

Kurzweil 3000 (Win) v.20 Customizing Reading and Writing Environment: Adjusting the Tools Options

Introduction

Kurzweil 3000 is reading and writing software that has many features designed to support students who are struggling with reading comprehension and written output. The program can be used as a word processor or it can be used to scan documents, like textbooks or worksheets, which can then be read aloud or completed within the program. Students with a wide variety of abilities and challenges can use Kurzweil 3000 effectively. The variety of learning needs can be best accommodated by customizing the program's reading and writing environment. While completing this tutorial, you will learn how to customize the toolbars, the right mouse button menu, and the Tools Options.

Learning Objectives

Completing this tutorial will give you experience:

- Adjusting user settings for auditory support, reading options, and text viewing in Tools Options

This tutorial assumes that

- Kurzweil 3000 version 20 for Windows is installed on your computer. If you do not have the program already installed, please refer to the installation and registration instructions that came with your software.
- Your computer system supports audio output either through speakers or a headset.

Case Study

Ms. Franklin is supporting five different students who struggle with reading and writing. The students range in grade from Grade 3 to Grade 7. Each student has his or her unique profile of literacy strengths and challenges. For example, her Grade 4 student is a high functioning student with Autism Spectrum Disorder. He uses the program for written output. Since he often perseverates on setting options such as font type and size, she has customized his toolbar set up to give him access to only those tools he absolutely needs. She also works with a Grade 6 student who has a physical handicap limiting her ability to complete tests and worksheets. This student is able to scan her own materials but found using the toolbars tiring, so Ms. Franklin customized the right mouse button menu to put features she needed right where she needed them in the document. She also added some additional tools to her test taking toolbar set up (e.g. the red circle tool) so she could complete multiple choice questions without having to add text boxes or use the highlighters. In this way, when her students sign into Kurzweil 3000, each has his or her own user settings.

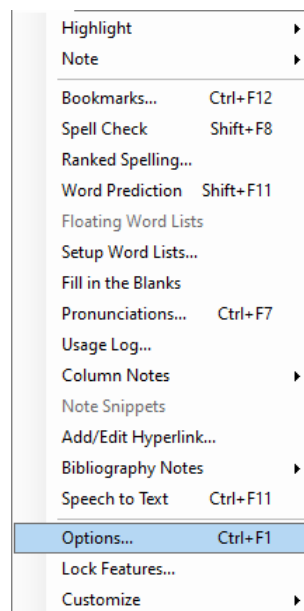
Adjusting the Tools Options

Step	Instruction	Visual Depiction
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1 Kurzweil 3000's many features, and tools can be adjusted to suit the specific reading and writing needs of individual students.

These adjustments can be made in the Tools – Options area.

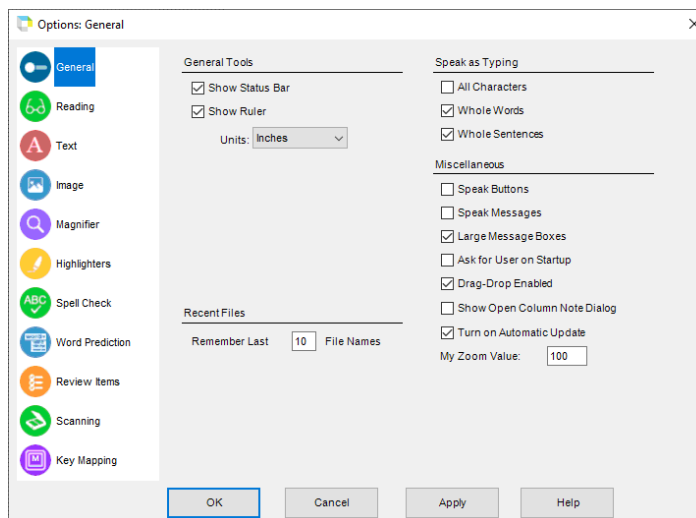
Go to **Tools -> Options...**



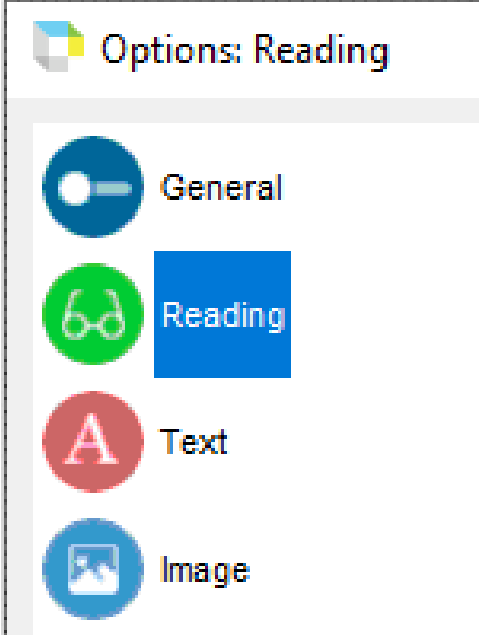
2 The window that opens up contains a number of different areas corresponding to the various program features and tools.

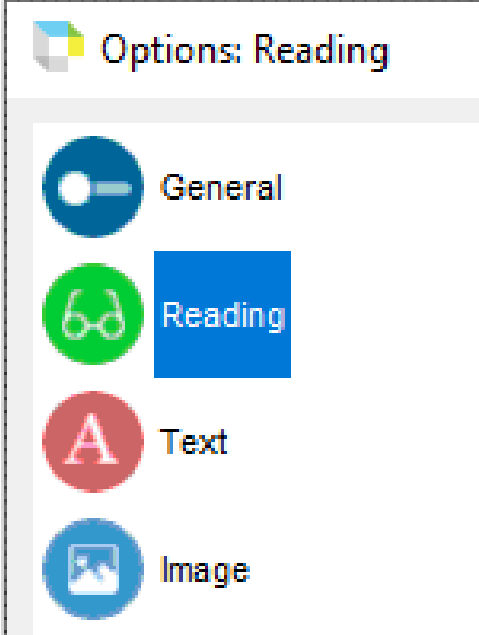
In the **General** area, you can adjust...

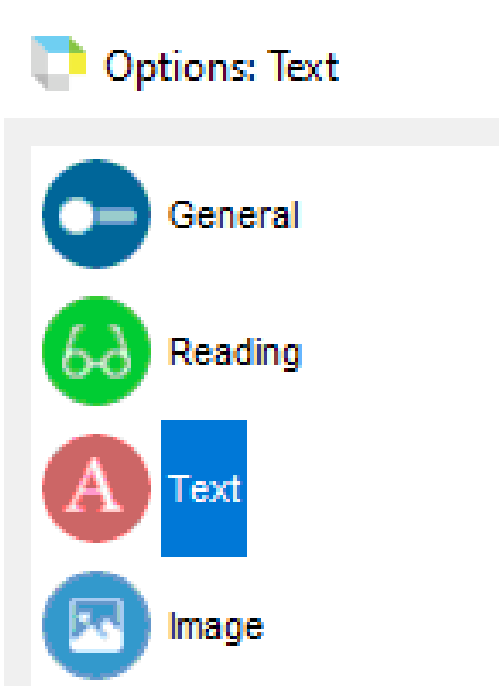
- the **Toolbars**
- how many **Recent files** can be viewed
- the **Speak as Typing** feature
- **Miscellaneous** features
 - program prompts
 - Ask for User on start-up
 - show/hide Tip of The Day
 - enable Drag/Drop
 - My Zoom value (the level of document magnification)

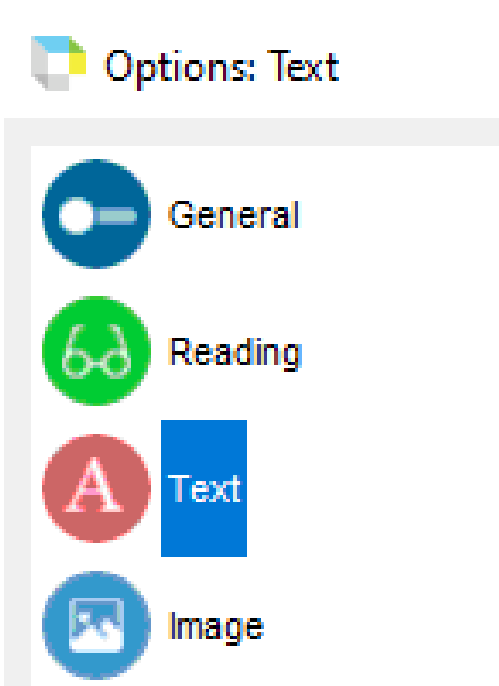


Step	Instruction	Visual Depiction
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|---|--|--|
| 3 | <p>In the Reading area, you can adjust...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Speaker, speaking language, and reading speed a number of reading Extras including when notes are read, whether or not words are read when double-clicked and so on the internet browser that will be used with Read the Web feature |  |
|---|--|--|



- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 4 | <p>In the Text area, you can adjust...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Colors of the text and background the Font displayed in text files the way Highlighting is displayed |  |
|---|---|--|



Extras such as word spacing and how often files are automatically backed up

Any time you make any changes to the Options area, click **Apply** to save the changes. Click **OK** to close the window.

Tip...

Adjusting the various Tool Options will customize the reading and writing environment so that it meets your individual students' needs. You should try and set up the environment as much as possible before your students begin using the program, but you will likely have to make adjustments as you see how they work within the program.

Here is a list of the commonly adjusted Options and how they might be used...

General

Toolbars – you can adjust which toolbars are visible and whether or not they have captions – this is the same as right-clicking on the toolbar area to adjust the toolbars or clicking on the coloured bars to show or hide them. Displaying the right toolbars for the reading and writing tasks will help students select the appropriate tools quickly and effectively.

Show Rulers – this allows your students to adjust the text width in a text document so the page will print properly on a standard 8 ½ inch wide sheet.

Speak as Typing – this important option allows you to set the amount of auditory support your students will need as they are typing – you can select one, two or all three units – selecting 'Whole words' and 'Whole sentences' is the most common setting.

Speak Buttons / Speak Messages – this gives auditory prompting for buttons and messages for students who are visually impaired or for those who cannot read the text in the toolbar captions or in windows and dialog boxes

Ask for User on Start-up – select this box if you will be using the program with more than one student – once you do, every time you launch the program, a sign in window will appear – when the students select their name from the drop-down list, their particular options are enabled

Tip of the Day on Start Up – deselect this option if you don't want the Tip of the Day window to open on program launch

Drag/Drop Enabled – select this option if you want your students to be able to highlight, drag and drop text on a scanned document – this is particularly helpful for students completing tests or worksheets – for example, when completing a Cloze exercise with a word bank they will be able to highlight the word, drag it onto the Cloze blank and drop it into place

Tip... (continued)Reading**Speaker**

Language – you can select a different language to add the appropriate accent to the reading voice

Speaker – there are a number of different voices, but VW Kate and VW Paul are recommended as they are the best reading voices on the drop down list

Speed – you can adjust the reading speed by sliding the bar – this is the same as adjusting it on the Reading toolbar – most students need to start with a slower reading speed when they start with the program – the speed can be increased as they become comfortable with computer generated speech

Extras

Read Footnotes when Opened / Voice notes in place – selecting these options will help those students who forget or don't realize they need to double-click the note icons in an image document – it increases the level of reading support and prompting

Read word when double-clicked – selecting this option adds an important level of auditory support in both text and image files – students will be able to double-click on words they don't recognize when reading or words they want to check when editing and hear them read out loud

Highlight Spoken word – this option is usually selected unless it is distracting for the student to have the spoken word highlighted as it is being read out loud

Skip Reading Headers / Footers – by selecting this option, it reduces the need to remove the reading zone on image files when zone editing the documents – Kurzweil will ignore any text in headers and footers when reading the document

Text**Colors and Highlighting**

Changing the various options under Colors (text, background, word, unit) is important for helping students track the text when it is being read out loud – this could be a visual issue for students with visual impairment or it could impact the student's ability to track or pay attention to the text as it is being read

Font

Adjusting the Font here will set the font for each new text document that is created – this is helpful for younger students or students with visual impairments (larger fonts)

Checklist of Skills Developed in this Tutorial

- ☐ Apply various toolbar setups to suit specific reading or writing tasks
- ☐ Customize the Main, Writing, Study Skills or Reading toolbars by adding, removing and moving tool buttons
- ☐ Save custom toolbar view and select from toolbar setup menu
- ☐ Customize the right mouse button by selecting or deselecting menu items
- ☐ Adjust the General Tools Options and the Options for Reading and Text files to suit the individual students' reading and writing needs

Now that you know how to customize the reading and writing environment in Kurzweil 3000, you may wish to try another tutorial in the series to learn how to scan and prepare documents.