

TMCSEA

TAZEWELL-MASON COUNTIES SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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Writing & Assistive Technology

What assistive technology can help with writing?

Writing involves the physical ability to produce written language (motor aspects) and the cognitive ability to put words together to create written expression (composing). Assistive technology devices that may help student with the motor aspects of writing mechanics are the following:

Motor Aspects of Writing

- ❖ Regular pencil or pen
- ❖ Pencil or pen with adaptive grip
- ❖ Adapted paper (e.g., raised line, highlighted lines)
- ❖ Slantboard to create slanted writing surface
- ❖ Prewritten words/phrases
- ❖ Templates
- ❖ Portable word processor to keyboard instead of writing
- ❖ Computer with word processing software
- ❖ Voice recognition software to word process

Here is a list of assistive technology to help with composing:

Composing Written Material

- ❖ Word cards/word book/word wall
- ❖ Pocket dictionary/thesaurus
- ❖ Writing templates
- ❖ Electronic/talking electronic dictionary/thesaurus/spell checker
- ❖ Word processing with spell checker/grammar checker
- ❖ Talking word processor
- ❖ Abbreviation/expansion
- ❖ Word processing with writing support
- ❖ Multimedia software for expression of ideas
- ❖ Voice recognition software

When is it appropriate?

If a student is having difficulty either with the motor aspects of writing or with composing written material, the above assistive technology may prove helpful.

Where do we go for help?

The Occupational Therapist is often the most knowledgeable service provider when the question is about motor aspects of writing. The Special Education Teacher or Speech/Language Pathologist may be the most helpful with composing. An assistive technology specialist may be knowledgeable about both of these areas. The IEP team should work with one of these people if they need help in determining the need for assistive technology.

In addition www.beacon-ridge.com offers many low tech tools to improve writing.

Reed, P. & Lahm, E. (2005) Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (general education)