

Using Tar Heel Reader to support Literacy

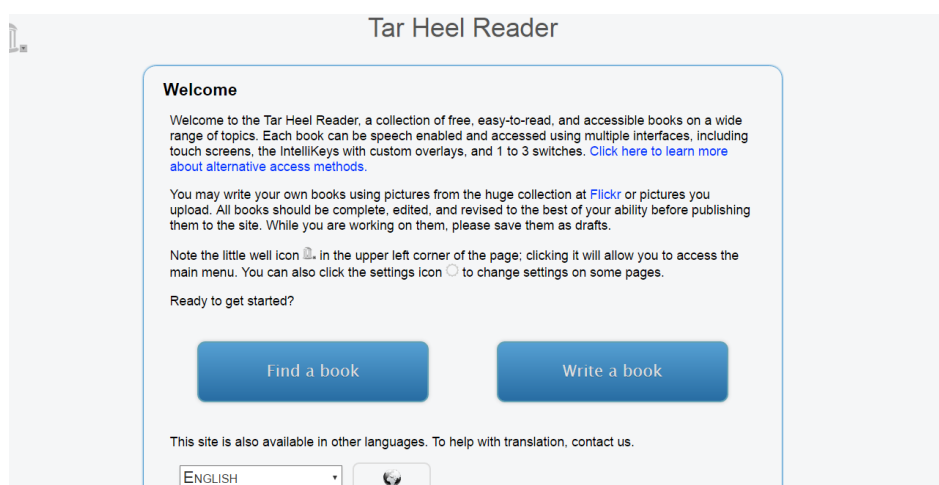
The following will support speaking and listening, AAC communication vocabulary use, spelling, learning names and sounds of letters, comprehension, connecting with prior knowledge, building knowledge, learning of grammar and reading.

This is a useful activity before a piece of reading or writing is required where the activity is based on texts that may be beyond the current understanding of the student. It can be used to pre-teach the student for texts in English or for topics in other subjects. It can be combined with the KWL approach. KWL is a speaking and listening/AAC vocabulary activity.

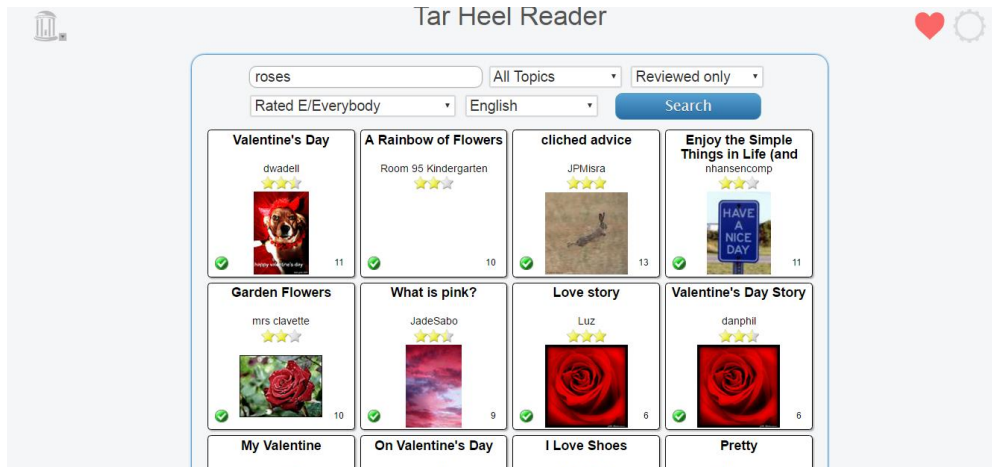
What I already know	What I want to know	What I learnt
Write down and display what the student already knows about the subject matter.	Excite curiosity by encouraging the student to say what they would like to know about the subject matter.	Write down anything the student has learnt from the session at the end of the session.

How to read a book already on Tar Heel Reader

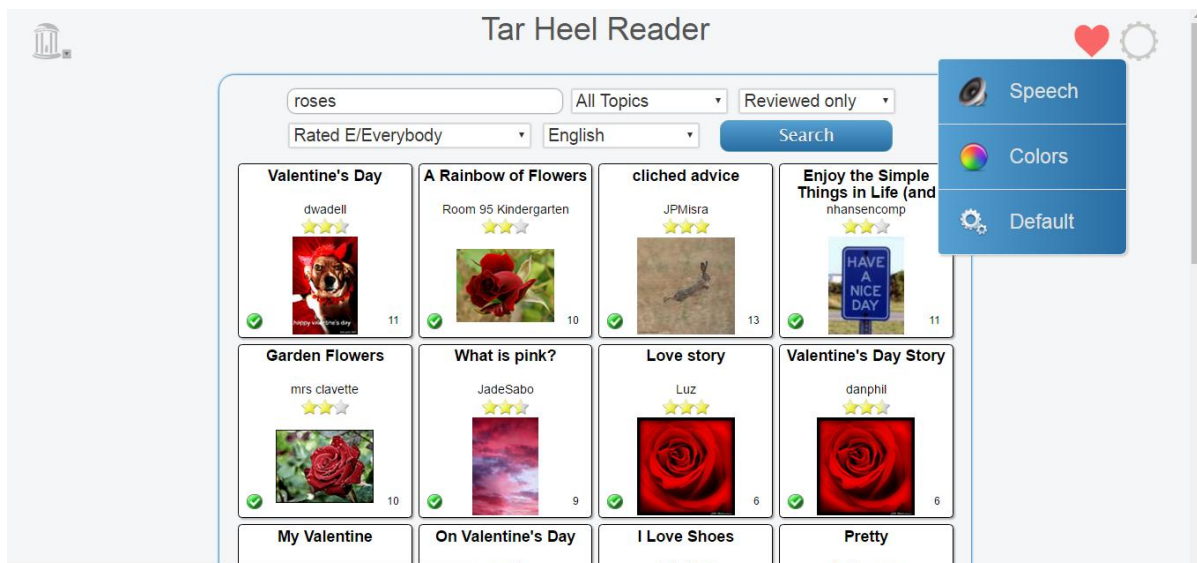
Tar Heel Reader is a free app that you can use on a PC or an iPad. It enables access to age appropriate books for older learners who are still at an early stage with literacy. A Google search will bring up the programme. You can then search for books on any topic and read the book. To do this you select “Find a book”.



I have just entered “roses” in the search and Tar Heel Reader shows all of the books mentioning the flower.

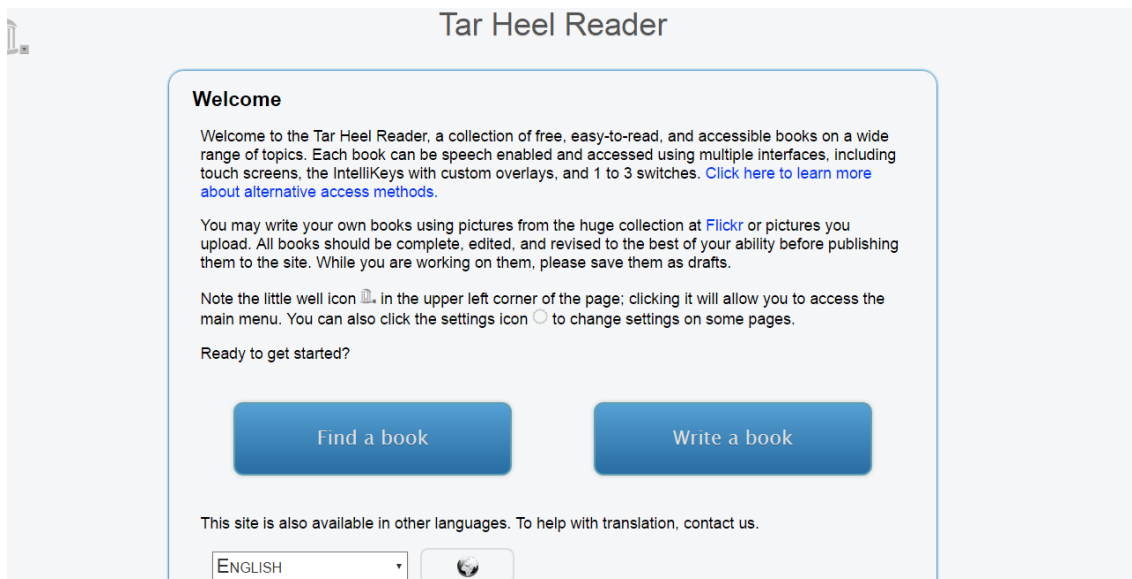


You can then select the book. You can either read without voice output or with voice output. To access voice output click on the cog in the top right corner and select speech then choose the voice you want. You can also change colours.

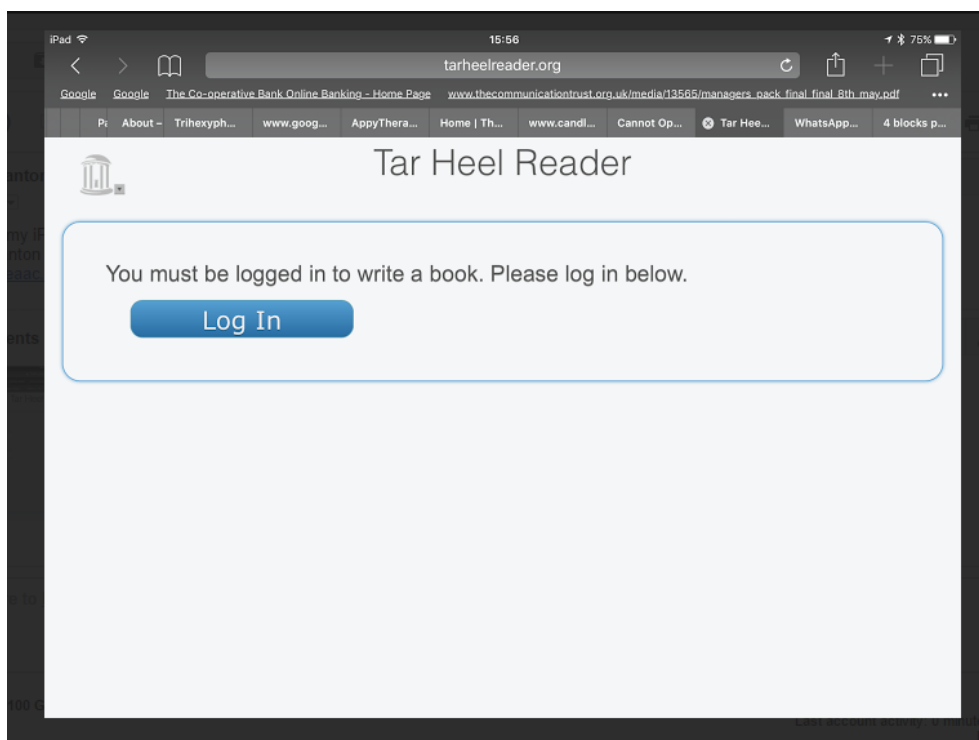


How to write a book in Tar Heel Reader

Select the “write a book” option on the welcome page.



Select log in



If you don't already have a password, you can register here.

The screenshot shows the Tar Heel Reader website on an iPad. The browser address bar displays 'tarheelreader.org'. The page has a header with the site logo and name. Below the header is a login box titled 'Log in to Tar Heel Reader'. Inside this box, there are two input fields for 'Username' and 'Password', a checkbox for 'Remember Me', and three blue buttons labeled 'Log In', 'Lost Password', and 'Register'.

Once you have a log in and password you can create your own book.

First you find pictures, then you add text then you either save as a draft or publish.

The screenshot displays the book creation workflow in four steps, each with a help icon (question mark in a circle) on the right:

- Step 1: Find pictures**: Includes a search input field and a 'Search' button. Below are 'Go back' and 'More like these' buttons.
- Or upload your own pictures**: Includes a note: 'Do not upload SymbolStix or other images unless you have permission from the copyright holder.' and an 'Upload' button.
- Step 2: Enter a short sentence for each page**: Includes the instruction: 'After you select or upload pictures your pages will appear here.'
- Step 3: Fill in the details**: Includes input fields for 'Title', 'Author' (with 'marionstanton' entered), and 'Language' (with a dropdown menu showing 'Choose a language'). Below is an 'Optionally: Categorize your book' button.
- Step 4: Publish**: Includes 'Save as draft' and 'Publish' buttons.

Approaches to helping a student to write their own Tar Heel Reader book:

It is useful to write a book with a student about subjects they are studying in the curriculum or about the kind of texts they are likely to encounter in tests.

- First have a discussion with the student about the subject matter. Find out what they know and have experienced and what they would like to know KW in KWL. Tell them about your experience and knowledge.
- Do a relevant internet search on the subject to find out more. You Tube video can be really good at this point.
- Depending on the student's learning needs they can then write a first draft, dictate a first draft or use their communication aid/book to dictate while you scribe. Plan for between 6 and 12 lines of text with no more than 2 lines per page. Let the student lead. Do the first draft in word or handwritten.
- **NB Don't use any app/programme that symbolises the document. We want the student to focus on text not symbols.**
- The student writes or dictates each line it in large font on a word document (28 to 36) or handwritten. You then say something like "That's great! Let me show you how I would write that." You then rewrite the sentence in a grammatically and correctly spelt and punctuated way in a different colour directly underneath. I suggest that the student's choice is written in black and you write in blue.
- Once you have your draft story in word or on paper open Tar Heel Reader and the student will choose a picture for a keyword in each line of the story. The student decides on the keyword. You can then help them to spell the keyword to search for each picture. Some students need to have the prompt of the names of the letters, others need the sounds and some will need to have a prompt of both the name and the sound. AAC users can spell the keyword on the letter page of their high or low tech device. Emergent spellers can use an Alternative Pencil approach (see separate document).
- Now each picture has a sentence or two added. This can be a useful reading task with the student reading from the word or written document (choosing from their own or your way of writing each sentence) – up to you if you add your way of writing it underneath in the final book – often the students will select the grammatically correct sentence after the modelling and support. For students who are unable

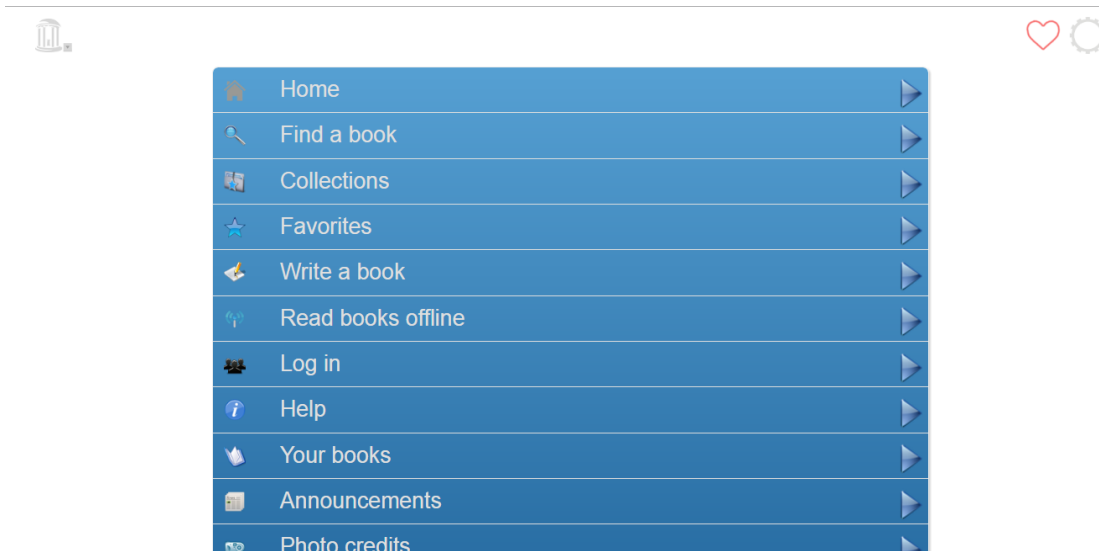
to speak selection of relevant sentences can be done using assisted Scan with YES/NO. For example, you say “Do you want this sentence for this picture?” and hold up a YES or NO card. It is a good idea to wear a YES and NO card on lanyards if you are working with many students who don’t use speech.

- Once the book is complete you can publish it. You can also export it to a PowerPoint where you can more easily edit it:

Select download under the cog wheel in the published book to put into PowerPoint:



Select the logo at the top left for other actions you can perform:



It is a good idea for students to create their own Tar Heel Reader accounts for writing stories.