

“Penfriend is great. It just sits there next to whatever you’re reading or writing, and it helps you with words you can’t read, or words you can’t spell.”

SEN Software Review

Penfriend XL version 3.0

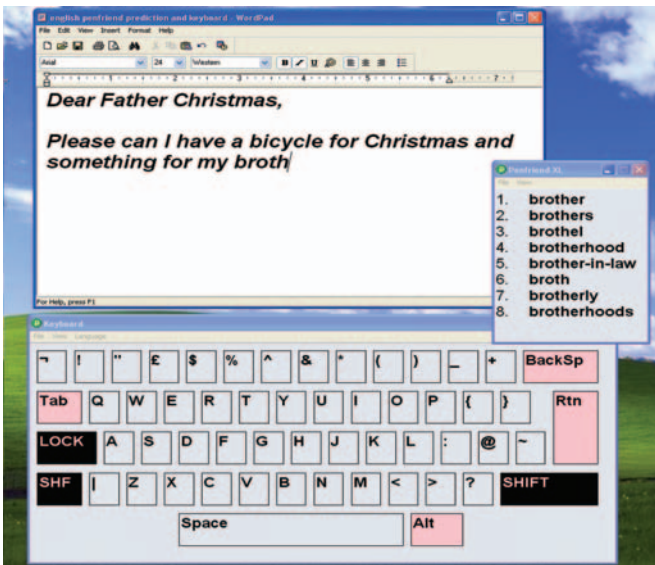
Word prediction

I had never used Word prediction software before, let alone in a class situation, so I had no idea what a huge difference Penfriend would make. Not just to the children, but to me as well. After the initial getting-used-to-it period (which was amazingly quick – the controls are simple and easy to use), the first thing I noticed was that nearly all those “how do you spell?” questions had dried up, and that the children were using the new software as a creative aid, not just to help them with spelling.

Penfriend helps people with dyslexia at all levels with next-word prediction from the first letter typed. The system actually ‘learns’ as you write, and suggests words as soon as you begin typing. It can select words from lexicons which vary from simple (2,000 words) to advanced (30,000 words). It even takes care of the grammar. We did not create our own lexicons, but Penfriend lets you do this easily. You can also “ban” words from the dictionary – you might want to ban unsuitable words or, more importantly, ban words which the student should be able to spell without help. Penfriend XL also works in other languages: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch and Swedish.

On-screen Keyboard

On-screen keyboards are essential for many children, and the Penfriend on-screen keyboards are the most versatile



and user-friendly I have come across. It allows you to have several keyboards visible at once – useful if you are working in more than one language, or if you are working with a symbol font.



Screen Reader

The speech part of Penfriend can read letters, words, sentences and whatever is on the clipboard. You can choose a voice which suits you, by downloading from the Penfriend website, and you can adjust the reading speed, the pitch, volume and pauses. Text magnification is done in a separate window, and the system automatically speaks what you point at with the mouse. Penfriend XL can speak text in different European languages. **S**

Penfriend Facts

If you’re not a fan of Microsoft, you will be pleased to learn that all the elements of Penfriend (on-screen keyboards, Screen Reader and Text Predictor) work with Open Office, Firefox and other non-Microsoft applications, as well as Microsoft Word, Explorer and so on.

If you use Clicker 4 or Clicker 5 (integration of Clicker 5 and Penfriend due early 2006), Penfriend can enhance your grids with prediction and providing switch access. Penfriend also integrates with Switch Access for Windows (SAW) from the ACE Centre providing another method of switch access

Penfriend XL and XP are compatible with Windows NT, 2000 and XP.

A free demonstration copy is available to download from www.penfriend.biz.

Penfriend XP and Penfriend W3 also available for people who do not require the additional features of Penfriend XL.

Penfriend W3 is suitable for Windows 3.1 and 95, while Penfriend XP is offered for Windows 98, Me, NT, 2000 and XP.