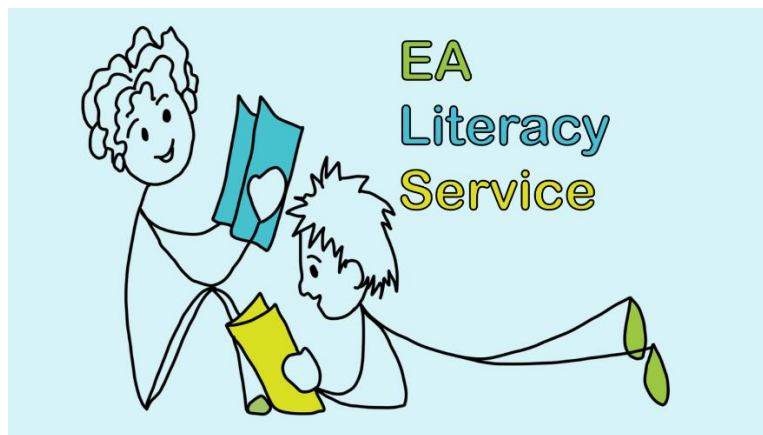


EA Literacy Service

Assistive Technology for Sixth Form Pupils



This document has been developed by the EA Literacy Service (Northern Ireland). It is intended to provide a broad overview of some of the assistive technology programs and devices that Sixth Form pupils with literacy difficulties may benefit from using. We hope you and your child find some of the content helpful and enjoyable.

Please note, readers should use the links and QR codes referenced in this document at their own discretion. Individual websites may contain pop-ups and marketing materials from the organisations providing these services and resources. The inclusion of links does not imply endorsement of any material on these websites, or any association with their operators. The EA Literacy Service cannot guarantee the security of these sites, the operation of the links or that they will be virus-free.

The EA Literacy Service Team,

February 2023

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“Computer readers, examination reading pens, speech recognition technology and word processors not only allow candidates to work independently but are also a better preparation for Further and Higher Education and the world of employment” (JCQ, 2020).

Read&Write Software

Read&Write is a piece of software that acts as a literacy support tool to help young people with literacy difficulties access the curriculum, e.g., reading onscreen text out loud for the pupil, typing out the words that the pupil speaks into their device’s microphone, and much more. Northern Ireland schools (including Sixth Forms) currently have free access to Read&Write software via the C2K network and it can be downloaded for free at home on up to five individual devices through arrangements facilitated via the Literacy Service. You can find out more information about Read&Write, including how to download and use it, by visiting the bespoke [R&W for NI Schools](#) webpage and scanning the QR code below:



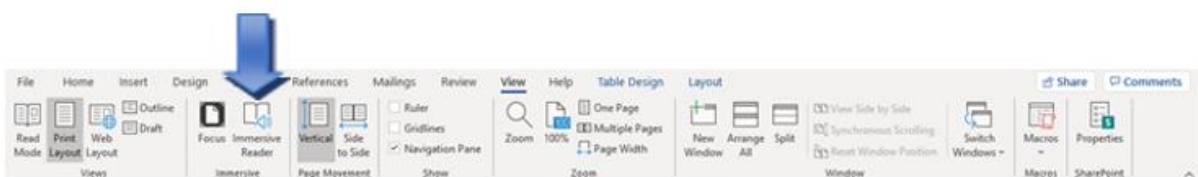
Sixth Form staff who are unfamiliar with this software can enrol upon an online training module regarding the use of Read&Write software, created by the Literacy Service, by visiting the [EA booking portal](#) and scanning the QR code shown below:



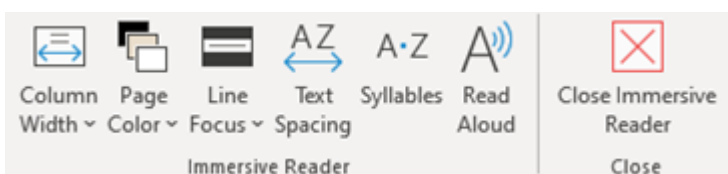
Microsoft’s Immersive Reader

Immersive Reader is a tool available within many Microsoft applications such as Word, PowerPoint and the Edge browser. Immersive Reader has many features that often prove useful for pupils with literacy difficulties including reading on-screen text aloud at a speed and voice of the pupil’s preference, creating a coloured background and spacing words and/or letters out on screen.

The Immersive Reader tool is quickly accessible within Microsoft Word, for example, by clicking on ‘View’ at the top of the toolbar – this then makes the Immersive Reader icon appear as indicated below.



There are then six main features within Immersive Reader which become accessible once the Immersive Reader icon is clicked (please see screenshot below).



Visit the [Microsoft Educator Center](#) for further information on Immersive Reader including a short explanatory video.

Microsoft's Dictate

Dictate is a speech recognition technology tool available within Microsoft Outlook, Word and PowerPoint. It converts the user's speech to text using state-of-the-art speech recognition technology, enabling the user to 'write with their voice' and quickly create documents, e-mails, notes and presentations.

The Dictate tool is quickly accessible within Microsoft Word, for example, by clicking on the Dictate icon that should be visible on the toolbar:



Visit the Microsoft website for further information on [Microsoft Dictate](#) including a short explanatory video.

Microsoft Lens

Microsoft Lens is a free app that effectively turns your tablet or smartphone into a portable scanner, allowing you to capture pictures of books, whiteboards, documents, business cards and receipts which can then be saved and edited digitally. Microsoft Lens can be downloaded onto either an Android (e.g., Samsung phone) or an iOS (e.g., iPad or iPhone) device. If a pupil is finding the reading of a piece of text challenging, then perhaps they could be provided with a camera-equipped digital device (e.g., a tablet or phone) with the Microsoft Lens app installed. They could then load up the app and point the device's camera

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at a page in the book that they are finding challenging, take a photo, then select Actions → Read. The Immersive Reader software that is integrated into the Microsoft Lens app will then read out the text for them in a voice and speed of their liking.

Captured documents and images can also be uploaded to Microsoft OneNote, Word, PowerPoint, or OneDrive, or can be saved and sent in an email.

Visit the Microsoft Support site for further information on [Microsoft Lens for Android](#) and [Microsoft lens for iOS](#) devices.

Electronic reading pens

An electronic reading pen is a handheld digital device that can read aloud text on a page, e.g., from an examination paper or textbook. There are a number of different pens available, from a range of different companies. A Sixth Form/school SENCo should be able to provide advice regarding the provision of an electronic reading pen. Some pens have built-in dictionaries and other useful features whilst some pens are designed primarily for use in tests/examinations.

Electronic reading pens can bypass a pupil's reading difficulties by reading aloud content on a page for them. Their use can decrease a pupil's reliance on human support and support their reading independence, confidence and self-esteem. Electronic reader pens can be used discreetly due to their small size and earphone capability. A short guide regarding the use of electronic reading pens can be requested from the Literacy Service by e-mailing:

literacyservice@eani.org.uk