

Assistive Technology Supports for Struggling Readers

This document contains information on the range of assistive technology supports that can be used by struggling readers to increase reading proficiency. Many of these supports also foster increased efficiency, productivity, independence, and enjoyment. In most instances, students use a combination of assistive technology supports to meet their reading needs. The types of assistive technology supports used for reading are determined by individual student abilities and needs as well as the required reading tasks across all instructional environments.

In this document, assistive technology reading supports are organized into various categories based on the primary features or applications of the technology. Moreover, the age ranges for which the devices are appropriate are identified in the following categories: elementary, middle, and high school. Lastly, supports are linked to the various reading skills addressed in the Georgia Performance Standards GPS. The reading skills supported by assistive technology are briefly defined below. It is recommended that individuals utilizing this document refer to the standards to determine the specific skills that are addressed at each grade level.

The following skills areas are addressed in this document:

Alphabetic

- Phonemic Awareness: Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken words.
- Phonics: Phonics is the ability to associate sounds with letters and use these sounds to form words

Reading Fluency

- Fluency: Fluency is the effortless, automatic ability to read words in connected text.

Comprehension

- Vocabulary: Vocabulary includes identifying the meanings of words and using those words appropriately within context.
- Comprehension: Comprehension is the complex cognitive process involving the intentional interaction between reader and text to convey meaning.

The assistive technology for reading supports referenced in this document are included to provide examples of different technologies used by students with disabilities to accomplish educationally relevant tasks in instructional and access areas. The document does not include all assistive technology devices within a specific category and inclusion of a particular support does not constitute endorsement by the Georgia Department of Education. Additional supports may be added to the document by contacting the Georgia Project for Assistive Technology.

Additional information about the assistive technology supports referenced in this document is available on the Georgia Project for Assistive Technology's website at <http://www.gpat.org>. Additional information about the Georgia Performance Standards is available on the Georgia Department of Education's website at <http://doe.k12.ga.us>.

Compensatory Tools

Category	Examples	Age Range			Skill Area				
		Elementary	Middle School	High School	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Fluency
Positioning Aids	Book Stands / Slant boards (Pocket Full of Therapy, Sammons Preston Rolyan, Onion Mountain Technology)	X	X	X					X
	Teacher-made slant boards with three-ring binders (office supply)	X	X	X					X
	Clipboard, binder clips (office supply)	X	X	X					X
	Page-Up (office supply, Onion Mountain Technology)	X	X	X					X
Page Turners	Page fluffers (teacher made)	X	X	X					X
	Page Turner (Zygo, Touch Turner, PageFlip)	X	X	X					X
Tracking Aids	Reading Window (teacher made)	X	X	X					X
	EZC Reader/Colored Reading Helper (Really Good Stuff, Onion Mountain Technology)	X	X	X					X
	Bar Magnifier (Independent Living Aids)	X	X	X					X
Contrast Aids	Highlighter / Highlighting Tape (Crystal Springs Books, Onion Mountain Technology)	X	X	X					X
	Acetate report covers (office supply)	X	X	X					X
	Colored Overlays (National Reading Styles Institute, See It Right, Irlen Institute)	X	X	X					X
	Colored reading helpers (Onion Mountain Technology)	X	X	X					X
	Software supported text/background contrast	X	X	X					X
Word Identification Aids	Hardware								
	Children’s Talking Dictionary & Spell Corrector (Franklin)	X					X	X	
	Merriam Webster Speaking Dictionary and Thesaurus (Franklin)	X	X	X			X	X	
	Speaking Language Master (Franklin)	X	X	X			X	X	
	Reading Pen (Wizcom Technologies)	X	X	X			X	X	

Category	Examples	Age Range			Skill Area				
		Elementary	Middle School	High School	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Fluency
Word Identification Aids (continued)	Computer-Based								
	WordWeb Dictionary Thesaurus (WordWeb Software)	X	X	X			X	X	
	On-line Dictionaries (Internet-based)	X	X	X			X	X	
Standalone Magnification Aids	Hand-held or Stand magnifier (Maxi-Aids, Independent Living Aids, LS&S)	X	X	X					X
	Binocular and monocular telescope (Maxi-Aids)	X	X	X					X
	Video Magnifier or CCTV (Independent Living Aids)	X	X	X					X
Specialized Format	Large Type Books								
	Local libraries and bookstores	X	X	X					X
	Georgia Instructional Materials Center (www.gimc.org)	X	X	X					X
	American Printing House for the Blind-Louis Database (www.aph.org)	X	X	X					X
	Braille Books								
	Georgia Instructional Materials Center (www.gimc.org)	X	X	X					X
	National Braille Press (www.nbp.org)	X	X	X					X
	American Printing House for the Blind (www.aph.org)	X	X	X					X
	Audiobooks								
	Local public libraries	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Local bookstores	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Recordings For the Blind & Dyslexic (www.rfbd.org) (available by membership only and requires specially formatted players such as PlexTalk Pocket)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	GLASS, National Library Service (http://www.loc.gov/nls/) (available by membership only and requires specially formatted players such as BookPort Plus or Victor Reader series)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Online bookstores (www.amazon.com , www.audiobooks.com , www.audible.com)	X	X	X			X	X	X

Category	Examples	Age Range			Skill Area				
		Elementary	Middle School	High School	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Fluency
Specialized Format (continued)	Electronic Books (eBooks)								
	Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org) Text files work with any text reading software	X	X	X					X
	eBookMall (www.eBookMall.com) Books available for Microsoft Reader, eReader, MobiPocket, Palm Reader	X	X	X					X
	eReader (www.ereader.com) Works with eReader, eReader Pro software only	X	X	X					X
	MobiPocket (www.mobipocket.com) Works with MobiPocket software only	X	X	X					X
	BookShare (www.bookshare.org) (available by membership only)	X	X	X					X
	Accessible Book Collection (www.accessiblebookcollection.org) (available by membership only)	X	X	X					X
	Access to Ebooks via Portable Text Readers								
	Classmate (Don Johnston, Humanware)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Intel Reader (Don Johnston)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	eBook Readers	X	X	X					
	Multipurpose eBook Readers	X	X	X					
	Access to Ebooks via Computer-Based Text Reading Software								
	eReader Pro (Barnes & Noble)								
	Microsoft Reader (Microsoft)								
	Digital Audio Files								
	Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org/wiki/gutenberg)	X	X	X			X	X	X
Teacher made files	X	X	X			X	X	X	

Category	Examples	Age Range			Skill Area				
		Elementary	Middle School	High School	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Fluency
Specialized Format (continued)	Text to Sound File Conversion Software								
	Alive Text to Speech (AliveMedia, Inc)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	TextAloud (NextUp)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Text To Audio (Premier AT)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Advanced Reading & Writing Aid feature (Kurzweil 3000, WYNN, Read&Write Gold)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Access for Digital Audio Files								
	Portable digital recorder (retail stores)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Portable MP3 player (retail stores)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Computer	X	X	X			X	X	X
	• Windows Media Player (Microsoft)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	• QuickTime (Apple)	X	X	X			X	X	X
Supported Format	Thinking Reader (Tom Snyder)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Start-to-Finish Literacy Starters (Don Johnston)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Start-to-Finish Library (Don Johnston)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Start-to-Finish Core Content (Don Johnston)	X	X	X			X	X	X
Alternative Format	News-2-You (www.news-2-you.com)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Weekly Reader Ablenet Edition (www.ablenetinc.com)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	News 4 You (www.mayer-johnson.com)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Read and Tell Series (www.slatersoftware.com)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Graphic word processors (refer to graphic word processors)	X	X	X			X	X	X

Category	Examples	Age Range			Skill Area				
		Elementary	Middle School	High School	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Fluency
Text Reading Software (visual and/or auditory)	Text								
	ReadPlease Free 2003 (ReadPlease)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Natural Reader (NaturalSoft, Ltd)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Microsoft Reader (Microsoft)	X	X	X					X
	E-Text Reader (Premier AT)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Universal Reader (Premier AT)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Text to speech software for Palm OS (Handango)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	ClipRead/LiveInk (www.liveink.com)	X	X	X					X
	PDF								
	Adobe Reader (Adobe)	X	X	X			X	X	
	Text and PDF								
	Kurzweil 3000 (Kurzweil)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Read and Write Gold (TextHelp)	X	X	X			X	X	X
WYNN (Freedom Scientific)	X	X	X			X	X	X	
Standard Word Processing Software	Microsoft Word (Microsoft)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	• WordTalk (www.wordtalk.org.uk)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Word Perfect (Corel)	X	X	X			X	X	X
Graphic Word Processing Software	Writing With Symbols (Mayer Johnson)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Communicate:SymWriter (Widgit)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Clicker (Crick Software)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	PixWriter (Slater Software)	X	X	X			X	X	
	Classroom Suite (IntelliTools)	X	X	X			X	X	X

Category	Examples	Age Range			Skill Area				
		Elementary	Middle School	High School	Phonemic Awareness	Phonics	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Fluency
Talking Word Processing Software	WriteOutLoud (Don Johnston)	X	X				X	X	X
	Boardmaker Plus (Mayer-Johnson)	X	X				X	X	X
	Talking Word Processor (Premier AT)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Read & Write (TextHelp)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Tex-Edit Plus (Trans Tex Software)	X	X	X			X	X	X
Academic Suite Software	Classroom Suite 4 (Intellitools)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	SOLO 6 (Don Johnston)	X	X	X			X	X	X
Advanced Reading & Writing Aid Software	Kurzweil 3000 (Kurzweil Educational Systems)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Read & Write Gold (TextHelp)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	TestTalker (Freedom Scientific)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	WYNN (Freedom Scientific)	X	X	X			X	X	X
Screen Enlargement Software	ZoomText (Ai Squared)	X	X	X					X
	MAGic (Freedom Scientific)	X	X	X					X
Screen Reading Software	JAWS (Freedom Scientific)	X	X	X			X	X	X
	Window Eyes (GW Micro)	X	X	X			X	X	X
Braille Reading Software	Duxbury (Duxbury Systems)	X	X	X					X
	MegaDots (Duxbury Systems)	X	X	X					X