

Alternate Format Materials

Factors to Consider in Selecting Appropriate Formats





- Alternate Format Materials come in a variety of file types or formats.
- The Department of Education currently provides the following formats:
 - Online Digital audio (MP3)
 - Offline Digital Audio (MP3) files on CD
 - On-line Electronic text files (PDF, Kurzweil or WORD)
 - Offline Electronic Text Files (PDF, Kurzweil or WORD) on CD
 - DAISY files



- The Department of Education will provide one format per resource requested for each approved student. In other words, a student will not be provided multiple formats of the same resource.
- If for some reason a different format from what was originally requested is required, the school should contact Tina Loveless at the Alternate Format Materials NL Library (AFM-NL).

Which Format is Appropriate?

 Selection of Alternate Format file type depends upon:

The needs of the individual

The availability of technology

Which Format is Appropriate? (cont.)

- It also requires a knowledge of the differences between the formats available
 - Online vs Offline?
 - Digital Audio vs Electronic text?
 - DAISY?





Online or Offline?



Online Resources

- Are accessed through the Department of Education website
- Require a computer with internet access
- Approved students are provided a unique username and password
- Requested files can be accessed directly from website or downloaded and stored on CD, computer or memory stick
- Downloaded files must be saved in a secure location that is not accessible to general public or unauthorized users.
- It is illegal to share these files. They are meant only for approved user.
- Files must be deleted/destroyed at end of school year

Offline Resources

- CDs which are loaned to the school
- Can be played on computers with CD Rom devices (without accessing the internet) or other devices which accept CDs
- It is illegal to share these files. They are meant only for approved user.
- School must return all CDs to Department of Education at end of school year

Online or Offline Resources?

- Generally online resources would be recommended, if available.
 - School has the option of downloading and storing online files on CD if the student prefers this for use at home.
- If online resource is available, offline resource will only be provided to school's with limited internet access.
- It is school's responsibility to ensure that all users understand copyright restrictions.



Digital Audio (MP3)?

Electronic text?

Daisy?





Digital Audio (MP3) Files



- Digital Audio or MP3 files are "audio books" that can be played on any MP3 enabled device.
- Audio books are recordings of books which use either a natural (human) or a computer generated voice.
- The text is automatically read to the student but the actual words are not visible on the screen.

Digital Audio (MP3) Files (2)

- Files can be played directly on the computer or downloaded to an iPod, mp3 player, or other MP3enabled devices. This requires Windows Media Player or iTunes.
- Downloaded files must be saved in a secure location that is not accessible to general public or unauthorized users.
- Files must be deleted at end of lending period

Digital Audio (MP3) Files (3)

- The Department of Education currently provides:
 - Online digital audio (MP3) files
 - Offline digital audio (MP3) files on CD of commercially available resources
 - Online DAISY MP3 files

Electronic text Files

- Digital text, or electronic text is text that has been scanned and is displayed on a computer screen.
- Electronic text files comes in several different formats.
- The Department of Education currently provides electronic text files in PDF, Kurzweil or Word format.
- These files can be opened on the computer or downloaded and stored on CD, computer or memory stick.
- Downloaded files must be saved in a secure location that is not accessible to general public or unauthorized users.
- Files must be deleted at end of lending period

Electronic text Files (2)

- Students with reading difficulties can use these files with text-to-voice software such as Word Q, Read and Write Gold or Kurzweil.
- This software allows the text to be highlighted on the computer screen while it is read aloud by a computer-generated voice.
- Many of these software programs also contain other features which may be beneficial to students with reading difficulties.

Electronic text Files (3)

- Students with physical disabilities, who may be unable to hold a book or turn its pages, can use assistive technology to manipulate an e-text file on a computer screen.
- This technology permits the student to independently read the book.

PDF Files

- pdf or portable document format
- Can be read using text-to-voice software
- Allow the student to follow the text onscreen as it is being read by a computer-generated voice
- Many other features may be available depending on the software used to read the files
- The full book, including pictures, diagrams and tables, is displayed and read aloud.
- Some diagrams and tables may not read well if the PDF text has not been edited.

Word Files

- .doc (document file), .rtf (rich text format) or .txt (text file)
- Can be read using Windows Vista, Windows 7
 & Macbook software or other text-to-voice software
- Allow the student to follow the text onscreen as it is being read by a computer-generated voice
- Many other features may be available depending on the software used to read the files

Word Files (2)

- Some word files (.doc or .rtf) consist of full book, including pictures, diagrams and tables.
- Some contain just text without pictures, diagrams and tables (.txt).
- Some diagrams and tables may not read well if the Word text has not been edited.
- Allow for easier editing than PDF files

Kurzweil Files

- Are PDF or Word files that have been converted into kurzweil (.kes) format
- Require Kurzweil software
- The text is highlighted on the computer screen while it is read aloud by a computer-generated voice
- Many other features are also available
- Diagrams and tables may not read well unless they have been edited
- Younger students may have some difficulty using Kurzweil software. It is more suited to High School students

Electronic Text Files - Considerations

- In order for these files to read aloud, student must have access to text-to-voice software.
- All schools now have automatic access to Word Q Speak Q. Your school principal can provide information regarding how to access this.
- Free one month trials of some text-to-voice software are also available online.
 - Kurzweil (www.kurzweiledu.com)
 Read and Write Gold (www.texthelp.com/page.asp)
- All these programs contain high-quality computer generated voices
- The one month trials provide an opportunity for schools to try this software with students and assess the benefit.

DAISY Files

- DAISY stands for The Digital Accessible Information System
- Can be played on a stand alone DAISY player or on computers using DAISY playback software.
- This software can be downloaded for free at http://www.daisy.org/amis/download

DAISY Files (2)

- There are different types of DAISY files.
 - Some allow the text to be highlighted on the computer screen while it is read aloud by a human voice.
 - Others are audio files with advanced navigational aids

DAISY Files (3)

- Can be downloaded and stored on computer, CD, or memory stick
- Downloaded files must be saved in a secure location that is not accessible to general public or unauthorized users
- Files must be deleted at end of lending period

Assistive Technology

- If assistive technology such as Kurzweil or Read and Write Gold software is deemed appropriate, the student's Program Planning Team may be able to access this software from the Department of Education.
- To do this, an assistive technology application must be completed and submitted to Student Support Services, District Office.



- Consider
 - Needs of student
 - Formats available & how format specifications match student's needs
 - Technology required and availability of that technology

