

Co:Writer

Exploring Co:Writer

Assistive Technology Training Online
University at Buffalo - The State University of New York
USDE# H324M980014
<http://at-training.com>

Activity

Using the tutorial you will learn how to launch Co:Writer and use it in **Talk Mode** to explore its unique word prediction features. You will learn how to customize Writer files for individual students and change appearance, speech and prediction options.

*Note: If you are using a Macintosh, substitute the ⌘/Command key for the Ctrl/Control key in the keyboard shortcuts.

Instructions

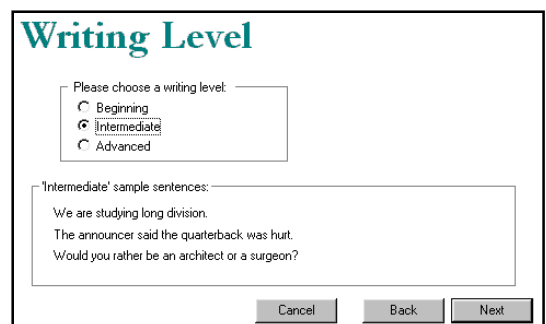
1. Launch Co:Writer

- Locate the Co:Writer 4000 folder on your hard drive and open it. Double click the **Getting Started** icon or Double-click the Co:Writer application icon.
- The first time you launch Co:Writer, it will walk you through setting up a writer file and getting connected to your word processing program. From then on, Co:Writer keeps track of the last active Writer file used, and reopens that file upon launch. You can select a new Writer file or open a different Writer file at any time by clicking on the **File Menu** and selecting **New Writer [Control + N]** or **Open Writer [Control + O]**.



- Select **Next** to continue.
- Co:Writer presents the **Who's Writing** screen. You need to name your Writer file. Type in your name or the name of the student you are setting this Writer file up for.
- Select **Next** to continue.

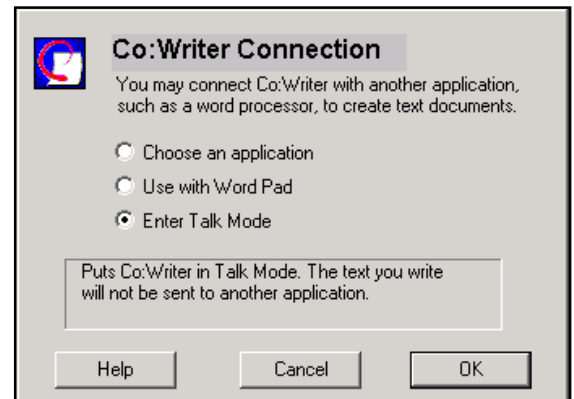
- Co:Writer presents **The Writing Level** next. Co:Writer presents three different writing levels, associated with three Main Dictionaries [Dictionaries menu>Select Main Dictionary]. The choices you make in the Writing Level screen affect the default settings that Co:Writer assigns to this writer file. Look at the sample sentences for each writing level to help decide which level is most appropriate for your students.



- Select **Intermediate**.
- Select **Next** to continue.

2. Connect Co:Writer to Another Program

- Now that your writer file is created, you will be prompted to select a word processor or other text program to use with Co:Writer in the Co:Writer Connection dialog.



- **Choose an Application** — Select this option to choose the word processing or text program to use with Co:Writer.
 - **Use with Simple Text** (Macintosh) or **Word Pad** (Windows)— Select this option to launch and use your system' s text program with Co:Writer.
 - **Enter Talk Mode** — Select this option to use Co:Writer for communication, without sending sentences to a text program.
 - **Cancel** — Select this option to launch Co:Writer in “ normal” mode, but without connecting it to any application.
- Choose the third option, **Enter Talk Mode**

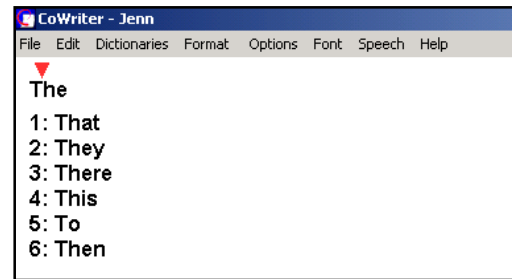
Note: When selecting the choice **Choose an Application**, Co:Writer automatically lists your “ Recent Applications.” If the application you want to use is not listed, use the directory dialog to navigate to it. The application will launch.

- You are now ready to start using Co:Writer in **Talk Mode**. When you use Co:Writer with a word processing document, you will have two windows open, the Co:Writer window and your word processor window. **Talk Mode** is used for communication

purposes, however, it is also a convenient way to explore the features of Co:Writer without having to toggle back and forth between two windows.

3. Using Co:Writer

- You write sentences one at a time in Co:Writer. As you begin to type a word, Co:Writer offers guesses as to what the word is, based on the letters you typed and other factors.
- If the word you want is in the list of guesses, you select the word and continue to the next word. If the word you want is not on the list, continue typing until it is, or until you finish the word. If you are using Co:Writer with another application, Co:Writer will “ send” your sentence to the word processing program when you finish typing it.
- Co:Writer offers two prediction choices in the **Format Menu**.
 - **Predict Ahead** means that once you have entered the first word in a sentence, Co:Writer will give word choices before (ahead of) your next keystroke.
 - **Predict In Line** means that Co:Writer has calculated the word to be the most likely choice in your sentence and places it there. Some writers may prefer this mode because only a spacebar or punctuation is needed to accept the in-line guess. This can have a very natural feel when writing.
- Go to the **Format Menu** and turn **OFF** Predict Ahead and Predict In Line by making sure they do not have a \surd next to them.
- Type the sentence **My name is _____**. Type the first letter of the first word, **m** . There is no need to capitalize it — Co:Writer automatically capitalizes the first word in each new sentence.



- Co:Writer brings up a list of guesses that match the letter you typed. The word we wanted, **My**, is the first choice listed. Click on the word to accept it. Co:Writer speaks the word and moves it to the in-line sentence.
- Type the letters in the word **name** one at a time, until **name** is on the list of guesses. When **name** is on the list, click to accept it. Again, Co:Writer speaks the word and moves it to the in-line sentence.
- This time, the word we want, **is**, appears in the guesses. Click to accept **is**. Co:Writer speaks the word and moves it to the in-line sentence.
- The next word we want, **your** name, will not appear in the next set of guesses that are “ predicted ahead.” Type your name.
- Type a period, “ . “ , to accept the completed word.

Note: Most personal and proper names are not likely to be included in Co:Writer’s main dictionaries. But Co:Writer will “ collect ” the names you use and save them so you can add them later.

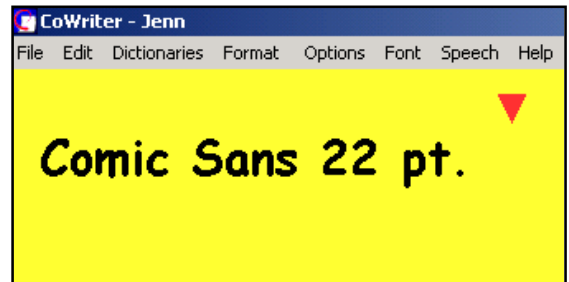
4. Changing Co:Writer’s Appearance & Speech Options

- You can change the way Co:Writer predicts words by changing the way the words are displayed, as well as the number of guesses predicted.
- **Change Font, Font Size and Colors:** You can change the way the Co:Writer window looks by choosing a different font, font size, text color, background color or cursor color.
- Change **Font** and **Font Size** by selecting **Other** from the **Font menu**.
- Change **Font Color**, **Background Color** and **Cursor Color** by selecting **Set Colors** from the **Format menu**.

- The **Set Colors** dialog displays the current color settings. Click **More Colors** to see all the color options.

- **Do It!**

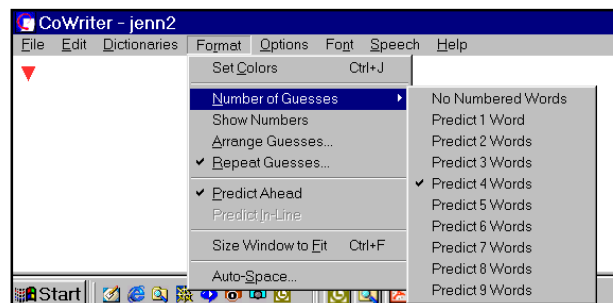
- Open the **Font** menu.
- Select **Other Font** from the menu.
- Select **Comic Sans 22pt.**
- Open the **Format** menu.
- Choose **Set Colors [Ctrl + J]**.
- Change your **Background Color** to yellow.
- Change your **Text Color** to black.
- Change your **Cursor Color** to red.
- Click **OK**.



- **Try It!**

- Change the **font** to 10pt., the **background color** to yellow and the **font color** to green. Type the sentence, “ This is smaller.”
- Change the **font** to 24pt., the **background color** to gray and the **font color** to green. Type the sentence “ This is lots bigger.”
- How might you use this feature for a student with visual impairments?

- **Change the Number of Guesses:** You can display from zero to nine guesses under the Co:Writer in-line sentence, depending on your preference and



ability. With a higher the number of guesses, the likelihood that Co:Writer will guess your word is greater, but it also increases the difficulty level for reading and selecting guesses.

- From the **Format** menu select **Number of Guesses**. The number of choices in the Co:Writer window changes to reflect your choice.

Note:The size of the window will automatically adjust to accommodate the new setting.

- Change the **arrangement of guesses**: You can arrange your guesses vertically or horizontally and they can either remain fixed or be dynamic (move with the cursor).

- Select **Arrangement of Guesses** from the **Format** menu.

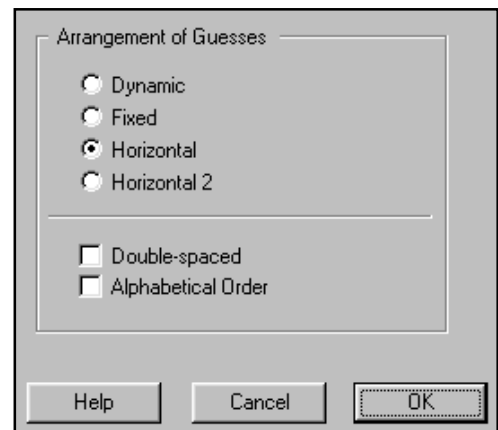
- Click **OK**.

- **Do It!**

- Change the **number of guesses** to 4.
- Change **arrangement of guesses** to dynamic.
- Type the sentence “ This is cool.”

- **Try It!**

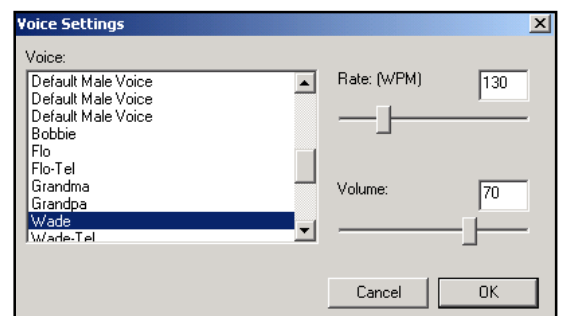
- Change the **number of guesses** to 8.
- Choose **horizontal**.



- Click **OK**.
- Type the sentence “ I like assistive technology.”
- Change **Speech Settings**: You can change the voice, volume and rate of speech settings by selecting **Voice Settings** from the **Speech menu**.

- **Do it!**

- Change your voice setting to **Wade** by highlighting his name.
- Adjust the rate of speech by sliding the bar to the left, change the rate to **130 WPM**.



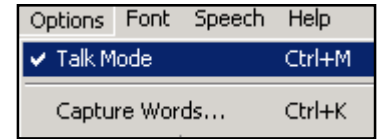
- Adjust the volume to **70** by sliding the volume bar to the right.
- Click **OK** when you are done.

- **Try It!**

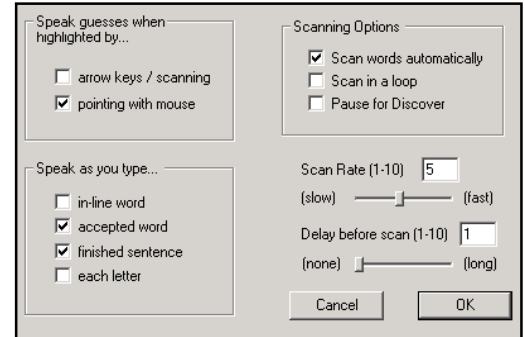
- Change your voice setting to **Kathy**.
- Make the rate of speech **faster**.
- Adjust the volume **louder**.
- Which settings do you like the best?
- **Change the Speech and Scanning Options**: You can change the speech and scanning options for Co:Writer by displaying the **Speech and Scanning Options** dialog box from the **Speech menu**.

- **Do it!**

- This feature is not available in **Talk Mode**. To explore this feature, pull down the **Options** menu and deselect **Talk Mode**.



- Open the **Speech and Scanning Options** dialog box from the **Speech** menu.
- Select **Speak Guesses When Pointing With Mouse**.
- Select **Speak As You Type Accepted Word**.
- Click **OK**.



- **Try It!**

- Select Arrow Keys/Scanning, Scan Words Automatically.
- Turn **Talk Mode** back on.

- **Turn Speech Off** by selecting this option from the **Speech** menu. The **Turn Speech Off** option is useful when you are using Co:Writer with a talking word processing program and do not want to hear any speech feedback until the word or sentence is “ sent” to your talking word processing program.

Note: When you are finished with this tutorial go to the **Format Menu** and turn **Predict Ahead ON**.