

### **Having a positive impact on student independence – Read&Write Gold at The Priory School**

*Kate Blackmore, SENDCo at The Priory School in Hitchin explains how Read&Write Gold has improved student independence, self-esteem and engagement.*



“I’m Kate Blackmore, the SENDCo at The Priory School in Hitchin. We have around 1000 students at the school and have recently invested in assistive technology, including Read&Write Gold software, to further improve our provision for our SEND students.

As expected in a school our size we have students that find reading and writing challenging for many reasons, including EAL students and those with a range of Special Education Needs (SEN), including dyslexia. We invested in Read&Write Gold software to help students overcome learning barriers and improve access to written content in the classroom.

Read&Write Gold software has had a very positive impact on student independence, allowing students to access reading materials and resources in lessons and enabling them to work without intensive Teaching Assistant or Teacher support. We have seen a big leap forward in students’ confidence and self-esteem and they are now keen to offer ideas and enjoy writing, when before it had been a struggle.

Our students also use the software to support their writing both in class and for homework. Read&Write Gold has many different features that support spelling and grammar as well as allowing students written work to be read back to them; enabling them to identify and remedy any mistakes and further improve their work.

We have also found that our struggling readers find the colour tints incredibly useful when working on a computer. This has eased students’ visual stress and allowed them to access material, without the teacher doing a mountain of photocopying.

In 2013 we also started using Read&Write Gold software as a reader in exam situations. As a result of this we have seen an increased number of students using their access provision of extra time and readers, now that they no longer have to rely on human support. Students often comment that they are pleased to be independent and do not have to draw attention to themselves as needing assistance, especially in exam conditions. These students now have this software provision as part of their ‘normal working’ conditions to ensure they are confident with using Read&Write Gold. With the exam rules now allowing students to make use of an



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electronic reader in their English reading assessments if it is their 'normal way of working', this provision is invaluable.

We wouldn't be without Read&Write Gold and it has transformed the learning experience of many of our students. We value it so much that we are trying to think of ways to use it as part of a wider school initiative."

### **About Read&Write Gold**

Read&Write Gold changes the lives of dyslexic and English as a Second language students through a host of powerful reading, writing and research features. The discreet toolbar integrates with all mainstream computer programs, enabling students to work independently in class, during exams and on homework/coursework.

Available to download directly from: [www.texthelp.com/UK/downloads](http://www.texthelp.com/UK/downloads), the software makes a big difference to the confidence and independence of students.

With the recent changes to JCQ Access Arrangements Read&Write Gold is now also being used as a computer reader by a number of secondary schools in England, for GCSE and A-level examinations.

For further information on Read&Write Gold or to find out how your school can use it in examinations, please contact Elaine on Tel: 028 9442 8105, email [elaine@texthelp.com](mailto:elaine@texthelp.com) or visit our website [www.texthelp.com](http://www.texthelp.com)

### **About Texthelp Ltd**

Texthelp Ltd is the worldwide leader of literacy software solutions provided through three core business divisions: Education, Speech Services and Publishing. Texthelp has been developing assistive technology software for the learning disabled community since 1996. The aim has always been to provide the most comprehensive cutting-edge technology available to provide inclusive education.

Based in Antrim, N. Ireland and with offices in the US, Texthelp is currently experiencing a period of sustained year on year growth. The company has a reseller network covering over 20 countries.

Texthelp has been a Deloitte Technology Fast 50 Award winning company for fourteen years and won numerous product, innovation and marketing awards.