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Dad Turns to *TextAloud* Program to Help Son Triumph Over Learning Disability

*Text to Speech Helps to Turn a High Schooler's Difficulty with
Words into a Love of Language*

CLEMMONS, NC – It's always challenging for a parent to help a child overcome a reading disability -- especially when reading is such an essential part of the learning and educational process. As the father of a learning-disabled son, Canadian **Greg D.** of Calgary knew those challenges firsthand, so he searched for the best tools and solutions to meet them -- and that's when he discovered *TextAloud*, the PC program from **NextUp Technologies** (<http://www.NextUp.com>). Through his use of the popular Text to Speech software, Greg was able to assist his son not just to overcome his learning disability – but to actually triumph over it.

TextAloud is an affordable PC program that allows any computer user to easily listen to their reading in natural-sounding computer speech, straight from the computer – from websites and e-mails, to eBooks and scanned text from any one of a variety of books or textbooks. Users can also take that speech anywhere they go with *TextAloud*, exporting to sound files that play on any iPod, iPhone, or other portable device – or even in the car.

Greg discovered the program when his son's learning disability was affecting his grades in high school. They had tried a variety of tools throughout the years to combat his reading difficulties, but with little success. A doctor who specialized in learning disabilities recommended searching for a high-tech solution, and that's when Greg decided to try Text to Speech. "I did some research and sure enough, I found *TextAloud*, which was uncomplicated and effective, and which did exactly what we wanted," adds Greg. "It was very easy for my son to use, and the next thing we knew, he was listening to his reading with the program."

The gamble worked, and *TextAloud* was soon actively helping Greg's son circumvent his disability through reading by ear. "At the time my son began to use *TextAloud*, he was in a language development (LD) class with a word recognition of approximately 500 words," comments Greg. "Today, through reading with Text to Speech, the number of words he recognizes is immeasurable."

To acclimate his son to the new program, Greg first sat with him in front of the computer, introducing each aspect of the program until it was understandable and familiar. "The next thing I knew, he was using the program on his own, and had the confidence to do so," Greg adds. The program's simple and elegant interface enabled his son to quickly and easily begin listening to his reading aloud.

The use of the *TextAloud* program not only improved Greg's studies and retention, it also opened up new lines of communication for him via e-mail, enabled him to utilize the web, and even allowed him to begin reading by ear for pleasure as well as study. Greg's son made it through high school with flying colors, and he continues to use *TextAloud* even as he now administers two online sports and gaming forums. "Without *TextAloud*, it would be impossible for him to interact with others through written words in this way," adds Greg.

TextAloud ultimately strengthened the bond between father and son, even as it enabled his son to achieve greater independence, through no longer having to rely on others to get through his reading or studies. "*TextAloud* was like having a built-in teacher, teaching him to read," comments Greg. "My son no longer goes to school, but I can assure you that if the schools had Text to Speech available in their Language Development classes, it would really enhance both study and the use of the Internet for any young student."

Greg highly recommends the program to people who have children or other family members who have difficulty with visual reading. "*TextAloud* opened up a whole new world for my learning disabled son, and gave him a new lease on life," he adds. "He has the ability to answer e-mails, communicate with people on web sites, read, study, understand, and learn. He has

gained confidence and self-esteem -- so important for those overcoming a disability. It took me only a day to see how valuable the program was to my son -- and it continues to be a daily resource for him."

About *TextAloud*

Highly useful for students, scientists, writers, business people, students and people from all walks of life – *TextAloud* has been featured in *The New York Times*, *PC Magazine*, *Writer's Digest*, on CNN, and more. Hailed by critics and users alike, *TextAloud* is priced from \$29.95, and is compatible with systems using Windows® 98, NT, 2000, XP and Vista. *TextAloud* also works seamlessly with iTunes, for easy synching with iPod®, iPhone™, or other iTunes-compatible portable audio players. The program is available for fast, safe and secure purchase via <http://www.NextUp.com>.

NextUp.com also offers *TextAloud* with optional premium voices from **AT&T Natural Voices™**, **Nuance®**, **Acapela®** and **Cepstral®** for the most natural-sounding computer speech anywhere. Available languages include U.S. English, U.K. English, Indian-Accent English, Scottish-Accent English, Arabic, Cantonese Chinese, Mandarin Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Belgian Dutch, Faroese, Finnish, French, Canadian French, German, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Polish, Brazilian Portuguese, European Portuguese, Russian, Castilian (European) Spanish, Latin American Spanish, Mexican Spanish, Swedish, and Turkish.

About NextUp.com

NextUp.com, a division of NextUp Technologies, LLC, provides award-winning Text to Speech software for consumers, professionals, businesses, educators, and those with visual or vocal impairment, or learning disabilities.

In addition to *TextAloud*, NextUp.com markets other innovative Windows software designed to save time and deliver vital information. NextUp *Talker* is an easy and affordable program that allows people who have lost their voices to use the latest in high-quality computer voices to communicate with others.

Evaluation copies of *TextAloud* are available upon request. For more information on NextUp.com or *TextAloud*, or for other case studies involving users ranging from writers, editors, and teachers, to actors, students, entrepreneurs, firefighters, doctors, lawyers, truck drivers, musicians, and more, please contact publicist Angela Mitchell at **(904) 982-8043** or via Admitchell@Nextup.com.

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