

textThing Plus

A unique package that creates interactive text-based activities in minutes - using any text!



textThing builds activities for word, sentence and text level work quickly and with no fuss. It takes just three clicks to start any one of the nine activities, whether you choose one of the texts provided, your own Notepad, Word or web documents. The suite of activities covers re-building text letter-by-letter and word-by-word, grammatical awareness, spelling, sentence construction, Cloze procedure and punctuation. You can even generate unlimited word searches and crossword puzzles based on the selected text!

More than 100 starter texts are provided, including poems, tales, recipes, articles, descriptions, letters, points of view, instructions, official documents and extracts from Shakespeare, Alice in Wonderland and Aesop's Fables. Your own files can, of course, be saved for re-use, and all can be printed for homework.

textThing's nine Literacy-based activities are:

- Letter-by-letter
- Word-by-word
- Scrambled words
- Scrambled sentences
- Spelling tests
- Sort text
- Punctuation
- Fill the blanks
- Print word puzzles

Age range: 7 – adult

Available for: Win

Review

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“textThing is an innovative, timesaving and clever program using the full power of technology to meet both teacher requirements and pupil needs. Designed for use with all age groups textThing provides a generic tool into which teachers can paste their chosen texts quickly and almost effortlessly to provide a range of Literacy Activities. The program comes with a wide range of teacher options to refine the tasks, such as letter patterns in the spelling, time limits and record keeping. Pupil's needs can be met not just through the tasks provided and the content chosen but a choice of options including font style, size and colour, background colour, speech support and levels of difficulty to name but a few. Tasks that may normally require hours to devise are organised in seconds.



Many teachers are looking for Literacy across the curriculum activities that are challenging to all abilities and textThing achieves this in a discreet way. Although it comes with many ready to use texts and activities for all age groups, it is essentially a content free program, allowing teachers to use their own choice of material. Virtually any text can be copied and pasted into the program very easily and then at a click of the mouse, up to 9 different (10 if you count crosswords and word searches as different activities) literacy activities can be created using the text. Even web-based text can be copied and the program will sort out all the potential glitches including HTML.

The activities are offered in a menu with a choice of formats according to the age group and provide a self-corrective environment with the time and score challenge to help engage and motivate the most reluctant of users. The activities generated include rebuilding the text word by word, cloze activities, sequencing the text, spelling and punctuation. (Rebuilding the text letter by letter seemed the least useful one unless it included high frequency words in a short passage, as poor keyboard skills could become a hindrance and frustration).

This enables a range of both literacy and cross-curricular texts to be used for individuals, groups or whole class activities. With the opportunity to set a time limit, using it in independent time during the Literacy lesson is an obvious choice. Activities at KS3 to support subject work, understanding of new topics, revision or preparation for a further task could be easily prepared. Many of the activities would lend themselves to a class warm up if working in an ICT suite or used with an interactive whiteboard. Activities such as sequencing events in History, use of punctuation when writing up a recipe or sharing strategies to predict when rebuilding the text are just a few that spring to mind.

There are a wealth of options including speech support, allowing the tasks to be differentiated for groups or individuals. Several tasks can also be printed in paper format to be used away from the computer and for homework. This enables a "dry run" using the computer first that is so valuable for pupils with learning difficulties.

Ideal for Primary and KS3/4 pupils and even adults, textThing seems excellent value for money as it provides so much for both teacher and pupil combining many activities into one program that have only been available in individual programs in the past. Topologika are known for their attention to detail and many teachers may feel put off by the wide range of options. But as with all good programs they are there if needed and most can be ignored to start with. I used the program quite usefully and easily several times before realising how much more there was on offer."
