

Chat Notes from Beth Gatewood's Assistive Technology Webinar at DyslexicAdvantage.com



Beth Gatewood  
<http://assistededucationalolutions.com>

CHAT NOTES - Beth answered some questions in the webinar, but we thought we'd post additional helpful comments from the chat notes.

Sophia Yunakov (15:39:38) Thank you for the information. I teach 7th grade and would like to know what other apps will convert picture files to readable text. I would like to help my students become more independent with homework handouts.

Melanie Hayden (15:40:01) My daughter needs to read PDF files of scanned excerpts from books. How can we have the Mac read those? My research shows I need OCR technology. Is that the case or do the solutions you mentioned solve this?

\_\_\_ Melanie Hayden (15:45:23) What is the name of the Adobe service you use to upload PDFs to convert to OCR?

Fernette: If student receives a pdf file from a teacher digitally (via email or downloaded to a computer), then the pdf can be read with the latest version (free) of Adobe Acrobat Reader (version 6 or later).

But the common situation in classrooms is that there are handouts made on a xerox machine or a reading excerpt or handout was scanned in - so it's recognized as a picture rather than text. What has to happen is for the picture of the text to be converted into a format that computers can reading (OCR or optical character recognition).

One inexpensive OCR solutions is the new Prizmo app (\$10) that Beth demonstrated.

Re: the Adobe system, I think Beth was talking about Adobe Export PDF ([https://www.adobe.com/exportpdf/en/pricing-b.html?s\\_tnt=62389:1:0](https://www.adobe.com/exportpdf/en/pricing-b.html?s_tnt=62389:1:0)) at \$2 per month, but it may be that these other options are cheaper.



\_\_\_ Shelley Haven - TechPotential.net (15:50:59) Google can also do  
OCR:<https://support.google.com/drive/answer/176692?hl=en>

Fernette: Shelley Haven is another technology trainer - like Beth. Shelley taught assistive technology at Stanford. Thanks for your input, Shelley!

Here's more about the free OCR option through Google Drive. Here's an article how to convert a document using an Android phone or tablet computer using Google Drive:  
[http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans\\_online\\_genealogy/2013/05/the-easy-and-free-way-to-perform-ocr-conversions-of-documents.html](http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/2013/05/the-easy-and-free-way-to-perform-ocr-conversions-of-documents.html)

\_\_\_ Alexis Bourbeau (15:40:04) do you have an opinion on trying to teach dyslexic students to listen to certain materials at a faster rate, like Ben Foss suggests on Headstrong Nation?

Fernette: Some people can listen to audiobooks very fast - and many can train up to it even if they can't listen fast at the start. For some though, this does not work at all - especially those with auditory processing problems of people who have difficulty with sustained attention. If a person needs to make images in order to remember, fast listening may not work for them.

Some people may not have the attention for listening to audiobooks - while others may if they speed up the text. Still others may be able to listen for sustained periods of time if they listen while walking, jogging, or working out.

\_\_\_ marcelle bichotte-dunner (15:40:10) what is cowriter

Fernette: Co-writer is a software from Don Johnston that has word prediction that can help students write. It can be bundled with a Draft Building software that can make customized topic dictionaries that may help for students who write very little and struggle with elaboration.

\_\_\_ Mobile Guest (15:40:13) do you know about any low vision/blind devices that are also good for dyslexics such as ACE?

Fernette: Some of the programs for the blind aren't optimized for dyslexics - for instance, they may spend a long time describing the copyright information at the front of the book and ignore or not include pictures.

\_\_\_ Mobile Guest (15:41:35) what would you suggest with a dyslexic who struggles with auditory processing issues as well

Fernette: Children and adults with auditory processing challenges often had trouble with poorer quality computer voices. There are some great computer voices from Nuance (we like Paul and Kate), but for many the easiest to follow will be professionally read books like those from Audible. Volunteers read LearningAlly books - so the quality of reading can vary widely with their recordings.

\_\_\_ Mobile Guest (15:44:20) bookshare reading speed max is 260 wpm. is there something faster

Fernette: No - not at the moment.

\_\_\_ Alexis Bourbeau (15:44:43) Learning Ally is expanding their young reader literature selections too-- with synchronized text and human voice.

\_\_\_ Mobile Guest (15:45:04) we homeschool and our situation is same as yours. dyslexic child is in middle school. would you recommend iPad or what type of MAC computer to prep

\_\_\_ Carly Scholz (15:45:11) We use Voice Dream on the iPad with our BookShare books, super fast TTS

\_\_\_ Mobile Guest (15:45:20) for greater independence

\_\_\_ Mobile Guest (15:45:49) voice dream? thank you!

\_\_\_ Carly Scholz (15:46:01) WE use both iPad, phone and MacBook

\_\_\_ Carly Scholz (15:46:22) MacBook for dictation/writing

\_\_\_ Nicole Bingay (15:46:28) What about about an android tablet. Is it as good as iOS for this kind of learning?

\_\_\_ Amy (15:47:11) We use the andriod platform very easily

\_\_\_ Lori Tomatz (15:46:54) this will all work great with the new iPad air!

\_\_\_ Carly Scholz (15:47:23) nice plug, Lori! \_\_\_

\_\_\_ Lori Tomatz (15:47:31) just saying.... \_\_\_

\_\_\_ Lori Tomatz (15:48:17) Google Docs....resave as RTF document is one way to do it for free.

\_\_\_ Lori Tomatz (15:48:21) a little time consuming, but works.

\_\_\_ Mobile Guest (15:48:24) wondering if you bought all those Kindle books for your son or had another source ...

\_\_\_ The Dyslexic 4 (15:48:48) is voice dream reader the same as test to speech for ipad?

\_\_\_ Mobile Guest (15:49:00) a source for books other than the public library ...

\_\_\_ sara (15:49:25) learning ally

\_\_\_ Lori Tomatz (15:50:32) I think Learning Ally stopped their financial support...at least that is what they told me when I called them.

\_\_\_ Lori Tomatz (15:49:39) Bookshare is a great service!!!!

\_\_\_ Dita (15:51:20) Gutenberg.org and [librivox.org](http://librivox.org) have people read public domain books to you. We use that for reading the classics in our homeschool

Fernette: Also Open Culture's list of free ebooks

[http://www.openculture.com/free\\_ebooks](http://www.openculture.com/free_ebooks)

\_\_\_ The Dyslexic 4 (15:50:14) can chrome speak it read google docs?

Fernette: Yes. <http://www.webappreviews.org/2013/03/read-and-write-for-google-docs.html>

\_\_\_ marcelle bichotte-dunner (15:50:51) is it costly for the bookscan

Fernette: It's not so bad. It would be very tedious taking a snapshot of every page of a 300 page Biology book for instance for Prizmo or other

OCR. With Bookscan, it may cost about \$7 - you mail the book - and 2-3 days it's loaded in your dropbox.

Great for HS and College texts. Problem with other ebook formats is that sometimes it's text without pictures, the page numbering may be very different - so hard to match up with the classroom if a fiction book. For instance if the teacher assigns page 46-65. It could be completely different in an ebook.

\_\_\_ Nicole Bingay (15:51:59) How did you get the bookshare books on kindle?

From Shelley Haven (Techpotential.net)

\_\_\_ Shelley Haven (15:55:06) Bookshare to Kindle: lift text from Bookshare file, mail to Kindle email address with subject "convert"  
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/sendtokindle/email>

In short, grab the Bookshare text, print it as a PDF, then email it to your Kindle account with the subject line "convert". Here's a link (especially see the last part):

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/sendtokindle/email>

Here's the long explanation:

1. Locate the .XML file of the book in the Bookshare folder
2. Duplicate this file (you don't want to mess up the .XML file -- your DAISY readers still need it)
3. Change the ".XML" extension in the duplicate's file name to ".HTML"
4. Email that .HTML file as an attachment to your Send-to-Kindle email address (every Kindle account has one -- different addresses for different devices). See the directions on this webpage for more:
  - <http://www.amazon.com/gp/sendtokindle/email>
5. If you first save or print that .HTML file as a PDF document and email the PDF with subject line "convert" (and nothing more), Amazon will convert it to Kindle format (.AZW) so that you can adjust font size, highlight, add notes, etc. like other Kindle books.
  - Uploaded and converted documents such as these will be found under the "Docs" tab, not "Books".

However, annotations for such converted documents will not show up under the "Your Highlights" tab at [kindle.amazon.com](http://kindle.amazon.com) (this is where highlights of purchased books are aggregated).

\_\_\_ The Dyslexic 4 (15:52:20) my computer timed out, not sure if you answered my question...can chrome speak it read aloud google docs

\_\_\_ Mobile Guest (15:52:21) are book share and learning ally different?

\_\_\_ Fernette and Brock Eide (18:25:28) Bookshare can help you get them on

\_\_\_ Shelley (15:53:01) Yes - Google OCR is free

\_\_\_ Jeannie Sims (15:53:22) I have heard some electronic versions of books referred to as "text dumps." What does that mean and how to avoid it?

Fernette: I think Beth answered this a bit, but the issue is that e.g. Bookshare gives you all the text - but maybe no pictures - all the page numbering is different too - and there may not be the normal breaks you would see in a book. Some people find this much harder to read.

In a Science book, for instance, I would like to see the figures, figure legends, Bold section headings, questions on the side etc. To have it all dumped into a single file without formatting and without pictures - it is hard to study. Some people may use Bookshare for the audio - and have a real print book to follow along though.

\_\_\_ Alexis Bourbeau (15:53:31) what do you use for books that have a lot of images, or science or math books?

Fernette: I personally think Bookscan is a great option. You can also ask Learning Ally to have a person record it if it isn't recorded.

\_\_\_ Mobile Guest (15:53:31) what if handouts are only available as paper copies?

Fernette: See first question above. Paper copies need to be translated into OCR.

\_\_\_ Lori Tomatz (15:53:48) Thanks for this....more webinars. They are fantastic and informative!

Also from Shelley Haven ([Techpotential.net](http://Techpotential.net)) - Playing Bookshare books in iBooks (Mac)

I'm getting more and more impressed with the capabilities of iBooks (both for the iPad, and as of yesterday for the Mac, too). If you copy the Bookshare text into Apple Pages, you can convert it to an ePub document (readable by iBooks) by simply selecting File > Export > ePub; drop the ePub doc into iTunes for the next time you sync your iPad.