

wordQ+SpeakQ assists with Dyslexia – Newsline.com

WordQ+SpeakQ software bundle for struggling writers is first and only integrated word prediction & speech recognition tool for those with learning disabilities.

A common misconception is that dyslexics write words backwards or move letters around when reading. Actually, this only occurs in a small percentage. Dyslexic people are better identified by writing that does not seem to match their level of intelligence from other observations. Additionally, people with dyslexia often substitute similar-looking, but unrelated words in place of the ones intended (i.e., say/saw, what/want, fell/fall, fun/run).

Simply put, writing is harder for people with dyslexia. As they struggle with spelling, they may pay little attention to their grammar, or vice versa. Writing by hand is a daunting and frustrating task for students with dyslexia (similarly, for those with the learning disabilities dysgraphia, or poor graphomotor control or working memory). This writing generally produces work that is far below their oral skills of expression. Fortunately, there is a great deal of evidence that assistive computer technologies are highly effective for people with learning disabilities, or “print disabilities. In this age when writing is the new social currency, these individuals can now explore their true potential and experience the freedom of self-expression, rather than the limitations of their learning differences.

In order to support someone with dyslexia to produce a high-quality written text, an assistive technology must address several issues. To this end, **WordQ+SpeakQ** software bundle is the first and only integrated word prediction and speech recognition tool available, designed specifically for struggling writers from 2nd grade to adulthood. (A 30-day free trial of the full-featured software is available at <http://www.goqsoftware.com/try/>; **WordQ** is for PC and Mac, **SpeakQ** is for PC only).

Neil MacGregor – Vice President of Learner Development for the company, and someone who himself has struggled with learning disabilities since childhood – explains that, “I read and write at a 7th grade level, but I did my BA degree in philosophy. The advent of assistive technology has radically changed my own life, and it’s thrilling for me to participate in changing the lives of so many others. Students with dyslexia can now use their verbal skills to compensate for reading and writing difficulty. Using assistive technology, they can listen to the text on websites and proofread their own writing. At the same time, they can get assistance spelling complicated words through sophisticated word prediction (similar to, but more advanced than, what you find on your cell phone) and can access speech recognition that allows them to write by speaking, and to edit their work by hearing their writing – including mistakes – read back to them.”

While there is no “cure” for dyslexia, **WordQ+SpeakQ** are helping to transform the writing experience for tens of thousands who struggle with it. Steve McClean, Principal of Rockland District High School in Ontario, has observed that, “Many children with learning disabilities have above-average intelligence but are unable to communicate well, especially through writing. These are kids with great ideas who just can’t write them down. For them, the writing process is painful and frustrating. **WordQ** and **SpeakQ** solve that problem for them.”

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