

Feature Summary

Reading Options

Visual tracking

Builds knowledge of the sequential ordering of letters in words. As well as being useful for people with dyslexia, these exercises can also assist people who constantly misread words, because they have not taken in the whole word.

Decoding

Where a student has difficulty interpreting or decoding a word, ReadOn can simply read the word out loud using the 'Word Assist' function. This is the default action for assistance with difficult words, however, ReadOn also allows you to set the Word Assist style to perform more advanced functions, to either perform a letter by letter sweep of the word, or to spell the word prior to reading the word out loud.

Comprehension

People with reading difficulties use up much of their mental energy struggling to decode text. As a result there is little energy left to comprehend what is read, which is, after all, why we read in the first place. Without comprehension, students are likely to be discouraged from reading as there is little satisfaction, but instead frustration. ReadOn's auditory feedback relieves the student of this constant decoding struggle, allowing comprehension to take place, and with it the motivation to continue reading.

Text highlighting

ReadOn uses letter, word, phrase and paragraph highlighting to remove any distraction from the surrounding text while reading. Students can easily focus on the current word, phrase or paragraph, rather than being distracted by all the other text on the page. When moving through the text, highlighting can be set to either the full word, phrase or paragraph, or can include a sweeping of the word where each letter is highlighted one at a time. ReadOn also offers a spell reading option, where each letter of a word is named and highlighted, before the whole word is read.

Reading text

ReadOn can read the current word, phrase or paragraph out loud. Text can be read out loud in a number of ways. With each word highlighted as it is read, with the entire phrase highlighted or with no highlight. When editing text, ReadOn can read selected text, read each letter as it is typed and/or read each word as it is typed.

Australian male and female voices

ReadOn allows you to select from a number of voices, including both male and female Australian voices for auditory feedback. If necessary, voice pitch, speed and volume can all be adjusted. Students can have ReadOn read their work to an audience. An invaluable tool for students who are not confident oral readers.

Can adjust reading speed

ReadOn will allow you to control the speed of the sweep or spell. You can also make ReadOn automatically increase the Sweep / Spell Speed as you move through the text.

Visual cues

People with reading difficulties are often visual thinkers. Despite hours of drilling high frequency words, many words remain difficult to decode and comprehend, due to the lack of visual meaning. ReadOn allows the user to record digital images for these words, and then have the option of accessing the images when the word appears in a text. Clay models, drawings or pictures created by the student can be used, ensuring the image has relevance to the user.

Word bank diagnostic function

Difficult words can be "auto-logged" in a Word Bank for individual students, so that special instruction in these words can be given. The contents of the word bank can be printed, or copied to another application, and used as a basis for multi-sensory exercises, flash cards or word charts. Students often get a thrill from checking the word bank after a reading session, to see if they can decode the words. This kind of use encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning.

Change pronunciation

Occasionally words are pronounced differently from the way they are spelt. This is particularly true for people and place names. ReadOn allows the user to enter a list of phonetic translations to deal with these discrepancies.

Use of age/subject specific text

ReadOn allows students to enter text from various sources and then assists the students in decoding and comprehension through auditory feedback.

Display

Font sizes, styles and colours

ReadOn allows the student to select from a wide choice of font types, sizes and colour schemes. Allowing the student to customise ReadOn to suit their personal preferences and learning style.

Can change page background colour

The colour of the page background can be changed. This can be beneficial to students with scotopic sensitivity and allows the student to select the most comfortable and accessible colour scheme for them.

Can preset user settings

Students can predefine up to three sets of user options, allowing you to define and subsequently restore previously stored option settings.

Writing Options

Talking / visual spell-checker

ReadOn's writing options include a talking spell checker that allows the student to listen to spelling suggestions prior to selecting a word. If an image has been recorded for that particular word then the image can also be accessed.

Proof reading / editing functions

Students can use ReadOn as a writing and editing tool. Listening back to compositions using the various voices included in ReadOn allows students to independently identify missing punctuation, word substitutions and clarity issues.

Report writing

ReadOn allows students to download information from the internet, and then listen to the text word, phrase or paragraph at a time. Keywords can also be recorded in the Word Bank, and then used as a reference for report writing. Students can type their report into ReadOn, and listen back to their work using the voices included with ReadOn. Once the student is happy with the report, it can be copied into a word processor and formatted appropriately. For students who have always been dependent upon support to complete research tasks, this independence can be very liberating and motivating.

Talking Spellchecker

Multiple dictionaries

ReadOn comes with an inbuilt spell checker. This spellchecker can use either a British English or US English dictionary.

Customisable

ReadOn allows you to add, ignore and remove words from the standard dictionaries.

Matching font

Suggested replacements are displayed in the same font style and size as the text being entered.

Can read suggestions out loud

The spellchecker is highly accessible as students can listen to spelling suggestions prior to selection.

Can attach images to words

Where an image and definition have been recorded for a word, these will be available via the spell checker.

Autocorrect

ReadOn can automatically replace one word with another. If appropriate, ReadOn will replace a frequently misspelled word with its correction without user intervention.

Phonetic/typographical suggestions

The suggested replacements for misspelled words can use either phonetic (sounds like) matching or typographical (looks-like) similarity.

Flexibility

Personalised settings

ReadOn's configurable, multi-user support makes it an ideal addition to the computer lab or classroom. ReadOn can be customised to suit each student's needs, and those settings saved for later use. Personalised settings and individual progress are recorded on an ongoing basis. This personalised multi-user support, allows teachers, parents and facilitators to control which supports are available to each student at any time.

Copy/paste text from the Internet, Word processors, e-mail, etc.

ReadOn allows parents, teachers and helpers to upload, enter and customise texts for students to read. Texts can be typed directly into ReadOn, or texts can be copied from other files, or from the internet. Once the text is loaded into ReadOn, instructors can customise the material to suit the needs of the individual student. Instructors can substitute words or phrases and add/remove text where appropriate. Once the text is customised, it can be saved for later use. Texts saved under one student's name, can also be easily accessed by other users. So in the classroom setting, teachers can quickly accumulate a variety of texts for a variety of students.

Load text using Optical Character Recognition (OCR)

Older students with reading difficulties are often frustrated at not being able to read age appropriate material. ReadOn's scanning facility allows students to scan texts of interest. With ReadOn's auditory support and customised visual cues, students can read and comprehend these texts independently. This is an invaluable option for reading and understanding subject specific text.

Compliments alternative learning approaches

ReadOn offers multi-sensory support and is well suited for the visual or kinesthetic thinker. Methods are complimentary to, but not reliant on, phonic approaches and therefore especially recommended for students with low phonemic awareness

Help

Context-sensitive help

Even user-friendly programs like ReadOn may take some getting used to. ReadOn's context sensitive help is never more than a click away. You can navigate the help table of contents, find topics in the index or use the search feature to locate the information you need.

Audio-visual tutorial

ReadOn comes with a comprehensive step by step audio-visual tutorial. The tutorial means that all users can learn to use the many features of ReadOn by simply watching and listening to the relevant tutorial topics. The tutorial is great for novice users with topics ranging from basic familiarity through to advanced features.

Reading exercise instructions

The Davis 'Three Steps to Easier Reading' exercises are included with ReadOn. These exercises include word and symbol mastery, spell reading, sweep-sweep-spell and picture at punctuation.