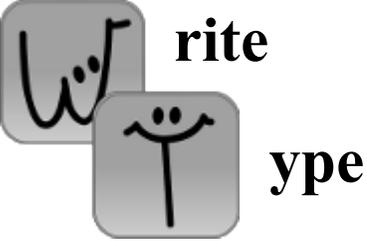# Write Type

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Teacher Materials

Program Features

WriteType is a free (and open source) program that helps students experience success in writing. It is designed especially for schools to transform technology from a barrier into an opportunity for success.

Some major features include:

- **Word Completion** — As students type, word suggestions appear on the right-hand side of the screen to complete the word being typed. Clicking on the desired word will finish the word. WriteType will also learn a student's habits over time and make more relevant suggestions based on what has already been written.
- **Reading Back the Document** — WriteType will read back written text, allowing students to catch errors they may not have caught reading it back themselves. It will also, optionally, read back words as they are typed.
- **Highlighting** — Sections of the document can be quickly highlighted while typing or while listening to the document being read back. This lets students quickly flag areas they need to go back and review.
- **Grammar checking** — WriteType will underline simple grammar and formatting mistakes in the document, and offer to make the necessary revision.
- **Auto-correction** — Common errors, such as typing *isnt* instead of *isn't*, will be corrected automatically without the need for intervention.
- **Multi-lingual** — WriteType is available in English, Spanish, Dutch, Italian, Russian, Bulgarian, and Basque.

Write Type
Documentation

Basic Usage

To:

- Open a document — *File -> Open* or click on the 🖶 button
- Save a document — *File-> Save* or click on the 💾 button
    - Please note that WriteType saves in the html format. This is the same format used by web browsers. Because of this, depending on your system configuration, you may not be able to simply click on a file to open it in WriteType. When opening files, please use File -> Open.
- Save a document under another name — *File -> Save As…* or click on the 📝 button
- Print the current document — *File -> Print*, or click on the 🖨 button
    - When you print, WriteType uses the standard printer settings on your computer.
- Read back your current document — *Edit -> Speak*, or click on the 📢 button
    - If you select a portion of the document and click on the Speak button, only the selected portion will be read back.

Highlighting

WriteType supports a feature called "highlighting". This allows a student or teacher to mark areas of the document for later reference. This is useful for the student to remember mistakes after listening to the document being read out loud, or for the teacher to flag areas that need to be reviewed.

There are two ways to highlight parts of the document: by using the Highlight Tool, or by turning on Highlight Mode. The **Highlight Tool** is the ⭐ button on the toolbar. To use the Highlight Tool, first click on a word in the document. Then, click the Highlight Tool button. The word under the cursor will be highlighted. If you would like to highlight more than one word, select the area you would like to highlight, and then click on the Highlight Tool button. The selected area will be highlighted. If the cursor is underneath a highlighted section, clicking the Highlight Tool button will remove the highlighting.

Highlight Mode works similarly to the Highlight Tool. Highlight Mode can be enabled by clicking on the 🪄 icon in the toolbar. It can be disabled by clicking on it again. The only difference between Highlight Mode and the Highlight Tool is that it does not allow text to be entered while enabled. The main advantage to using it is speed. Every time you click on the document with highlight mode enabled, the word under the cursor will be highlighted. Every time you select text, the selected text will immediately be highlighted. The speed makes it possible to quickly highlight words when hearing the document read back, for instance. As with the Highlight Tool, clicking on a highlighted section in Highlight Mode will remove the highlighting.

Other features

For certain situations and usages, WriteType has additional features built-in.

- Enable Distraction-free mode
    - If the typist has difficulty maintaining concentration while typing, distraction-free mode is an alternative interface that displays full screen and only includes the text box and the list of completions. All toolbar items, menus, and other interface elements of the desktop shell are hidden. To enable it, go into the "View" menu and click "Distraction-free mode".
- Change the size of the list of suggestions
    - Bigger isn't always better, especially when you have to sift through all of the words in order to find a suitable replacement. To change the size of the word list, go to *File -> Settings* and click on the second tab, entitled "Word lists". There will be different sizes to choose from. Please be aware that, for most uses, the smallest list is too small and the largest list is too big. The default list is recommended. Also, please note that, on slower computers, the smaller lists will increase performance.
- Add a list of custom words
    - In some situations, the default list of words is not sufficient. In this case, go to *File -> Settings*. In the first tab (entitled "Custom Words") you will see a text box. In this text box, you can enter one word per line that you would like to appear in the list of words. Even if the words already exist in the list of words, putting them here will bring them to the top of the list of suggestions.
- Change the reading speed
    - If the read-back speed is too fast or too slow, it can easily be changed. Go to *File -> Settings* and click on the last tab, entitled "Other". Adjust the "Reading Speed" slider to your liking.

Advanced Usage

For more advanced usage, WriteType has a number of additional settings and features.

- Wait a few letters before suggestions kick in
    - Some individuals may, due to the novelty of the word completion list, enter only the first letter of a word and then spend a great deal of time looking for the word in the list of possible completions. In order to avoid this, go to *File -> Settings* and click on the "Word Completion" tab. Change the "Minimum letters" box to your liking. When this is anything above 0, WriteType will wait for the designated number of letters to be typed before offering suggestions.
- Try to guess misspellings
    - One problem with word completion is that it will not work if the beginning letters of the word are misspelled. WriteType attempts to combat this by offering a feature that will try to guess misspellings. This is enabled by default, but may make older computers extremely slow. In other words, if you need to speed up WriteType, this is what you are looking for. Open up *File -> Settings* and go to the "Word Completion" tab. This feature can be enabled or disabled with the "Try to guess misspellings" checkbox.
    - When enabled, there are additional parameters that can be changed. The "Misspelling threshold" prevents overcrowding in the suggestion box. WriteType assumes the correct spelling until there are fewer than this many suggestions, after which point it will begin searching for possible misspellings.

- The "Advanced substitutions" checkbox specifies whether or not to make more advanced substitutions. Checking this box will enable WriteType to find even more misspellings than it could with a standard misspelling check. This is optional, however, because it slows down the program quite a bit in exchange for only a small number of possible corrections. If you notice WriteType is slow, but do not want to disable misspelling detection altogether, disabling only advanced substitutions will significantly increase your speed.
- Set the default font
    - To change the default font, go to *File -> Settings* and click on the "Other" tab. Select the font you would like from the "Default font" drop-down box. Checking "System Default" will use the system default instead.
- Auto-correction
    - Auto-correction will automatically fix the most common mistakes made while typing without the need for user interaction. It also allows the typist to make shortcut words for longer words and phrases. For example, WriteType could replace "me" with the typist's name.
    - To enable this feature, go into the options menu and click on the "Auto-completions" tab. Click the "contractions" checkbox at the bottom if you would like corrections such as "wasnt" => "wasn't". Also, the "Auto-correction settings" table can be used to define additional corrections. Just double click on a cell to edit it.
- Change the TTS engine
    - Not all TTS engines work well on all computers. If speech synthesis does not work properly upon installation, chances are that changing the engine will help this. In *File -> Settings*, click the last tab, entitled "Other". In the drop-down menu, select your preferred TTS engine. Please note that on GNU/Linux computers, either Festival (for "festival") or eSpeak (for "eSpeak" and "pyttsx") must be installed. On Windows computers, eSpeak is recommended, if it works properly.