

Write:OutLoud

Text-To-Speech Features: Step by Step

Assistive Technology Training Online

University at Buffalo - The State University of New York
USDE# H324M980014
<http://at-training.com>

Activity

Using the tutorial you will explore Write:OutLoud and learn about the unique read and delete features. You will learn how to customize features such as speech and text to create an accessible, multisensory writing environment.

*Note: If you are using a Macintosh, substitute the ⌘/Command key for the Ctrl/Control key in the keyboard shortcuts.

Instructions

1. Exploring the Toolbar Menus

Write:OutLoud® offers a talking toolbar. Simply point to a button and it tells you what it does. It is divided into 5 categories of actions: navigating the text for reading; text-to-speech functions; spell checking; changing font size; and font and background color.

- Open the application **Write:OutLoud ®**



Go to beginning, end and select sentence

Talk, repeat, stop talking

Save, print

Spell Check
Dictionary
Add Pictures

Change font size

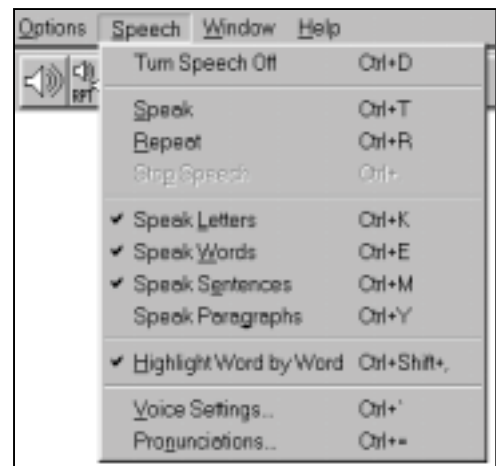
Font & background colors

2. Type and Listen

- Go to the **Speech** Menu and select **Speak Letters**, **Speak Words** and **Speak Sentences**.

A check appears when the listed item is turned on.

- Type the sentence: *I like to write*. Notice that Write:OutLoud speaks each letter and each word. It speaks back the sentence when you type the period.



- Double-click on any word; click the **Talk** button. Write:Outloud reads the word back.
- Go to the **Speech Menu**. Turn off the **Speak Letters** item. Type another sentence of your choice. Notice that the program only speaks after you type each word.

- You can also use keyboard equivalents: Hold down the **Control [Ctrl]** key and press **D** at the same time. **[Control+D]** turns off the speech function.

- You can also use keyboard equivalents to select speech options. For example:

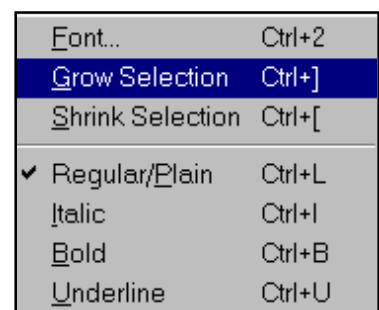
Speak Letters	Control+K
Speak Words	Control+E
Speak Sentences	Control+M
Speak Paragraphs	Control+Y



- The **cursor** must be on the sentence, in order for the sentence to be spoken.
- Go to the **Speech Menu** and select **Speak**. Notice that the entire sentence is read to you. You can also select this feature by typing **[Control+T]**.
- To read the whole document, select all of the text **[Control+A]**, and click the Speak button **[Control+T]**.

3. Exploring the Text Menu

- The Text menu provides a way to change the font type and style (**bold**, *italic*, underline) as well as the size of the letters.

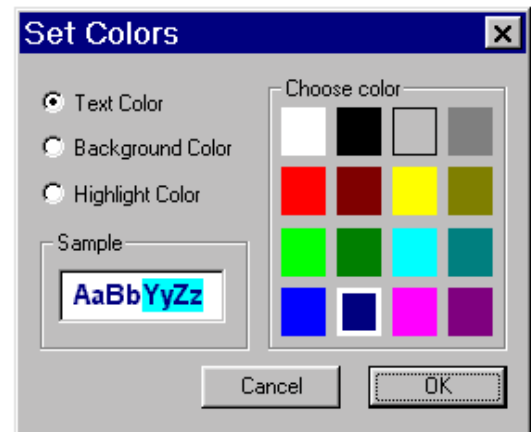


- Double click on any word to highlight it. Go to the **Text** menu and select a new font size or **Grow Selection [Control+]]**, or Click on the large **A** button on the tool bar. The font can be changed for different student needs or for writing and language activities. Shrinking the selections has similar options.

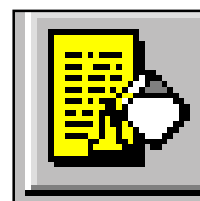
- Change the size of the font; practice making words grow (increase the font) and shrink (decrease the font). Notice how Write:OutLoud only changes the font size of the selected text. To change the whole document, select all of the text [**Control+A**] and change the font size or set it before you begin.

4. Exploring the Color Menus

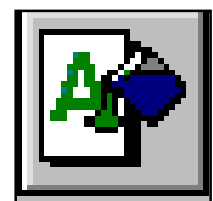
- Go to the **Options** Menu and choose **Set Colors**.
- Change the color of the words. Choose from 16 colors by moving the slide bar. Notice how Write:OutLoud changes only the color of the highlighted text on the page. Use this same window to change the text, background and highlight color. This feature can be useful to cue targeted words, create titles, etc.
- Experiment with making high and low contrasting screens and text. These features can be useful to provide high contrast for students with visual impairments or learning disabilities.



You can also change the background color and text color by clicking on the **background color** and **text Color** icons on the right side of the toolbar. Each time you click on the icon, the color of the background or text will change.



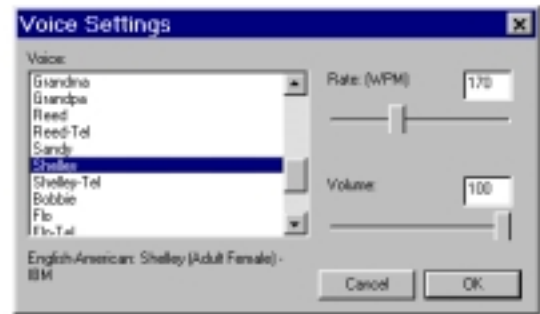
Background



Text

5. Exploring the Voice Menus

- Go to the **Speech** Menu and choose a different Voice in **Voice Settings**. Select a voice, rate and volume of speech. You will immediately hear the results of the changes you make. Select OK when the voice sounds right.
- With the cursor on the first sentence, Go to the **Speech** menu and select **Speak** [Control+T].
- Notice that each word is highlighted as it is spoken by the new voice.



6. Exploring the Speech Menu

- Type the sentence: Students can choose to listen to each word, sentence or paragraph.
- Go to the **Speech** menu. Select **Speak Words** [Control + E] and **Speak Sentences** [Control + M]. A check appears if the item is selected. Notice you can choose to hear words, sentences, paragraphs or the entire page. Select **Speak Sentences** [Control + M]
- Write:OutLoud speaks highlighted text, or the sentence containing the cursor. Go to the **Speech** menu and select **Speak**. [Control + T].
- Place your mouse cursor on any word. Hold down the [Control + T] keys. The word next to the cursor is read aloud.

Turn Speech Off	Ctrl+D
<u>S</u> peak	Ctrl+T
<u>R</u> epeat	Ctrl+R
<u>S</u> top Speech	Ctrl+.
Speak <u>L</u> etters	Ctrl+K
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Speak <u>W</u> ords	Ctrl+E
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Speak <u>S</u> entences	Ctrl+M
Speak <u>P</u> aragraphs	Ctrl+Y
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>H</u> ighlight Word by Word	Ctrl+Shift+.
<u>V</u> oice Settings...	Ctrl+`
<u>P</u> ronunciations...	Ctrl+=

7. Navigating and Selecting Text



To move your cursor quickly to the beginning of the document, click on the "beginning" toolbar button.



Click on this "move" button to move the cursor to the next sentence; a sentence is marked with appropriate punctuation.



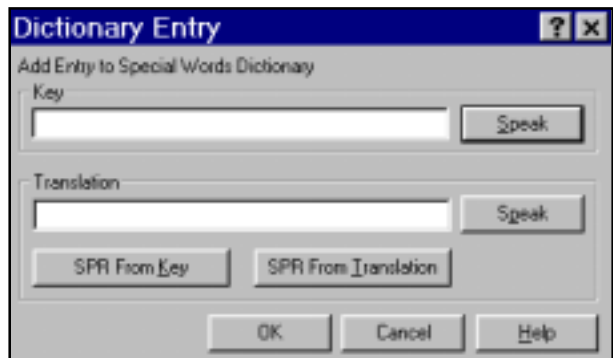
To highlight the next sentence, click on the "Select" button. In addition to reading the text, highlighting allows the user to grow/shrink words, and to change the font and color.



Click on the "end" button to move the cursor directly to the end of the document.

8. Using Edit Pronunciation

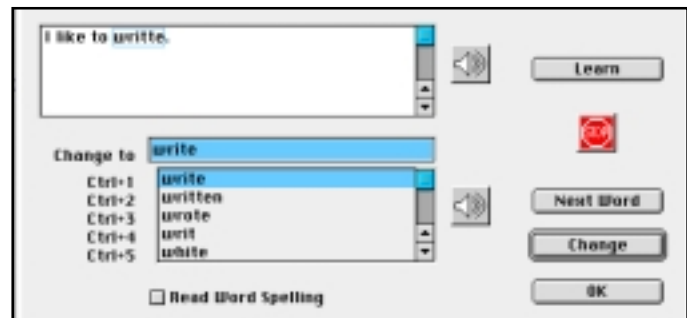
- Write:OutLoud has a pronunciation dictionary that contains many common words, abbreviations and proper names elementary school children use. However, the built in speech may not always pronounce words exactly as you want. Add your own to the list whenever you encounter a mispronounced word.
- Go to the **Speech** menu and select **Pronunciations**. Click **Add** Notice that a box comes up for you to enter the correct spelling of the word and the phonetic spelling.
- Type a name or foreign word that is not pronounced correctly, e.g. 'Baja'.
- Type the correct spelling and the phonetic spelling into the respective boxes. Write:OutLoud will remember your new pronunciation when that word is typed.



9. Check Spelling



- Type the sentence, *I like to write.*
You will hear an audio signal and see your Write:OutLoud title bar turn red for a moment. This indicates that Write:OutLoud has detected a possible spelling mistake.



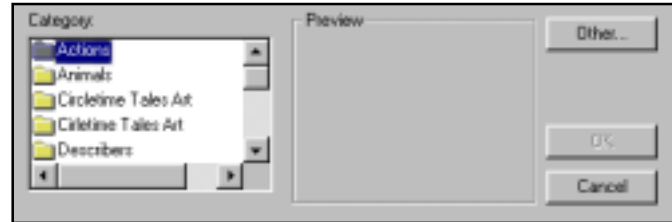
- Click on the "Check Spelling" **[Control + G]** button anytime to begin the function. A window will be displayed when it finds a word that is not in the dictionary.
- The checker displays the sentence containing the misspelled word along with suggested corrections.
- Click on the speaker icon to **Read** the sentence.
- Write:OutLoud suggests a list of new words in the box. Select a word from the word list and click on the speaker icon to hear the suggested words.
- Options are available to hear other words
- Click **Change** when you find the word you want.
- Correct the spelling of **write** and click **OK**.
- Sometimes you may want to keep the word/spelling that you have written.
- Type the sentence, *My bungee cord was too long and I got wet.* Write:OutLoud does not recognize the word **bungee** and will cue you that it may be misspelled.
- Click on the "Check Spelling" **[Control + G]** button.
- Clicking the "Learn" button will add the word to the dictionary.



10. Add A Picture To Your Document

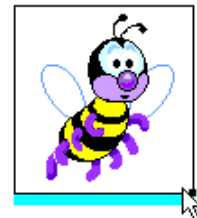
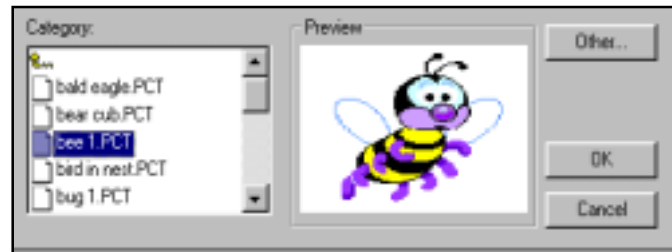
- Write:OutLoud allows you to paste pictures from the Picture Library or your own files into your writing documents.

- Click on the Add Picture icon.
- Choose from the categories listed or click Other to import your own pictures and graphics.



- Try It!

- Click the **Add Picture** icon.
- Double click on the category **Animals**.
- Click once on a line to preview the picture.
- Choose the **Bee**. Double click on the bee to accept it or click **OK**.
- Grab the black "handle" on the lower right side of the picture to resize it.



Note: Write:OutLoud adds pictures on their own line and does not recognize them as text, so will not read them in a sentence.