

eBooks and their use in supporting struggling readers

eBooks and their use with hand-held mobile devices engages the learner in ways beyond the traditional book. You have the potential of your own library you can take around with you wherever you go – in a car, on a bus, on a plane. Those long journeys where space is a premium is a real boom. In school having all the pupils books in one place is a definite plus so there is less chance of losing a book. Then there are some aids:-

- having a line of text masked at a time enables the reader to follow the relevant information. This is key as for some tracking seems to be an issue as does background colour. Handy books enable the reader to have the right background and font to make the text clearer to them

Open Dyslexic font may help your readers to anchor each letter to help those who struggle with moving letters and text. Especially as the eyes are still developing at age six! Those who prefer proper G's and Y's may prefer Sasson Primary or Comic Sans. What is important is that whatever the choice of text it must be one the pupil can read for themselves.

Ebooks can also have text to speech and therefore the possibility of hearing text read back to them. *ClaroSpeak (iOS app)* or *Voxdox (Android)* allow users to have text read back to them – often with highlights so the user can follow the words being spoken.

Many people confuse Speech recognition with text to speech. Dragon also employs that read back facility in the pupil's own voice as its their voice that is being recorded. Very powerful for getting students to edit their own work. And helpful for spellings. I believe that if a pupil hears and see the word THEY want to use they will be motivated to retain and remember it again. Of course, there are many dyslexics who struggle with the same word over and over again.

Finally, sources for ebooks are important and that is where it becomes more difficult. The classics such as treasure island are available but simpler texts maybe not so . Therefore , being able to develop your own ebooks using the .pdf format may be a way forward. Hence why you are reading this article which was created in word, saved as a .pdf and then uploaded to a website so that it can be downloaded into a mobile device. Perfect!