

## **Tips for using Educational Software To Help Students with Learning Difficulties**

- ❖ Make sessions short (about 15 minutes) and often 4-5 times per week at least.
- ❖ Don't have too many programs being worked on at the same time.
- ❖ To get the most out of a program, only learn about and introduce one new program at a time, and explore it thoroughly. Many people miss useful features by not exploring. For example open and view the CD-ROM's content – there may be some helpful text files, word lists, etc., that you can use.)
- ❖ Set up a regular time & system for students to use the software. Try to correlate this with their best learning time. (e.g. 'Are they a morning person or a night person?')
- ❖ Put your own reward system in place to reinforce any system the program uses (e.g. 'So many points equals a football card or whatever enticement works at your house.')
- ❖ Try to link the program to school work if possible.
- ❖ If using a spelling program, such as 'Word Wizard', try reinforcing the work by having students write the words, or type in a talking word processor when they have finished using the program.
- ❖ If using programs like 'Reading Works' or 'Angus McIntyre' have students read the passage off screen to reinforce what they have learnt while on the computer.
- ❖ Some programs like 'Dingo Bingo' often work better with a short burst of concerted effort and a competition between a number of students (e.g. 3 weeks x 15 minutes per day) to see who can get the furthest. Who can get the fastest time, etc?
- ❖ In classrooms, a rolling roster can work well with each student tapping the next on the list to have their turn at programs like 'Word Wizard', 'Dingo Bingo', etc.
- ❖ The first typing game in 'Word Wizard' is great for improving keyboard skills. How fast can you type the alphabet? How many fingers on each hand can you type with?
- ❖ Ask yourself which programs work best with students unsupervised, and which are better with some help. 'Reading Works', 'Phonics First' and 'Reading Freedom' all work much more effectively with some supervision and are great resources for untrained people, such as school assistants and parents, to help students in the classroom or at home.

Most of the Macroworks software programs work brilliantly on interactive whiteboards. This can be a way of taking what was formerly an individual program and using it as a whole class teaching-tool.



**Macroworks**<sup>®</sup>  
Premier Education Software  
[www.macroworks.com.au](http://www.macroworks.com.au)