

# Tools for Struggling Writers

## Struggling students - low tech options

**One Hand Touch Typing**- Video on one hand typing - 85 words an hour.

**Keyboard Shortcuts** - The fewer times we reach for the mouse the more efficient we are! Laminate this handout and make available to students.

**Writing Fun** - Provides tools for students who need external structure and prompts to assist organize thoughts and approach to writing. Look at the categories on the right side of the page: Narrative, Discussion, Poetry, Procedure, Informative, Recount, Explanation, Persuasion and Description.

When you click on a category, you are taken to a new Text Organizer screen which breaks down the writing tasks into parts. At the bottom of the screen are examples; on the right side, links will connect to color coded text that connect to the examples.

**Let Me Type** - Free downloadable word prediction program - runs in background no matter what application you are using.

**Wacky Web Tales**- web based tool - students provide parts of speech and it creates a tale.

**Read, Write, Think**- Reiterating offers a collection of online Student Materials to support literacy learning in the K-12 classroom. These interactive tools can be used to supplement a variety of lessons and provide an opportunity for students to use technology while developing their literacy skills. Click on the name of each interactive for a brief description of the tool and a list of the ReadWriteThink lessons that use the tool. From there you'll also be able to directly access the tool and use it in your classroom.

**Ghotit**- Online context spell checker service, great for students with LD! Tell them to add it to their home computers.

**Scholastic Story Starters** - Story starters for grades k - grade 6

**Word Talk**- WordTalk is a free plug-in developed for use with all versions of Microsoft Word (from Word 97 upwards). which

can help people with reading difficulties use Microsoft Word more effectively. It will speak the text of the document and will highlight it as it goes. It contains a talking dictionary to help decide which word spelling is most appropriate. It sits neatly in your toolbar and is highly configurable, allowing you to adjust the highlight colors, the voice and the speed of the speech.

## **Word Magnets**

### Glogster

**Glogster** lets users create an online interactive poster, which can be shared or uploaded to wikis and other sites. By uploading photos, images, and even videos, Glogster transforms a static online Web page into a visually exciting and interactive online presentation.

Like most other popular 2.0 software sought after by educators, Glogster now provides an educational version of their [program](#). Within this site are tutorials, lesson plans, and examples of how educators are using Glogster in the classroom and library.

As a unique visual literacy tool that's all about creativity and ease of use, Glogster is a must-have tool for school librarians.

[sample of a 7th grade students glogster - historical timeline](#)



## xtranormal

xtranormal- a 'Text-to-Movie' application. Their tag line says, "If you can type, you can make movies." You also need to be able to choose from a range of available characters, facial expressions, animations, settings, sound effects, etc. The possibilities are unlimited.

There is a helpful set of Quick Tips to guide the novice movie maker through the process. The quality of the text-to-speech is remarkably good, as is the range of available creative options. Movies can be shared and easily embedded elsewhere on the net. You even have the option of re-mixing movies that have been made by other film makers. Xtranormal's mission is to bring movie-making to the people.

I hope there will always be a free version of this application. There are indications that once the product is out of beta, there will be a paid premium service available.

<http://www.xtranormal.com/>

# Lined Paper Tools

**Start with the basics. Customize paper to support hand writing. Great for students learning to use pencil grips**

[Free Online Graph Paper](http://incompetech.com/graphpaper/) - <http://incompetech.com/graphpaper/> - free online PDFs of various graph papers. includes an online generator so you can create customized graph paper and print it out .

[Enchanted Learning Writing Activities](http://www.enchantedlearning.com/languagearts/index.shtml) - <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/languagearts/index.shtml>

[Handwriting for Kids](http://www.handwritingforkids.com/handwrite/manuscript/alphabets/index.htm)- <http://www.handwritingforkids.com/handwrite/manuscript/alphabets/index.htm> online collection of printable handwriting guides in a variety of sizes.

# Graphic Organizers/Outline Tools

[Printable Graphic Organizers](#) - This collection of ready-to-use graphic organizers will help children classify ideas and communicate more effectively. All of the free, printable graphic organizers are designed to facilitate understanding of key concepts by allowing students to drill down to the basic points and ideas. By using graphic organizers across all subject areas, you will be empowering your students to master subject-matter faster and more efficiently. There are graphic organizers for reading, science, writing, math, and for general use.

[Bubbl.us](#) -

Bubbl.us is a simple and free web application that lets you brainstorm online. Free online mapping software. very basic, simple

Why use bubbl.us?

Because you can:

- Create colorful mind maps online
- Share and work with friends
- Embed your mind map in your blog or website
- Email and print your mind map
- Save your mind map as an image

[Mindomo](http://www.mindomo.com/) - <http://www.mindomo.com/> - free online mind mapping software. supports additional graphics and shapes

[Graphic Organizers](http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/graphic_organizers.htm)- 58 graphic organizers in PDF format.  
[http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/graphic\\_organizers.htm](http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/graphic_organizers.htm)

-  
[Webspiration](#)

## Loose Stitch

[Loose Stitch](#) is a user-friendly outlining tool that can be used in many ways to support learning. An individual can use it to record and organize researched information. Or, it can be used to help keep track of scheduled events or assigned tasks on a project. As well, Loose Stitch offers convenient ways of sharing recorded information. It has been designed to be used collaboratively by a group of people working together on the same project.

[Back Talk Writing](#) - Select a funny animal picture and encourage your students to do some writing.

[Comic Creator](#) - Comic Creator fosters creativity and higher level thinking skills as students plan panels and captions.

[Doodle Splash](#) - Students draw a representation of a text, summarize the text, explain the doodle and then explain the significance of the doodle to the text.

## [Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#)

OWL offers over 200 free resources including:

- Writing and Teaching Writing
- Research
- Grammar and Mechanics
- Style Guides
- ESL (English as a Second Language)
- Job Search and Professional Writing

[Guide to Grammar and Writing](#) - site for rules of grammar and writing

## [Writing Fun](#)

[Speechable](#) - **Speechable™ is a free photo service** that lets you easily upload and add speech bubbles to your photos and share them with friends via email or on [Facebook®](#), [MySpace®](#), [Orkut](#), blogs, and message boards.

# Bibliography Tools

## [BibMe](#)

The fully automatic bibliography maker that auto-fills. It's the easiest way to build a works cited page. **And it's free.**

Search for a <b>book, article, website, or film</b> , or enter the information yourself.
Add it to your bibliography.
Download your bibliography in either the <b>MLA, APA, Chicago, or Turabian</b> formats and include it in your paper. It's that easy!

[Easy Bib](#) - Free online bibliography tool. [Introductory tutorial](#)

