SAVE AS
- Go to SAVE AS TYPE edit box; see a list of available file formats.
- Select Text File
- SAVE

Accessing Text through Font Enlargement and Visual Enhancements


For students with low vision, adjustments can be made to Write:OutLoud through font enlargement and visual enhancements.


- Enlarge Font size
 - Select (highlight) text or **Select All (text)** under **EDIT**.



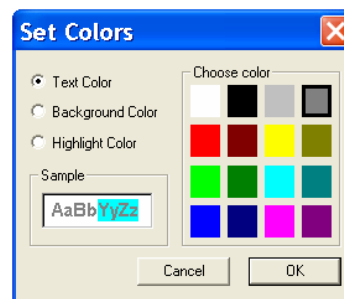
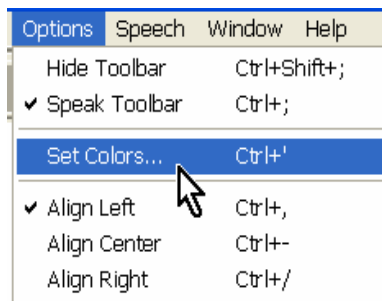
- Click on the **Grow** icon  to very quickly enlarge font.

- **Set Text and Background colour** for best contrast and brightness levels.

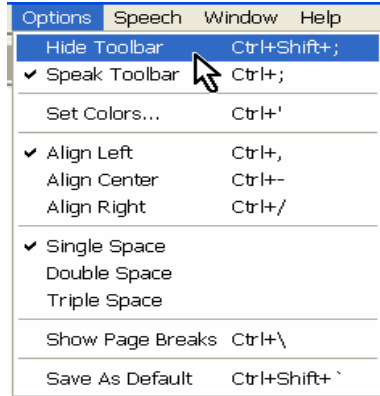
- Select text (highlight) or **Select All** under **EDIT** and then click on the **Text Colour** icon  to scroll through the available colour options.

- Click on the **Background Colour** icon  to scroll through the various background colours.

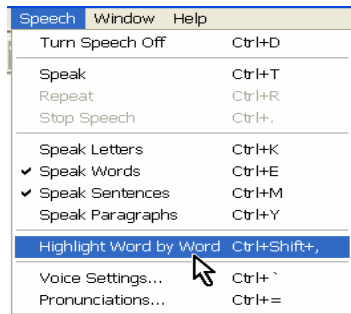
- More choices for text, background and highlight colours are available with **Set Colours** under **OPTIONS**.



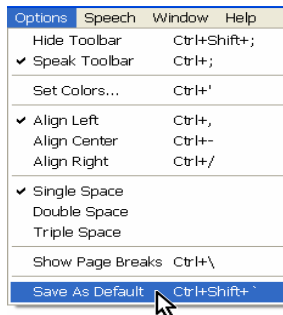
- Customize other **Visual Enhancements** under **OPTIONS**.



- Double or triple-spacing text.
- Mark page breaks - often aids the student with visual clues and reference points to help navigate and scan the information.
- **Hide Toolbar** under **OPTIONS** for students who require fewer distracting elements on the screen.
- **Highlighting text as it is read** can be turned on or off under the **SPEECH** menu.



- Settings can be saved as the default setting so these adjustments are permanent and do not have to be made each time Write:OutLoud is launched. Under **OPTIONS**, select **Save as Default**.






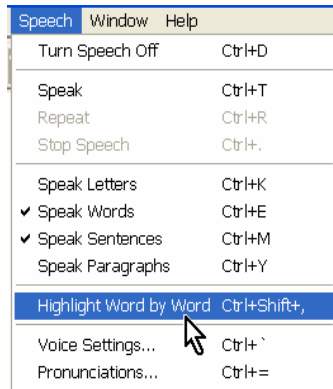
- For students who require magnification of the menu bars and desktop, not just the text, screen magnification programs, such as **ZoomText**, or a screen reader, such as **JAWS** should be considered.

Accessing text with Speech

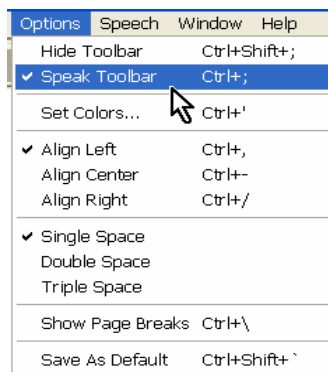
- Speech provides supplementary support or an alternative access for text materials.
- Speech helps to minimize fatigue particularly for large quantity of text materials.
- Speech facilitates understanding.
- Speech enables students to scan text materials for specific information.
- When font is enlarged to 48 point or larger, reading becomes cumbersome. When only a few words per line and only a few lines per page are visible on the screen, constant scrolling and tracking back and forth is required. Information is gained in small chunks and it can be difficult to integrate and make sense of the text material. Flow of the text and continuum of thought may be lost.

Speech Settings in Write:OutLoud:

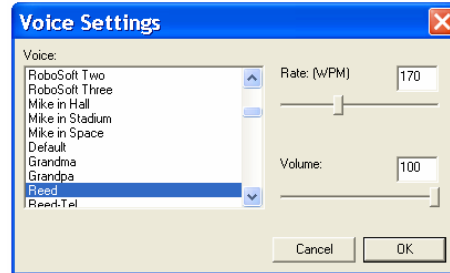
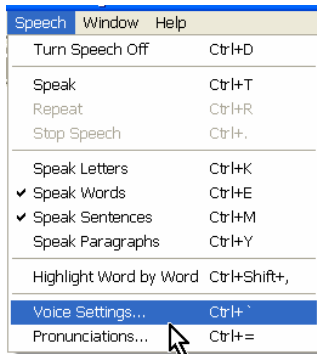
- Write:OutLoud reads and repeats text. Select text to be read or Select All under EDIT, then click on the **Read icon**  or click on the **Repeat icon** .
- You can stop reading at anytime by clicking on the **Stop icon** .
- **Highlighting text as it is read** can be turned off under **SPEECH** for students who wish to simply listen.



- For students who require some screen reading options, the tools bar can be set to **Speak Toolbar**. Under **OPTIONS**, select **Speak Toolbar**.



- Choice of voices, volume setting and rate of speech feedback can be set to suit auditory perception to promote better listening. Under **SPEECH**, go to **Voice Settings**.



Keyboard navigation

Students can use **keyboard shortcuts** for all functions and operations included in the menu or tool bar. A list of the keyboard shortcuts is available in the **User's Guide** on the **Write:OutLoud CD**.

When font size is magnified to 36 or 48 points or higher, it is difficult to track cursor movements. Keyboard control is recommended.

*Go to **beginning of document***
*Go to **end of document***
*Go to **beginning of line***
*Go to **end of line***
*Go to **next sentence***
Select sentence

***CTRL HOME** or icon on tool bar*
***CTRL END** or icon on tool bar*
HOME
END
CTRL SHIFT M
CTRL SHIFT X
*then use arrow keys, **END** or **HOME** keys to select text*

A "Related Materials" section is included in this resource book. Please refer to the Related Materials section for a list of narrated screen demonstrations that have been developed for each content section. All narrated screen demonstration files are included on your Accessing Literacy cd, also included with this resource book.