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### **What works**

*The word processor can be used to*

- *draft work,*
- *edit*
- *restructure passages,*
- *develop ideas collaboratively,*
- *look at different styles and format for different purposes.*
- *produce text faster*
- *write more accurately.*

### **How can ICT help?**

- *text to speech,*
- *speech to text,*
- *text to Braille,*
- *text to pictures,*
- *switches,*
- *screen enlargement*
- *whole-word input*

### **Editing**

*For anyone who tends to make mistakes or has disjointed thought processes, it can be a great relief to know that text can be put right before you've finished. The ability to develop a piece of writing over several lessons also helps pupils to become more involved in the process and may help them to understand the way text can be edited and improved.*

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### **Presentation**

*Work nearly always looks good when it's printed out from the computer, looking crisp with clear writing. For some pupils this is the only way they are going to produce legible, smart and tidy work. It's something they are happy to revisit, something to show to other people.*

### **Collaboration**

*Members of the group may take different roles, such as the thinker, the typist, the editor, the illustrator, or perhaps work simultaneously or successively on their own parts of the work, planning together at the start and bringing it together at the end. It helps to make the process much less threatening and encourages pupils to take a more objective view of their own work.*

### **Checks**

*There are all sorts of automated features within word-processing software: spelling and grammar checkers, word count, speech facilities and print previews amongst others. These help writers to keep on track, check their work as they go along and keep writing. The 'danger' of making pupils dependent on the spelling checker does not seem to be borne out in practice. People with genuine spelling difficulties see correct spelling models more often and consequently many of them also start to spell better away from the computer.*

### **Valued context**

*It is often quite a privilege to be able to work on a computer, so it builds a good self-image as well as sending messages to the rest of the world. Pupils tend to work harder, faster and spend more time on tasks. These combine to give them more opportunities for learning, reinforcement and mastery.*

### **Objective view**

*It is much easier to look at and think about work on a computer screen. The anonymity of type, along with the clarity of presentation, gives pupils a more objective view, so that they can consider their work in a more critical light.*

### **Vocational opportunities**

*Almost all jobs these days assume keyboard skills at some level. This is one important vocational skill that we can teach at school.*

### ***How have teachers and pupils used word processing?***

*Mark is six and goes to a local primary school. On entering the school he caused some concern because he was so shy and withdrawn, making no attempt to move around and explore the vibrant, open-plan infant environment. Having a severe visual impairment, he has in-class support for some of his lessons. He has discovered that it is much easier to see what he has written when he works on the computer, and finds black on yellow in 48pt type best. He's learning to touch type, too. When we visited him we asked if we could see what he was doing on his computer. "No, sorry," he replied, "I've finished for this morning. I'm going to the library" and picked up his books and went. ICT is helping him become a very confident and competent young man.*

*A group of boys with specific learning difficulties in a school in Scotland developed their own spelling strategy using a combination of the spell-check facility and thesaurus. If the word they had written was too inscrutable to be recognised by the spell-checker after a couple of attempts, they would think of a synonym or something close, and nine times out of ten would find the word they'd been unable to spell. Over the next school year their vocabulary became richer and they, as well as other language groups, were encouraged to go back through their work using the thesaurus to see where they could have used more interesting words.*

*Anne Walker has been working with reluctant writers, using colour laptops. Each pupil has spent time going through the possible font and colour combinations and produces work that looks quite different from that of their classmates. One pupil is writing in curly red script, another in a nice casual brown marker font and yet another works in the drawing module so that he can write white on black. All of them are now really keen to work and get what they have written printed out at the end of the lesson.*

*Andrew was in Year 10 before he started to use a computer regularly for his coursework. He was bright but had difficulty with handwriting and spelling. He was reluctant to use the computer to start with, seeing it as cheating, but quickly became fascinated with the way he could play with formatting. He spent a great deal of time looking at his work, emphasising particular words, centring and re-sizing headings. He was also delighted with the ability it gave him to check spellings. It gave him the confidence*

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*to produce far longer pieces of work (his philosophy had been that if 30 percent of words were going to be spelt wrongly then the shorter the homework was, the better). The initial benefit was longer, well presented pieces of work. Over a greater period of time, his spelling became much better and he was less reluctant to write by hand, knowing that it could be typed up and edited later if necessary.*

*Peter is the archetypal electronic whizz-kid with a bedroom full of cast-off amplifiers, dismantled radios and the occasional exploding transistor. He uses a laptop computer because of his visual impairment. He has to print out his work on the school office printer and so has casually gained access to faxes and e-mail as well. He has obtained all sorts of technology and science equipment for the school from local firms by persistent and friendly e-mailing, and is always the first port of call when technical support is needed. He lies in bed at night dreaming of the fun he can have with all the wonderful resources at his new secondary school in the autumn.*

### ***Meeting individual needs***

- *Configure/customise menus and toolbars to emphasise or hide features*
- *Design macros that automate particular tasks*
- *Provide on-screen frames (scaffolding)*
- *Encourage use of spelling and grammar checkers*
- *Provide whole-word input systems via word lists, clickable grids or overlay keyboards*
- *Use word processors that allow picture or symbol support*
- *Design and write-protect templates set up with particular colour, fonts and sizes so they are ready to use.*

### ***Activities***

*Organise pictures and words to convey ideas*

*Use the mouse to match words and pictures*

*Use an appropriate input device to position elements on screen*

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*Create movement on screen*

*Resources*

*An object-based drawing package*

*Scanner*

*Photograph of one of the children*

*Teachers should be able to:*

*scan a photo or take a digital photograph*

*create a file within the drawing package*

*The activity*

*Scan the photograph or create a digital one and save it as a screen sized photo into file and lock this so that children cannot move it around*

*Make labels of parts of the face and body*

*Ask pupils to move the labels so that they match the right parts*

*2. Organise pictures and words to convey ideas*

*Use a word bank to assemble sentences that communicate meaning*

*Make deliberate selections from a clickable grid supported by symbols*

*Select elements from a clickable grid containing sounds and pictures*

*Resources*

*Word processor with word-bank facility which inserts pictures alongside text*

*Teachers should be able to:*

*use an appropriate word processor*

*create an on-screen grid containing pictures*

*record or capture and add sound to the cells*

*The activity*

*Create grids for regular tasks, such as news, weather and timetables*

*2A Writing stories*

*Use a word processor to produce sentences that communicate meaning*

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*Use a word processor, which has symbol support, to tell a story*

*Make decisions in a branching story*

*Resources*

*Word processor with word-bank facility which inserts pictures alongside text*

*Scanner*

*Teachers should be able to*

*use an appropriate word processor*

*create an on-screen grid containing pictures*

*use a scanner*

*The activity*

*Select pupils for a small group supported by an adult if necessary*

*Read and re-tell the story of Red Riding Hood (or any other you can find pictures of) using a prepared grid*

*Combine the text and pictures to make big book*

*An alternative*

*The class or a group can compose their own story*

*Each child illustrates one page*

*Children draw characters and any significant items*

*The teacher makes a grid containing children's scanned pictures and necessary vocabulary*

*Each child writes their own page of the story to go with his or her drawing*

*Combine the pages to make a big book.*

*3A Combine text and graphics*

*Combine graphics with text, use appropriate effects and re-size graphics*

*Use a painting package to create an appropriate picture to illustrate children's writing and insert this with adult support*

*Operate a single-switch presentation which contains familiar photographs with spoken captions*

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### *Resources*

*Painting package*

*Word processor which allows pictures to be inserted*

*Teachers should be able to:*

*use the chosen software*

*configure menus so that unnecessary functions are not available to pupils*

*set up a template with particular fonts and colours*

*write-protect files*

*design a clickable grid, if pupils need this type of support for their word processing*

### *The activity*

*Pupils write about a particular animal and its habitat using the class word processor, perhaps with the support of a clickable grid with the appropriate vocabulary (Science KS2 2.5a)*

*Each child creates a picture of his or her animal and is supported to combine this with the text*

*Combine pages to make a class book about animals and their habitats*

### *4A Write for different audiences*

*Use the more advanced features of a word processor to help pupils match their work to an audience*

*Select appropriate font and size of text for different audiences*

*With support, choose favourite font, colour, effect for print-outs to label books and possessions*

### *Resources*

*Word-processing software that allows formatting of text*

*Samples of different styles of text & colours, fonts and format greetings cards, mail shots, magazines for people of different ages*

*Activity cards with challenges*

*Teachers should be able to:*

*use the full range of formatting features on word processor*

*configure menus to focus on desired features*

### *The activity*

*Create challenge cards (or use the ones below)*

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*Discuss examples*  
*Give challenges to pupils*  
*Discuss the final result as the full class*  
*Create a display of different styles of text*

*Name plate for child's bedroom*

*Letter to the bank manager*

*Invitation to a Hallowe'en party*  
*Poster for a jumble sale*  
*Wedding Invitation*

*Supermarket shelf*

*KS3 unit 2*

*Gather, process and output information in text and image form within the context of a newspaper*

*Use a newspaper template, designed through analysis of audience needs, acquire and process images*

*Contribute to production of a newspaper*

*With support, participate in selection and production of articles, digital photos and images*

*Resources*

*Desktop publishing software such as MS Publisher, Apple Works or Textease*

*Digital camera*

*Scanner*

*Access to CD-ROMs and the Internet (optional)*

*A range of newspapers showing different styles and content*

*Where appropriate, a symbol-based word processor*

*Teachers should be able to:*

*select appropriate desktop publishing software*

*understand how the program handles pictures and text (each program is different!)*

*set up style sheet, for headings, titles, body text and so on*

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*use a digital camera and alter size and resolution of pictures*

*use a scanner*

*capture pictures from CD-ROM and the Internet (if used)*

*capture and manipulate screen shots, for example to use output from symbol word processor*

*The activity*

*Visit your local newspaper and find out about the different jobs that people do*

*Invite the press to a significant school event so that pupils can follow the process of producing an article from their own experience*

*Look at a range of newspapers, and learn the vocabulary of newspaper layout*

*Conduct a survey of other pupils or parents to see what they would be interested in reading*

*Give roles and responsibilities to different members of the group*

*Have meeting to make decisions about articles, try to get balance of local developments, events (take your own photos), current interest (music, sport*

*The Internet is an excellent source of information and pictures), jokes, opinions*

*Prepare content as separate files*

*Compile the paper*

*Evaluate and edit the result*

*Duplicate and sell!*

*More ideas for using templates and styles include*

*Creative writing frames*

*Headed notepaper*

*Reports*

*Records of achievement*

*Follow with Accessing Text*