# I.C.T. and Literacy.

Victoria Crivelli.

This presentation focused upon the support that I.C.T. can provide for supporting literacy and particularly:

- Access to the curriculum,

- Provision of alternative forms of written communication,

- An opportunity to improve and practise skills.

Specific useful tools to support reading text, writing or recording information may include:

- Text- to- speech tools,

- Talking word processors,

- On screen talking word banks,

- Talking spellcheckers,

- Predictive text ,

- Planning and mind mapping software,

- Portable tools.
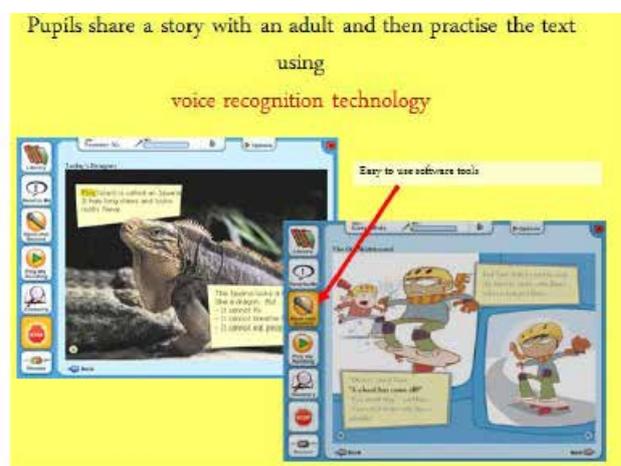
**Pupils share a story
and use voice recognition software.**

Specific programs were also shown to demonstrate how appropriate I.C.T. can support interventions to improve reading, phonics and spelling skills. Such software can often be personalised to suit individual needs in both content and personal options and may also log progress and achievement.

The positive contribution that well designed and well implemented practice can make to students was highlighted through case studies. Particular examples included students displaying increased:

- Confidence,

- Independence,

- Motivation,

- Ability to show what is known as opposed to that which they can spell,

- Levels of skills in reading , spelling and phonics.

Although examples of commercial software were demonstrated, particular weight was placed upon the importance of initially making the best use of low tech resources such as virtual reading rulers (like coloured overlays) and adapting and accessing those resources which already exist within the classroom.


The virtual reading ruler simulates an onscreen coloured overlay that can be used on any application
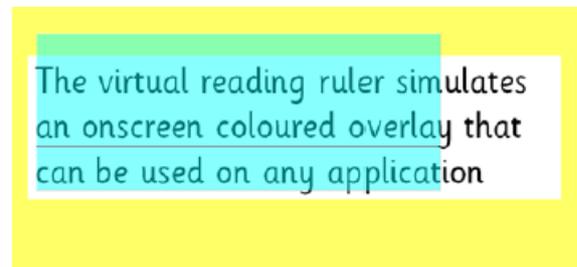
The virtual reading ruler.

Examples of these included:

- Locating software that may have been bought but never used, such as a talking word processor,

- Using interactive whiteboard tools to reduce visual stress,

- Making use of older, and often undervalued, technology such as the Language Master (an audio visual resource that enables card to talk!),

- Adaptations that can be made to existing software such as increased magnification, changing coloured background etc.

The improvements in current commercial software were emphasized. Particularly, the versatility and increasing means of provision with accessibility which is now available in online applications or portable tools supplied on memory sticks. Today's generation of students are no longer restricted by software which can only be accessed whilst at school. They can access what they need, when they need it, virtually anywhere.
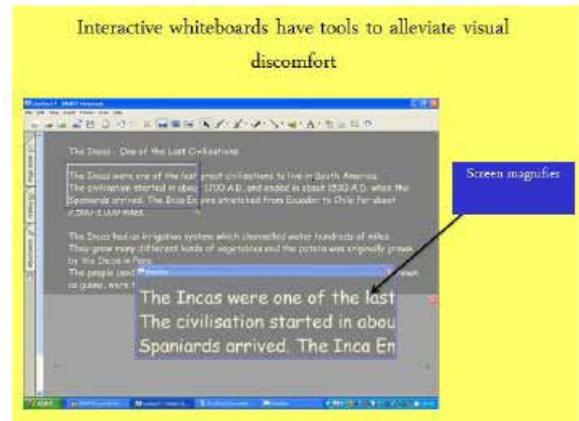
Interactive whiteboards have tools to alleviate visual discomfort.

The presentation concluded with the essential message that although technology can provide a range of useful tools and assistance, very little can be achieved without good quality training to use them, together with adequate provision of time for practice and the availability of good technical support.