

SPELDNSW

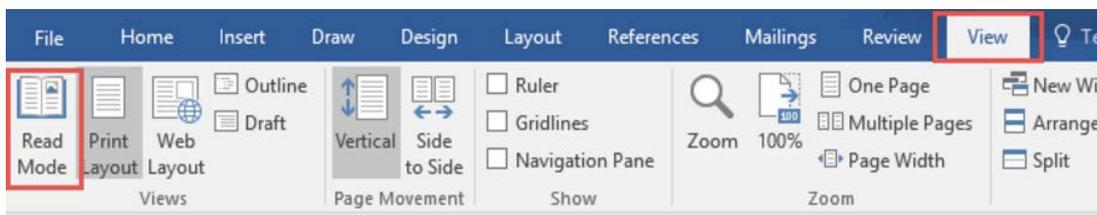
Learning Difficulties Q & A #6



For many students with learning difficulties, the very idea of completing a written assignment can be overwhelming. The challenges associated with researching and reading, developing ideas and conceptual knowledge, structuring written responses and producing written assignments free of spelling and grammatical errors can at times seem insurmountable. For many older students, the use of assistive technology and computers has helped ease some of this burden, with many students utilising a variety of computer software programs and apps available across android and apple devices.

Some of the concerns raised by teachers, parents and students about the use of assistive technology include: the cost of purchasing multiple software titles; the need to switch from one application to another; and, the lack of integration between the applications recommended and those used by the school - such as Microsoft Office. These concerns seem to have been responded to as Microsoft has been quite busy developing some new tools.

Earlier this year Microsoft released an update to their Office 365 apps with the aim of supporting diverse learners in reading, spelling and written expression. A new feature now found in Microsoft Word as well as One Note (online version and desktop version) is a feature called Learning Tools.



If you wish to unsubscribe please email it@speldnsw.org.au with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

SPELDNSW

2/ 172 Majors Bay Rd Concord NSW 2137

T. (02) 9739 6277

F. (02) 8765 1487

E. enquiries@speldnsw.org.au

W. www.speldnsw.org.au

PATRON: Mrs Linda Hurley
ABN: 27 508 096 871 CFN: 11013



SPELDNSW

Learning Difficulties Q & A #6

What are Learning Tools?

Learning tools are designed to support decoding, reading fluency, reading comprehension and writing skills by providing the user with additional user options. These new features include:

Read aloud / Immersive Reading: - Microsoft now has inbuilt text to voice support and words are highlighted as they are read aloud so that the user can read along.

Text options: - enable users to increase the spacing between letters, between words and between lines. Users can also change text size and background colour when in the reading panel.

Parts of Speech: - nouns, verbs and adjectives can automatically be colour-coded.

Syllables: - Text can be automatically displayed as syllable chunks to assist with decoding.

Improved spell check: - Users are now offered spelling choices with synonyms listed to assist with the selection of the correct word. Spelling choices can also be read aloud to ensure that the correct word is chosen.

Improved Grammar Checker: - Grammatical errors are now highlighted with two double blue lines. The grammar checker will look for word choice errors, incorrect spacing and punctuation errors. Suggestions can be read aloud.

Writing style checker: - this feature checks for consistency in writing style including, but not limited to, the use of complex words, contractions, cliché's, informal language, jargon and wordiness. Suggestions for improvement can be read aloud and will be highlighted with a dotted gold line.

To access learning tools, the student must have a current Office 365 subscription and may need to update his/her desktop application.

Are there any other tips or tricks?

If these new learning tools are not exciting enough, Microsoft Office also allows you to install add-ons into most applications including Word, PowerPoint and Excel. The range of add-ons is still relatively small as this is a new area of development, however, there are several add-ons that are particularly useful for students.

Texthelp Study Skills: - Selects, highlights, and groups content together for review. (also available in Word for iPad).

Assignment Buddy: - helps students find information from the web and Office 365 inside Word & PowerPoint. (Check with the school before using this add-on as the information gathered is from Wikipedia).

Collins Dictionary

MyScript Maths sample: - easily insert math equations and notations through handwriting recognition and mouse input.

If you wish to unsubscribe please email it@speldnsw.org.au with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

SPELDNSW

2/ 172 Majors Bay Rd Concord NSW 2137

T. (02) 9739 6277

F. (02) 8765 1487

E. enquiries@speldnsw.org.au

W. www.speldnsw.org.au

PATRON: Mrs Linda Hurley
ABN: 27 508 096 871 CFN: 11013



SPELDNSW

Learning Difficulties Q & A #6

The Read&Write family of products!

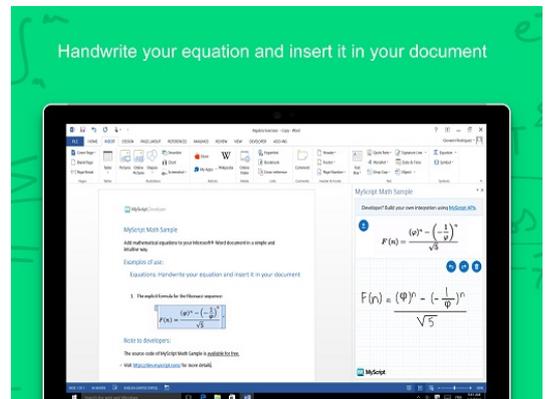
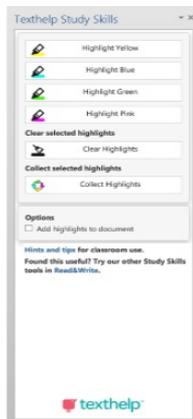
The Read&Write suite supports struggling readers and writers, those with literacy difficulties (including dyslexia) and English language learners, through a host of reading, writing and study/research features. The Read&Write family of products provides support on any platform and is used globally in education, the workplace and at home.

Read&Write for the Desktop

Our Read&Write Gold for PC and Read&Write Gold for Mac are perfect for all ages and abilities. Educators recommend choosing Read&Write Gold to provide powerful support for students in class and during exams, while organizations and individuals choose it for use at home and in the workplace.

Read&Write for the Cloud

Our Read&Write for the Cloud solutions are designed for today's on-the-go lifestyles and consist of Read&Write for Google! and Web Apps. Users benefit from powerful support features, flexible mobility and accessibility wherever and whenever they interact with Google.

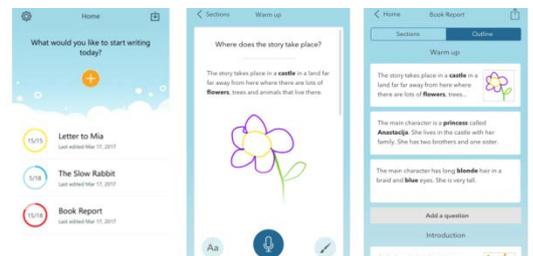


What about other Microsoft apps?

Microsoft has also released two new apps that are particularly useful and best of all, they are FREE!

Office Lens: - A portable document scanner that uses OCR to convert pictures to text. Students can take a photo of a document and export the text to word, powerpoint, outlook or utilise the inbuilt immersive reader function and have the text read aloud. This is great for those students who don't have an electronic copy of a text or novel as each page can be quickly scanned, converted and read aloud.

Write ideas: - This app provides a series of templates that assist with creating a writing plan. By selecting a document type (book review, Descriptive essay, Informative essay, personal letter, newspaper article, or short story), answering a series of questions, users can then export a writing frame directly into word to assist with the production of their written work. Custom templates can be added for additional text types. Available for IOS devices only.



If you wish to unsubscribe please email it@speldnsw.org.au with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

SPELDNSW

2/ 172 Majors Bay Rd Concord NSW 2137

T. (02) 9739 6277

F. (02) 8765 1487

E. enquiries@speldnsw.org.au

W. www.speldnsw.org.au

PATRON: Mrs Linda Hurley
ABN: 27 508 096 871 CFN: 11013



SPELDNSW

Learning Difficulties Q & A #6

Additional Questions?

For additional information about Microsoft learning tools please visit: <https://support.office.com/en-ie/article/Learning-Tools-to-improve-reading-and-writing-skills-735fc6ea-21eb-401a-9293-4a481ef7e482>

For information about Microsoft Add-ins please visit: <https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Get-an-Office-Add-in-for-Word-d8956c8b-4ae3-4b74-9288-2ee99128a6f1?ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US>

Visit the Google Play store or Apple App store to download Microsoft Lens.



Microsoft Write Ideas is only available for iOS devices through the Apple App store.



Copyright © 2017 The Dyslexia-SPELD Foundation of WA, All rights reserved.

If you wish to unsubscribe please email it@speldnsw.org.au with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

SPELDNSW

2/ 172 Majors Bay Rd Concord NSW 2137

T. (02) 9739 6277

F. (02) 8765 1487

E. enquiries@speldnsw.org.au

W. www.speldnsw.org.au

PATRON: Mrs Linda Hurley
ABN: 27 508 096 871 CFN: 11013

