



Parent launches pioneering reading application for Autism, Dyslexia and Young Readers

Visual Reading (iPAD)

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An Essex based company releases its debut pioneering educational iPAD app today. The app is built to assist those with Autism, Dyslexia or learning difficulties to read and create stories in a fun way. The application was designed by the parent of Nieve Jones, an eight-year old autistic girl, who loves books, but struggles with words.

The app gives parents or teachers the ability to create their own storyboards. Familiar pictures or videos can then be assigned to each word. The child is then able to follow a story by either reading the words, or by seeing the image assigned to each word. The image acts as a visual clue to each word.

The app utilizes advanced text-to-speech technology, which allows the book content to be read out-loud when appropriate. The user can also click the individual words to hear them spoken.

For example, a parent using the app could use a photo of a familiar family scene; or any photo the child is comfortable with in order to build a story around it. The user would then assign a picture or video of their actual mum, dad or dog to each of the words, thus creating the connection between words and images in the story.

Mr Jones who designed the application for his daughter said: "The inspiration for the application came from a bedtime reading session with Nieve. I would point backwards and forwards between the word 'dog' and an actual picture of a dog. I suddenly realised that Nieve was more able to follow the story, when there was a concrete association between the words and a related image."

From the book, *Thinking in Pictures*, Dr. Temple Grandin, a highly successful autistic herself, writes, "Words are like a second language to me. I translate both spoken and written words into full-color movies, complete with sound, which run like a VCR tape in my head. When somebody speaks to me, his words are instantly translated into pictures."

The application works on this idea by allowing the user to place familiar media above the words.

The application comes with seven built-in stories and a default library of 760+ common nouns that automatically appear as the user types. The internal image library is designed to grow as personal content is added. To get the most out of the application, the designers recommend using images and videos from the child's own environment. This helps create a fun environment to learn and help build a strong association between the words and images.

Price: £2.99 – Free future updates in the pipeline.

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Videos:

<http://visualreadingapps.com/blog/introduction-video/>

<http://visualreadingapps.com>

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/visual-reading/id656123171?mt=8>

<http://visualreadingapps.com/press-releases/press/press-images/>