

# SETC Focus

## The Special Education Technology Center

Do you have questions about Assistive Technology (AT)? You are not alone.

For more information and training opportunities see the insert with our webinar schedule of events.

### Fall 2017 SETC Conference:

#### The Accessibility Toolbox -

#### Providing Supports for Access to Curriculum

Presented by Dan Herlihy

When it comes to providing access to standards based curriculum materials we often find ourselves starting at the same place, and arriving essentially at the same destination - accessibility. This may entail altering the cognitive difficulty of information, or translating into another language, providing TTS perhaps for a variety of languages, grammar and vocabulary supports including image or symbol support, signed or captioned videos, switch access to the content and more. Students often need time to utilize many or all of these solutions at the same time!

Learn how you and your learners can utilize tools for accessing/ adapting content or providing on-the-fly access to print materials or electronic content with scan and read apps, extensions and tools for Chromebooks, apps for iPads and tablets, cloud based programs and more.

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## Fall 2017 SETC Conference:

### [The Accessibility Toolbox - Providing Supports for Access to Curriculum](#)

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We will also be exploring alternative supports for writing including tools for video expression allowing students to easily create and demonstrate understanding of concepts, connections in learning or express their ideas in a multisensory approach utilizing green screen technology, apps and programs for recording, editing and presenting, integrating video into eBooks, adding captioning and visual supports within video.

A cross-platform and device specific matrix will be provided allowing you to build a toolbox of solutions for all students providing support from class to class, platform to platform, device to device and once they leave your class - homework supports as well.

Register now for the November 7th Conference in Federal Way or Spokane.



Dan Herlihy has worked in the education field for over 35 years, from Wilderness Programs for at risk students, Special Education classrooms, Network Administrator, Assistive Technology Resource Specialist and currently providing AT training and professional development for schools and learning centers. He presents nationally and internationally and has written articles for national publications, books on technology integration and tools for access, and produced CD's of educational activities for students and templates for educators. His expertise is in taking diverse technologies, and connecting them together to provide solutions for access to the curriculum and communication of ideas and learning.

Please register individually online. Since group rates may apply we will bill you or your school when we receive your registrations.

Look for Services>> Training>> Upcoming Conferences.

A total of six clock hours will be available through ESD105 for a small fee.

## Equatio – Digital Math Extension for Chrome Browser

There is a new digital math tool available from TextHelp that includes Speech to Text and Text Prediction. Equatio has replaced g(Math) add on for Google Docs and is available as an extension to be used in Google Docs, Forms, Sheets, Slides and Drawings. Equatio has some great features:

- Handwriting recognition
- Text Prediction (type “sq” and get suggestions such as “squared, square root”)
- Speech to Text (without needing to know difficult mathematical formula jargon)
- Text to Speech



Basic features including Speech to Text are available free in Google Docs; there is a subscription for premium features and for using the extension in Google Forms, Sheets, Slides and Drawings. To learn more and try it for yourself, go to

<https://www.texthelp.com/en-us/products/equatio/>



For more articles, view our Facebook page  
Special Education Technology Center

### **Speech Recognition as AT for Writing: A Guide for k-12 Education**

SETC will host a free webinar on  
November 16 , from 1:00-2:00

with guest speakers Daniel Cochrane and  
Kelly Key from Illinois

Don't miss the opportunity to learn from  
these two nationally known assistive  
technology specialists.

Register on the [SETC webinar page](#).

## Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology:

Last spring a 20-question assistive technology survey was conducted in Washington state. Fifty five school districts participated representing all nine ESDs. Questions were designed to gain an understanding of how school districts are addressing AT needs through staff allocation and establishment of AT procedures. According to the survey, 51% of participating school districts stated that they have some kind of procedures in place for the consideration and assessment of AT for special education students. The survey data shows a need for continued professional development on establishing district procedures for AT consideration and assessment. With these statistics in mind, SETC has decided to repeat the QIAT Book Study webinar series one last time.

“Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology” authored by the QIAT leadership team, provides practical guidance on how to consider and assess AT, how to include AT in the IEP and how to implement AT effectively. The book study facilitators will review each chapter, provide real-life applications, and facilitate group discussion.

There are two copies of this book available through the SETC lending library. You do not need to own the book to join these webinars. While we encourage you to join the conversation for all 10 webinars in this series, you may also join particular sessions that interest you. If you have a scheduling conflict for a session, you will be able to review the recorded event on the SETC website.

If you wish to purchase the book, visit the Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology website.

<http://www.qiat.org>

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### Book Study Dates and Topics

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**September 18th Ch.1 Intro to QIAT**

**September 25th Ch. 2 Consideration of AT**

**October 2nd Ch. 3 AT Assessment**

**October 9th Ch. 4 AT in the IEP**

**October 23th Ch. 5 AT Implementation**

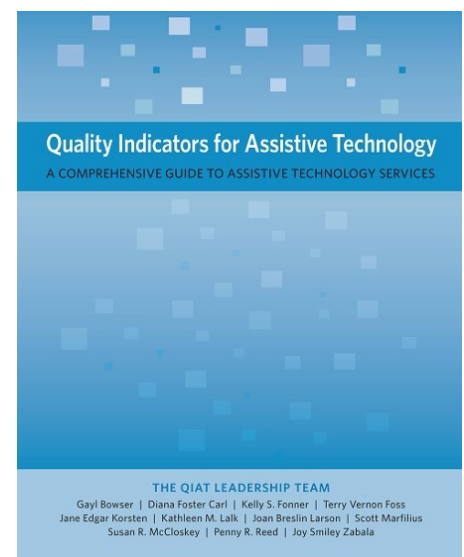
**October 30th Ch. 6 Evaluation of the Effectiveness of AT**

**November 13rd Ch. 7 AT in Transition**

**November 20th Ch. 8 Administrative Support of AT**

**November 27th Ch. 9 Professional Development in AT**

**December 4th Ch.10 Improving AT Services**



Did you miss the webinar?

No worries– you can may find in our [recorded webinars](#).

<https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/services/trainings/recorded-webinars/>

## Getting Started with Eye Gaze

**By Brenda Del Monte**

The myGaze eye gaze system from Inclusive Technology is one of the most requested items in the SETC lending library. While the MyGaze system has increased access to eye gaze trials, it is important to note that this unique access method requires significant training time.

Brenda DelMonte, SLP and AAC Specialist, has extensive experience with training eye gaze users with the goal of accessing AAC. We asked her to provide us with some tips on eye gaze training. “In my experience, it takes about 6 months to refine eye gaze as an access method. If your student is not reliable with eye gaze in the typical 4-6- week trial, they are right on track. After having trained dozens of students over the past two years and through collaboration with a vision specialist, I have identified some practical components for improving the accuracy and functional use of this eye gaze system. It is exciting to live and practice in a time when eye gaze access is possible!”



### 1. Warm up (10 minutes)

Whether using sensory guru, myGaze, Look-to-Learn or even a low tech eye-gaze board, it is important to do eye warm-up exercises. These are games that are relatively errorless. During these activities, the user is becoming aware that their eyes are the driving force behind the interaction with the system. It is “errorless” because wherever they look, something happens. There is no wrong answer. In sensory guru, myGaze and Look-to-Learn, there is a hierarchy of games moving into more refined target practice. In low-tech warm ups, you can use a clear eye-gaze board or a colored board with a center opening to have them look at a word or symbol. Again, this is errorless. One example is an Old MacDonald eye-gaze board. The trainer sings “And on that farm there was a.....” and waits for the child to look at any word/picture and then the adult sings their selection. With an older child you could use YouTube video topics, music artists, joke topics, etc. It is important that you are vocal about your observations. “I saw you look at all of them, but I’m not sure which one you want.” Don’t guess. That is confusing to the participant. Feedback such as “I like how you are looking at all your options.” And “when you find the one you want, keep your eyes there so I understand.” After a small dwell time is established, “Wow, you told me want you wanted with your eyes!”

\*\*\*\*After Warm Ups: Calibration can be completed (5 minutes or less) You will not need to calibrate each time but use your warm up to judge if today is the best day for calibration or refinement of calibration.

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## Getting Started with Eye Gaze

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### 2. Set up the session for ocular success and endurance.

Eye gaze can be extremely fatiguing. Consider your use of a computer. Naturally and often unintentionally we look away for a moment. When we look down at the keyboard or out the window, we are unknowingly giving our eyes a rest. When the eye is focusing on stimuli exactly 19-21 inches away (optimal for your eye gaze user) it is like holding dumbbells at your waist with your elbows at a right angle. You can only hold that position for so long before fatigue sets in. You will soon need to adjust by either lowering the weights down to your hips to relax the arm muscles or pull the dumbbells to your shoulders to change the demand on your muscles. Since holding a gaze at a specific distance requires the effort of eye muscles, we need to be mindful of how we plan a 30 or 60 -minute therapy session with an eye gaze user. Perhaps after a warm up you move to an activity that requires looking beyond the distance of the device or closer than the device, requiring the eye to change position and allowing the muscle to activate in different ways.

### 3. Don't be afraid to change positions.

If they pick the swing, take them out of their chair and put them in the swing. Grab an extra set of hands and align the eyes for them to let you know "Higher" or "Faster" or "Spin me." Be careful not to avoid activities that make eye gaze difficult for you as the partner. This suggests that "You can't talk when you are in the swing so 'no swing today.'" If you don't have that extra set of hands, combine low tech by grabbing index cards and provide choices "high" or "spin." This allows the child to continue to use their eyes to communicate in all locations. Don't worry if they can't read. They will pick up "sight words" very fast in these beginning weeks or may even learn selection by location with consistent placement. Remember, the whole idea is that they understand that their eyes are driving communication.

### 4. Teach navigation

For navigation, you will need a pipe cleaner that has a closed circle at the end. This "wand" is used to guide the gaze without having your hand or arm inadvertently cover the cameras required for eye gaze accuracy. When the child begins to look at an item, there is some kind of visual stimuli (shrinking dot or the completion of a dot) in the center of the circle of the wand/button. I often hide all other options on the screen, except the button that leads to the vocabulary set I am teaching on that day. For example, I will have "I want" and everything else hidden; (lead to page) to play (no other verbs); and then it will open to toy or therapy choices. I will model with my finger through the pipe cleaner hole so it is clear where I want them to look. I'm careful to reveal all or most buttons after a few minutes (within the same session) to practice locating the target vocabulary with all the visual distractions of other buttons.

## 5. Eye gaze activity tips

Move beyond choice making and on to core words immediately. After they pick balloon, give them more vocabulary that directs the communication partner. This vocabulary can be telling a friend or clinician to “bat the balloon higher”, “Rub it on your hair and see if it sticks to the wall.”, or “Pop it!”. Phrase based language at this point in the eye gaze learning process is essential in order to toggle between the activity and communication. It gives the eye gaze user tremendous power over their environment. Phrases like and core words such as, “Come here”, “Go away” and “I don’t like it when you touch my talker” are my client’s favorites! Let’s face it, if they are using eye gaze, they don’t have control over much in their world. This makes control EXTREMELY motivating.

You will continue to expand activities to build vocabulary, target core words, and increase mean length of utterance, keeping in mind that literacy skills and the word prediction feature are still the ultimate goals to novel language for AAC users.

## 6. Establish “yes” and/or “no” without technology

This tip is true of many access methods and in particular in instances where eye gaze is used. While eye gaze is an incredible access method, it can be cumbersome and it does require exact positioning and high or low-tech supplies. It is important to develop a reliable “yes” and “no” with no technology. Yes/no can be used for their low tech systems when high tech is not an option, like at the swimming pool. Yes/no can also help the child clarify a selection.



## How to Login to Our Website.

To login to the SETC website go to the home page at: [www.specialedtechcenter.org](http://www.specialedtechcenter.org)

Some accounts will be in place, based on previous user history. Before creating a new account we would encourage each user to try to login using their current or a past e-mail address and the password **test1**. Some school districts will block the mail required to reset a password independently. In this case, please call or email Sue in our office and we can reset the password.

## Washington Regional Meetings Hangouts Here and There

You are invited....

In response to feedback from the Statewide AT Meetings held in December and May, the Special Education Technology Center will be facilitating monthly “hangouts” for AT professionals. The Statewide meetings have been well received and participants have appreciated the chance to learn and share with one another throughout the state. To facilitate continual collaboration and in response to feedback, the SETC has agreed to facilitate a monthly time of collaboration. The details are still being worked out but be on the lookout on our website under “[Training/Classes and Regional Meetings](#)”.

These will be informal, online sessions open to anyone. We will have different hosts and have one or two topics each time with time to share and ask questions. We are considering a lunch time and/or after school time. If you would like to host, have an idea for a topic and/or time preference, please e-mail Linda Doehle, [linda.doehle@cwu.edu](mailto:linda.doehle@cwu.edu).

We can experience growth through success and struggles of our peers.

For an opportunity to network with other AT Specialists across the state.

Be sure to attend the Statewide AT Meetings. <https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/services/trainings/>

Meetings will be held December 8th, 2017 9:00-2:00; May 3rd, 2017 9:00-2:00



We offer free webinars daily.  
The only items necessary to participate are a computer and a telephone.

To find the listing go to:  
[specialedtechcenter.org/services/trainings/webinars](https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/services/trainings/webinars)

### Try 500 iPad apps for free.

We currently have many iPads and 20 new iPad minis ready for loan in the SETC lending library. Each of these devices has over 500 apps loaded and ready for trial with your students. To review the list of applications or request a loan visit the SETC Software Library at:

[specialedtechcenter.org/services/software-library/software-library](https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/services/software-library/software-library)



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