Penfriend XP version 3

Penfriend XP combines terrific performance with a range of well chosen features and surprising ease of use.

Penfriend XP version 3 now contains a wealth of features to support learners with reading and writing difficulties, particularly those people with dyslexia or physical/sensory disabilities including visual impairment and motor difficulties.

Highlights include:

- New 30,000 word lexicon.
- Improved prediction.
- Improved on-screen keyboards with special characters.
- Ability to switch off prediction and smart punctuation by minimising the predictor window.
- Drag and drop lexicons.
- Better interaction with other programs.

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Word Prediction

Penfriend XP works with your word processor and accurately guesses the word you are typing. For example, when you have entered the first

or second letter, when the word appears in the prediction window, one key press will finish the word for you. If you want, it will offer you the next word as well.

Other features include:

- Penfriend learns the words you use frequently and recently.
- Word prediction improves as you use it.
- Lexicons and personal preferences can be saved for each user.
- You can hover the mouse over the words in the prediction list and hear them spoken, and a simple click enters it.
- New options, including the ability to learn the first word after a mouse click
- Helps users with mobility difficulties to increase text input and accuracy.
- The prediction window can be positioned anywhere on the screen, or, if you prefer, follow the cursor
- The prediction window can also be resized to allow for up to 1 – 12 word predictions or guesses.
- Integrates with Clicker and SAW.
- Very easy to use on a network
- Works in any word processor, spreadsheet or email program

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Easy to edit Lexicons

Penfriend XP is configurable to suit the preferences and needs of different users and it is easy for teachers and tutors to select preferences and add topic specific vocabulary.

A great feature of Penfriend XP is the ability to quickly and easily select a new lexicon by 'dragging and dropping' existing lexicons into the prediction window.

With version 3 you can create 'empty' lexicons and add words one at a time, e.g., create a lexicon based around colours or animals for younger learners – great for word building!

For example:

- You can create topic lexicons for specific projects, topics and/or curriculum based subjects such as science, history, geography etc.
- You can easily save topic specific lexicons.
- Words can be banned so Penfriend will not predict words a child should be able to spell, (or should not be using!)
- Spelling errors and their frequency can be tracked and analysed to assist with spelling strategies.

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Speech Feedback

Penfriend can read the letters you are typing, words and sentences. It can also read and highlight any text transferred to the clipboard.

There is a link on the Penfriend website to download a variety of free voices.

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On Screen Keyboards

Penfriend XP also includes an on-screen keyboard which provides increased access for users who are unable to use a standard keyboard.

It is also valuable for those with dyslexia, reducing the visual strain of glancing between keyboard and screen

The on-screen keyboard works alongside Penfriend XP's predictor window. Users can choose to use the function 'F' keys, number keys, or number keypad, to select and enter predictions.

Features include:

- Helps to simplify typing into your computer.

- Provides keyboard access to users with a physical difficulty.

- Works well with a trackerball for users with motor difficulties.

- Integrates with SAW for switch scanning.

- Can be resized to meet individual preference and positioned anywhere on the screen – very accessible for users with upper limb and shoulder problems.

- Now easy to type numbers, URLs and email addresses

Making Reasonable Adjustments

With the implementation of the Special Educational Needs Act 2001 and the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act 2004 education authorities are obliged to make reasonable adjustments and meet the additional support needs of every person for whose education they are responsible.

With the range of accessible features in Penfriend it offers an all-inclusive learning support tool for struggling learners with literacy difficulties, dyslexia as well as physical and sensory disabilities.

Penfriend offers a range of customisable options, for example:
- Word prediction helps users with mobility and cognitive difficulties to increase text input and accuracy.
- Topic dictionaries can be easily created to cater for the most difficult subjects.
- Dwell and/or hover options allow Penfriend to be used alongside a range of alternative and adaptive keyboards and pointing devices, for example, trackerballs and Intellikeys keyboard.
- Text in the prediction window and on-screen keyboard can be resized to meet a range of visual needs.
- Users can choose from a range of colour backgrounds and font sizes.
- It can read letters, words and sentences as you are typing and any text copied to the clipboard.