

TIPS and HINTS for . . .**Benevolent Bill****The practitioner profile**Terry Docking, e-Learning Advisor
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S****Introduction**

The person referred to in the "Benevolent Bill" is Bill Gates, who gave his permission for the title to be used. This is all about the features that are built into Microsoft products that can help with a variety of disabilities such as visual impairment, dyslexia etc. Many of these features have been built into the product for many years but often people are not aware of them and therefore do not make use of them, either as teacher or as a learner.

TIP / HINT 1 - The Accessibility programs from the start menu

By using the sequence Start > Programs > Accessories > Accessibility you will be able to click on any one of the following: Accessibility Wizard; Magnifier; Narrator; On-screen keyboard. There is also a Utility Manager but this of little use so ignore it.

TIP / HINT 2 - The Accessibility Wizard

The Wizard will take you through a sequence of dialogues which will set various elements of windows to be more accessible for the user. Sticky keys allow one handed key combinations such as Ctrl+Shift+Enter. Filter keys filters out accidental repeated keystrokes. Toggle keys allow audio feedback when caps lock is on. Mouse keys allow the keyboard to be used instead of the mouse. Various sounds and visual indicators for feedback to the user. Colour and contrast options and different cursors can also be set.

TIP / HINT 3 - Word and accessibility

There are many features built into Word which can be used to help learners. Auto Summarise attempts to summarise a whole document. Auto Text and Autocorrect can be very helpful to people with motor difficulties or dyslexia. Fonts can be altered easily and the background colour and text colour changed to suit the learner. Comments which only appear when the mouse pointer is over them can be very helpful. Sound clips can be inserted which could provide a narration.

TIP / HINT 4 - Keyboard Shortcuts

All keyboard shortcuts can be very useful to all learners. It can avoid having to use the menus, which for some learners is a problem. There are hundreds of shortcuts so it is a question of finding the ones which are most appropriate to the individual. As an example text or other objects can be selected and then copied by using Ctrl+c and then pasted with Ctrl+v. If you are not used to this it means press and hold the Ctrl key then while it is held down press the c or the v key then release.

TIP / HINT 5 - Patience

If you feel a little daunted by all of the above then it is important to remember that as ever practice is the key to feeling comfortable. The reward is being able to more easily use technology to make a difference for the learner.

TIPS and HINTS are based on the survival kit principle

- Most people can remember up to 5 key facts
- Identify the minimum someone must know to survive
- They don't need to know everything
- They do need to know where to go for further information
- Keep it simple and straightforward

TIPS and HINTS can be accessed at
www.cettl.org.uk

**For further information about this
Tips and Hints topic contact**

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