Quillsoft

WordQ®
for Google Chrome™

Functionality

WordQ® for Chrome is a simple-to-use, yet powerful *writing tool*. It is designed for Chromebooks as an *offline* and *stand-alone* alternative to Google Docs (with compatible file format). It incorporates advanced word prediction and speech feedback along with associated strategies to improve a student's writing, particularly with spelling and grammar. Documents can be saved on online (Google Drive) or offline. Teachers can share files (e.g., assignments) using standard Google sharing. The goal is for students to create better quality written work with greater independence, confidence, and ease. This means getting homework done faster, with less effort and achieve better marks.

WordQ distinguishes itself with a focused set of key features (word prediction and speech feedback) and effective strategies for writing/editing. Together these promote independent and active use without distracting the student from the writing process. Its simplicity is what encourages its use so that students directly benefit. WordQ is intended primarily, but not exclusively, for use when writing and editing drafts.

A key function carried over from the desktop WordQ is proofreading. Writers often read what is in their mind, not what is actually written down. Even if there are no spelling or grammar mistakes flagged, the writer may be unaware that what is written may not be what is intended.

With WordQ, a student can listen to their work being read aloud while text is simultaneously highlighted. They become more aware of what they write by matching text with what they hear and engaging with both. WordQ is under their control; it speaks exactly what is written, unfiltered by human interpretation. Mistakes, such as misspellings, missing words, or poor word order, stand out as sounding strange. As a writer, students can simulate what it is like to be a reader, and modify their text interactively, like a dialogue with another person, prior to presenting their edited text to someone else such as a teacher.

Adding and using topical words that influence word prediction is easy with our companion ThoughtQ® Chrome Packaged App. ThoughtQ automatically generates a topic list on any subject that can be used in WordQ. For exam-

ple, by entering a topical keyword or phrase, such as "solar energy," a related topic list is automatically created that can be copied and pasted directly into WordQ.

WordQ as a Packaged App, not an Extension

WordQ for Chrome is designed and built using the latest "Chrome Packaged App" technology for Google Chrome. Why? This technology addresses real concerns with online connectivity, delivery across multiple platforms, document saving, and immediacy of interaction (particularly with word prediction and speech feedback). As a Packaged App, we also retain control over the design and functionality of the writing space.

A Chrome Packaged App allows us to offer full functionality both online and offline, outside of the confines of a browser. The WordQ app is downloaded onto the desktop within the student's account space. Files may be stored/retrieved from a student's Google Drive when online or locally on the desktop when there is no connectivity. These files are compatible with Google Docs, although limited to simple layout and formatting. Word prediction and speech feedback are handled locally without having to connect with an online server. This ensures immediate feedback of words and speech. It also allows for individual student settings. When online, all student's settings and work are synchronized across any number of computers (not necessarily the same type) within school or at home under the student's account.

With our WordQ app, we made a conscious decision not to use "Chrome Extension" technology. Extensions are seemingly ideal because they add functionality to apps or pages within the Chrome browser. Unfortunately, they do not always work across the board because of inconsistencies in the programming of apps and web pages, especially involving text. This leads to efforts being sidelined into custom technical workarounds rather than focusing on the end goal. With WordQ for Chrome the focus is on a better writing environment for struggling students and to provide a platform for new and improved strategies and technologies.