

The Handwriting Clinic
1506 Capital St. Ste. 150
Plano, Tx 75074



Assistive Technology

**ASSESSMENT
THERAPY
TRAINING**

**1506 Capital St,
Ste. 150
Plano, Texas 75074**

972 633-1974

Our Assistive Technology Team:

Laura Battaia, OTR, ATP
RESNA Certified Assistive
Technology Professional

Amanda Scorcio, OTR

Kacie Baxley
Education

We are fortunate enough to have some very highly skilled professionals working with our children who have difficulty with writing literacy.

Laura Battaia, OTR, ATP comes with 23 years of experience in occupational therapy in the public schools, including 20 years of experience in assistive technology. Laura provides assessment, training in software and devices, and application of technology. Laura does the technology assessments, training of software, parent training and device training at our clinic.

Amanda Scorcio, OTR is also an assistive technology specialist. She has been a team leader at a local school district. Amanda teaches keyboarding skills and handwriting classes at our clinic, and has been working at our clinic for many years.

Kacie Baxley, is a special education teacher with many years of experience in working with children on literacy. She teaches our writing literacy classes. Our writing literacy classes focus on re-teaching grammar, punctuation, and paragraph formation. She uses visual templates and multisensory teaching, to give students a visual approach to paragraph formation. Kacie teaches our keyboarding classes and also teaches many of our handwriting classes. She has extensive experience in working with students with mild to severe learning disabilities.

The Team Approach at The Handwriting Clinic

Evaluation and Training: (3 sessions plus additional training if needed).

Bring your child in for an evaluation for technology, with Laura Battaia, OTR, ATP. Laura will spend one session evaluating and beginning training with your child, one session doing technology training with your child, and one session doing technology training with the parent. Laura will work with the parent to create a home program, and give parent suggestions for communication with school. Additional therapy sessions are available, and Laura can provide training on a variety of assistive technologies. She also can assist parents on how to make power point tutorials for spelling words. Laura specializes in technology for many other areas of learning, for example, using iPad® or iPod® applications and using technology for children with special needs. Please schedule sessions with our clinic office.

Enroll your child in a **keyboarding class**, if they will be using computer support at school for technology. We have 8 session classes at an affordable rate. Our staff is also available to do private 1:1 keyboarding instruction. **Please see our keyboarding brochure.**

If your child has difficulty with syntax, punctuation, grammar, spelling, paragraph organization, composition, or writing literacy, enroll your child in a **writing literacy class** with Kacie Baxley. We have the Zany Pirates or Zany Heroes class. Kacie is also available to do private tutoring for composition and literacy. Writing is FUN with Kacie - and she has many fun activities to keep children interested and motivated to write! Parents often comment that they learn many new tricks and techniques for helping their child. **Please see our writing literacy brochure.**

If your child struggles with spelling, composition, sentence formation, etc - we want your child to master keyboarding with spell check software, and to evaluate access to technology for school support. It is also important for your child to master handwriting. We use visual templates and hand held spell check devices to help with writing literacy when using handwriting.

If your child needs improved legibility of handwriting, we have the older students print legibility class (WHAM), or cursive class to help with legibility. **Please see our brochure on the WHAM or cursive class for more information.**

In these training sessions with an assistive technology specialist, your child will learn how technology tools can relieve writing anxieties connected with spelling and grammar, editing, and producing written text. These one-on-one trainings will teach the child what technology does, what are the features of software programs, how to operate it, and how they will benefit from the use of the software. During this session application strategies will be applied. Furthermore, one hour of training will be provided to the parent(s) so they will understand the purpose of the technology and are proficient in operating the program. Parents will also receive additional spelling strategies using technology.

Laura can offer additional training for portable word processor, speech recognition software, text to speech software, and word prediction software. She also can provide training on devices for note-taking and organizational skills

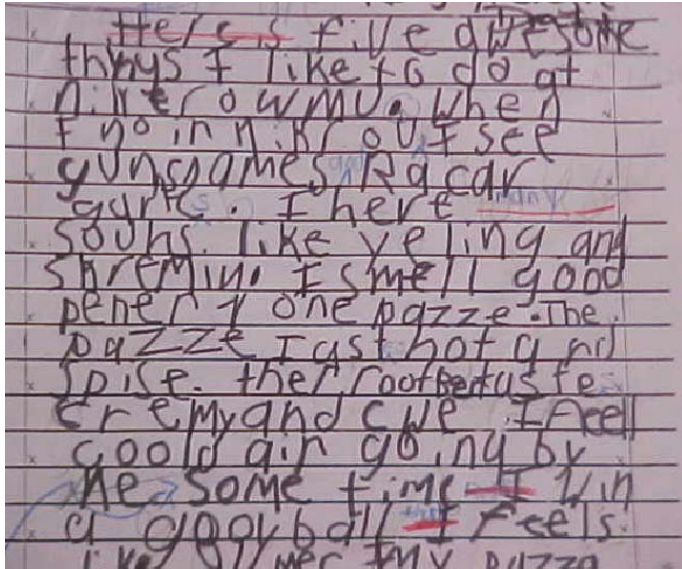
Assistive Tech Assessment: \$150

Assistive Tech Therapy: \$100/hr

Writing Literacy Tutoring: \$80/hr

Parents are essential to our students success. We strive to do parent training after each session and to implement home programs for mastery of skills.

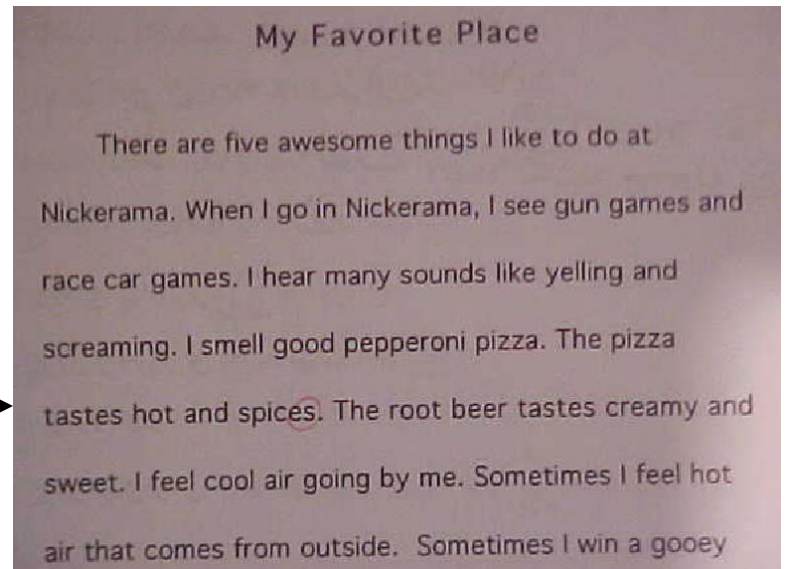
Assistive Technology Tutoring for Written Expression - We provide tutoring for assistive technology software and portable keyboard devices. If you have a poor speller, or a disorder of written expression, tutoring may help children write at their cognitive level, not their spelling level. We use a software program called Write:OutLoud which allows students who misspell about 40 out of 100 words, to write a paragraph with only 1 - 2 spelling errors. This program has text to speech, to enhance students abilities to self correct. \$80 an hour



Same 3rd grade student independently used the Write:OutLoud program with an interactive spell checker with text to speech. Student corrected all misspelled words.



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3rd grade child with poor spelling, spacing issues, poor consistency of size and form of letter formation and poor legibility of handwriting. Handwriting and spelling errors make it difficult for the child to edit grammar, learn and learn capitalization and punctuation rules.

Same 3rd grade child using Write:OutLoud software to INDEPENDENTLY rewrite the paragraph. Note, he now has only one spelling error, and good punctuation and grammar. This child feels successful and others can view him as being smart and capable. Goals for this child would be to 1. help him learn to love writing 2. Use an electronic note taker to type in text 3. Use Write:OutLoud spell and grammar checking software with text to speech to edit work. 4. Write using handwriting, using a handheld spell checker with the Write:OutLoud spell checking software built into the handheld device. 5. Improve legibility of handwriting through a Cursive I or a WHAM class (print).

Writing should be based on a students creativity and cognitive level, not a child's spelling or handwriting level!

What is the Children's Talking Dictionary?

This is a handheld spell checker, that is very kid friendly. It has text to speech to read the words to the child. It is available to purchase from www.donjohnston.com. We have students use it during written work.

What is Write:OutLoud software?

Write:OutLoud software is a phonetic word processing program that allows a student who spells phonetically, to write paragraphs with very few misspelled words. No longer do they need to do "safe" writing with brief sentences of words they know how to spell. Write:OutLoud corrects most phonetic and dyslexic spelling errors. This software has text to speech that allows a child to hear what they are writing. This software is awesome for beginning or advanced writers and makes writing FUN!

What is the Don Johnston Writing Literacy Technology Lab?

Our writing literacy lab consists of 4 computers, each loaded with Don Johnston Writing Literacy software. All of the above software programs are loaded on the computers, as well as other special software programs. You can find out more about the software at www.donjohnston.com

Of course, the software helps, but our FUN, experienced teachers make writing literacy work for the child. Through fun, creative and zany writing projects, a child is invested in developing writing literacy!

Frequently asked questions about assistive technology software:

My child does not have trouble with writing or spelling. Would this software be ok for my child to use? YES, of course, anything that can make writing FUN would be beneficial.

Will using the phonetic spell checking software be a “crutch” for my child. NO! It will allow your child to begin to compose with success. In fact, when kids have to correct their spelling, after a few times they often remember to start to spell the word correctly. Paragraph formatting skills practiced with the software will only generalize to more success with handwritten work. Also, as students get into more advanced grades they spend more and more time working on typed written work. Middle school and high school students turn in most written essays and reports typed.

My child is a very poor speller. Will he always be a poor speller? Many kids have difficulty with spelling. The English language is not very fair - a large amount of words are NOT spelled phonetically. Even kids with dyslexia learn to master most words. But many, many adults need to always use a spell checking program to edit and correct written work. We find that young children do best with a simple program such as Write:OutLoud, and then by the time they are in middle school, have success with Microsoft Word.

Will Microsoft Word work just as well? The ultimate goal is for a child to use the more advanced word processing programs. But Microsoft Word does not correct phonetic or dyslexic spelling errors as well as a phonetic spell checking program. Besides, “hearing” their paragraph read to them word by word, in Write:OutLoud, is much more fun!

What are some other advantages of having text to speech? Say a child writes “I want to lunch my rocket”. “Lunch” is a real word, so no spell checking program will correct the sentence. However, when a student HEARS the sentence, the student will immediately recognize the error and can do a different word attack approach for the word “lunch”. Even if the child wrote “lonch”, the phonetic spell checking program will bring up the spell checking menu with the word “launch”.

I think my child may need to use technology at school. Can you recommend devices or how to access technology? We can recommend devices or technology for school and for home. We try to recommend general suggestions for school, because there are many ways to use technology and many devices. It is very important for parents to understand the technology, how to access technology, and how to use the technology for home support. We try and spend time with parents, training parents on how to support their child at home.

My child uses a device at school. Can you provide training? Yes, if your child brings in the device, we can provide training, and employ a RESNA certified assistive technology specialist, who is also an occupational therapist with 23 years of public school experience.

My child does not have access to this at school: If your child is in regular education, the program offered for assistive technology support is just a great, creative writing outlet. If your child has some learning disabilities and qualifies for special education, you have a right to request an assistive technology evaluation from your district’s assistive technology team if you feel like your child may benefit from assistive technology. Most assistive technology teams are very familiar with this software. They provide training at the district level for how to use portable keyboards, special software for writing literacy, etc. But, after initial short term training, the student is expected to use the technology within the classroom. The Handwriting Clinic’s writing literacy program is a bridge that will allow more training, in FUN ways, for students who need more work in practicing these skills. The summer writing camps and the tutoring during the school year, are marketed for ALL students who are beginning learners or who need a little extra help with writing literacy. They are considered “enrichment” classes.

My child is a poor typist. Does he need typing skills to use assistive technology? Yes, typing skills at 12 wpm is recommended to be an initial level of skill to begin assistive technology. The clinic provides multi-sensory keyboarding classes to improve typing skills. ALL children would benefit from keyboarding skills!!