Accessibility Features

Windows and MAC

We NEVER want to throw the baby out with the bathwater. It is important that we use the materials and resources that are available on a daily basis. The philosophy of UDL does not say we must go out and buy new technology. Using tools that are already in the classroom and the curriculum to meet the needs of all students also helps the teachers implement strategies more quickly.
Let’s begin with the accessibility features built into the Windows Operating System. Starting in the control panel and clicking on the Appearance and Personalization link, we can see a variety of built-in features. We will take a quick look at the Display features and the Ease of Access Center.
The first feature is the display. There are a variety of alterations that one can make. Here we see the ease with which you can change the size of the information on the screen. This UDL feature can meet the needs of many of us. Looking at the sidebar on the left, you can see an adjustment for *brightness* as well as *Adjusting Clear Type* text. This feature is a Microsoft software that improves the readability of text on the screen. When used the text looks almost as clear as text printed on paper.
The **Ease of Access Center** is available through a number of avenues. Here we can see the features through the Appearance and Personalization link. Here you see the choices of **Accommodate low vision**- Choose High Contrast, turn on the Narrator that will read aloud text on the screen. The magnifier will zoom in for easier reading.

**Use screen reader**- The screen reader accesses the Narrator as well

**Turn on easy access keys**-
- Mouse Keys- turns your numeric keypad into mouse access
- Sticky Keys allows you to access function keys such as *Shift plus a letter* in a sequential mode as opposed to all at once
- Toggle Keys provides an auditory tone when you press CAPS LOCK, NUM LOCK or SCROLL Lock
- Filter Keys- provides an option for ignoring or slowing down brief or repeated keystrokes by adjusting the keyboard repeat rate

**Turn high Contrast on or off**- The last features allows you to change the contrast. This is most beneficial for individuals with visual disabilities.
The **Ease of Access Center** has a variety of features through the Appearance and Personalization link. When the Ease of Access Center is available directly through this link, you have access to explore many settings.
A second way into Ease of Access is directly from the main Control Panel page. Here you see the same options.
Let’s begin with exploring the accessibility features of Windows 7. You can also access these features on the Windows operating system by going to the Start button/All Programs/Accessories folder/Ease of Access folder. We will be discussing the magnifier, onscreen keyboard and the speech recognition features.

Ease of access, formerly known as accessibility, is located under accessories. The path to access it is located on the slide

We will take a quick look at the:

**Magnifier**

**Onscreen keyboard:**

**Speech recognition:**

Let’s take a quick look at the Ease of Access folder.
There are now 3 magnifiers available.

1. Docked divides the screen horizontally. The top of the screen is magnified.

2. The lens creates a rectangular lens that can be moved around the screen, highlighting specific information.

3. Full screen, magnifies the entire screen.

This feature can help students who need enlargement or teachers who want to showcase specific information.
**Onscreen keyboard**: allows access to computer keyboard on the computer screen. Can be accessed via the mouse by clicking on the key or with a touch window.
Speech recognition allows for dictation directly to the computer. This updated version is easy and functional. You should give it a try! We will be discussing Dragon Naturally Speaking in future sessions. The Windows version is not as robust as the DNS, however it does offer an alternative and certainly a great way for to begin exploration and assessment. Please be aware that our students still need to learn the writing process to use this tool, it does not take the place of the skill set needed.
Readability statistics provides grade level information on text that is typed or copied and pasted.

Consider the student who struggles with writing. The student can generate their written work. Run the spell check with Readability and using the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level get an idea of where they are writing. If their work is below grade level, they can work to improve it.

Likewise, let’s consider reading. This example shows a grade level reading assignment, however, we have a student who is reading below grade level. The Readability Statistics show us current level. You can go in and edit the material yourself or... (go to next slide)
This slide showcases Auto summarize another free tool built into Microsoft Word.

By selecting a percentage of the information to the read Auto summarize automatically reduces the difficulty level of the text.

The AutoSummary Tools in Microsoft Office Word 2007 can highlight and assemble key points of a document. For example, a student could use Office Word 2007 to create an automatic summary of a number of long science articles or to quickly create an abstract for a finished history report. The student runs AutoSummarize and then edits the summary. AutoSummarize analyzes a document and then assigns a score to each sentence. You decide the amount of detail you want, and AutoSummarize uses the scoring system to extract the key points and assemble them for you. Choose one of the four types of summaries, and Office Word 2007 displays the extracted text. After AutoSummarize finishes, you can edit the results to fit your needs.
Now we have pulled the information from the Auto Summarize and run a new Readability Statistic. As you can see we’ve significantly reduced the amount of text as well as the difficulty. Explore this tool to see how it can benefit your students.
This is another example of giving a student the same information as their peers. Running auto summarize all of the students can be asked to read the highlighted information first and then the rest of the document. The student with a learning differences may be asked just to read the highlighted text.
There are a few additional accessibility features that one doesn’t always connect to students with identified special needs. One we need to consider is the use of color to support reading. It is very easy to change the background color of documents to meet the unique needs of your students.

Another easy to change feature is the font. Consider this as you are working with students who are having difficulty deciphering text. It might just be the font.

A third easy to use feature is changing character spacing. You can quickly and easily change the spacing between letters to assist students with challenges.
The last aspect that we will address is using the find and replace feature of Office to increase the spacing between words. We know that as children move from primary to intermediate classrooms, the word spacing decreases. For students who require the larger space between words, you can use this quick tip. Access the **Find and Replace** feature. In the **Find** window space once. In the **Replace** window, space a number of times. Hit replace all. The program will replace all occurrences of one space with the number you indicated in replace.
Quick and easy.
For additional resources on Accessibility for both the Windows and Mac platforms visit my Livebinder.

- Livebinder resources
  - [www.tinyurl.com/kaplanudl](http://www.tinyurl.com/kaplanudl)
Thank you for your time and interest in the many and varied accessibility features built into technology today. Continue to explore and build a firm basis of knowledge for yourself and your students!