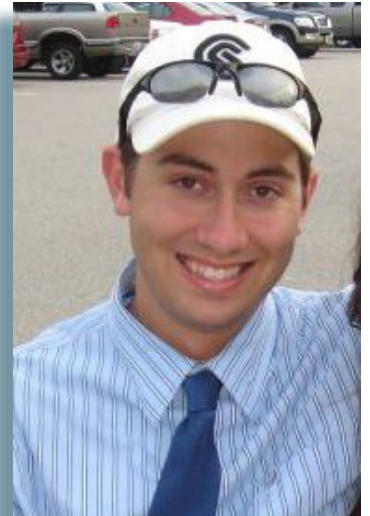


Dyslexia, in its most simple definition is, “a learning disability that impairs a person's ability to read.” According to the National Institute of Health, up to 15% of U.S. students have a language-based learning disability; dyslexia is one of the most common.

In the fall of 1996, New Hampshire parent, Deb Langton, started to suspect that her middle child in second grade had a disability. After her son Craig's tests came back showing he had no disability, she started to think she may just be a “neurotic” parent. However, her worries only increased when she noticed how Craig's sister, who was three years his junior, was able to rhyme easily, whereas Craig struggled. In 2003, Craig Langton was officially diagnosed with dyslexia. Here is Craig's story as told by Craig, his mother Deb, and Craig's advocate Kathy McCaskey.



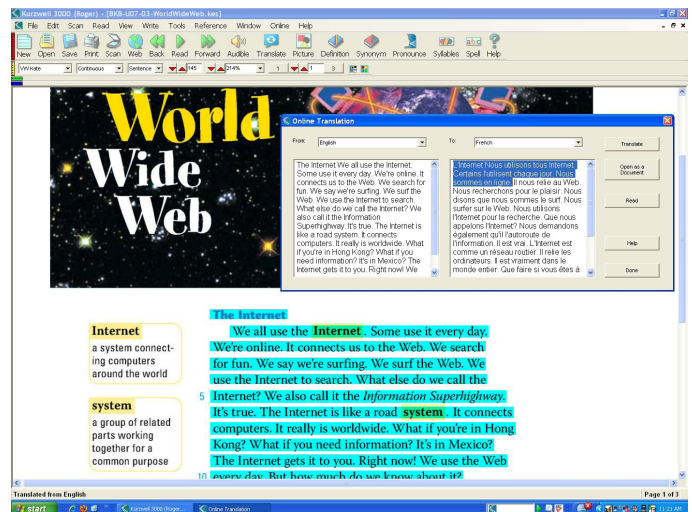
Feeling Success

As told by Deb Langton

As a parent, you only want to see your kids succeed. Seeing Craig struggle to read was difficult to watch, especially when his siblings were excelling. What would take other kids an hour to do the homework, was taking three or four hours for Craig to complete. We kept thinking, “something isn't right.” When Craig was getting ready to enter high school, the district wanted to discontinue Craig's IEP Plan, even though as an 8th grader he was still reading at a 5th grade level. It was clear as a parent, that Craig did not have the skills needed to be independent. I would still have to read to him, and then have him read back to me. How embarrassing is it to be a 16-year old boy and having your mother still read to you? Finally, with the help of an outside advocate, Craig went through an assistive technology evaluation, to determine the best accommodations for his IEP.

The solution Craig picked was Kurzweil 3000. It didn't take long to notice how Kurzweil 3000 was going to forever change all of our lives. **Seeing my son use Kurzweil 3000 to read was euphoric. As a parent you never want to discourage your kids or tell them they can't do something, but before Kurzweil 3000, I couldn't have imagined college in Craig's future. Before we knew it, his reading and writing skills had improved so much, that Craig decided to challenge himself by taking an advanced-level physics course to finally see how independent he could be. It was a dream come true.

Deb Langton now sits on the Manchester School Board, where she fights to make a difference for other children who need special education.



Kurzweil 3000 supports reading, writing, study skills and can be used as a testing accommodation.

If our family hadn't been handed the gift of Kurzweil 3000, I wouldn't have imagined that I would be the proud parent of a 2010 University of New Hampshire Civil Engineer Graduate! Kurzweil 3000 allowed my son to find success and let him reach beyond what I expected and, more importantly, what he expected. To our family, Kurzweil 3000 is the most wonderful program, and we wish that more special education teachers would advocate its use.

Free Reading

As told by Craig Langton

Growing up I would never answer any questions in class or read aloud. Reading a textbook was always a struggle. I'd read it and not remember what I read, making it pretty much impossible. When I was reading stuff, it took me probably an hour for every ten to fifteen pages, now it takes me 20 minutes. I can read one word at a time or multiple words at a time.

I really liked the e-reader capability of Kurzweil 3000 when I was first introduced to it. I noticed pretty quickly that I could understand what I was reading and was able to pick out the important stuff. And, when I write a paper, it is nice to know right away if I am typing the wrong word. The highlighting functions are awesome, especially because you can extract your notes straight into an outline. I started to understand everything a lot better and in high school decided to take an advanced course.

Without the Kurzweil 3000 program, I probably wouldn't have tried to accomplish that. I am also able to use the program in writing my college essays. What probably surprised me the most was that I could "free-read," actually just read a book for fun, which was something I never would try to do before. Kurzweil 3000 makes books a lot simpler to get through. I understand what I read the first time, remember everything, and do not have to go back and re-read paragraphs. READING is actually enjoyable. STRUGGLING through reading isn't.

Craig Langton is currently employed in Portsmouth, NH as a civil engineer

** In 2003 The Langton's approached the Manchester, NH School District about getting software for Craig. The school agreed to provide the software and a small amount of training.

Manchester School District provided Craig with 8 hours of training in Kurzweil and the other software programs.

From Carpenter to Civil Engineer

As told by Kathy McCaskey

In 2003 I was asked to perform an assistive technology evaluation on a young man entering his freshman year at Manchester Central high school. At this time he was still reading at a 5th grade level. When I met this young man I asked him to tell me what challenges he's faced and what he aspired to be. In a soft voice Craig told me, "Maybe I could be a carpenter."

After the evaluation I asked Craig what software tool he liked the most. He pointed out the reader – a software product called Kurzweil 3000. In my recommendations to the school district I indicated that three pieces of software would benefit this young man so he could begin to gain independent learning skills. They were Kurzweil 3000, Inspiration, and Microsoft office. I tutored him for several months and left leaving knowing he was empowered to use these tools to support his learning.

A few years later, his mother came to one of my workshops in Manchester. She told me that Craig had just graduated from Manchester High School; with much pride she added, "He's a freshman at the University of New Hampshire – majoring in Civil Engineering!" He is able to do this by using Kurzweil 3000. He obtains all his textbooks on CD and uses Kurzweil 3000 to read and take notes for all of his courses." It is truly heartening to know that technology can have this kind of life-changing impact on a student.

Kurzweil 3000 transformed this young learner's perception of himself. Just a few years earlier Craig had set his goals on becoming a carpenter, now Craig knows he is able to be whatever he wants to be. Craig is now a Civil Engineer. As an educator, it is always rewarding to hear results like this and to know that we, along with technology like Kurzweil 3000, can play a part in helping students like Craig accomplish whatever they set their minds to achieving.

Kathy McCaskey is the founder and president of EdTech Associates. Founded on the vision that every child should have the opportunity to develop a foundation of 21st Century learning skills, EdTech Associates provides services to empower all students to succeed.