



Promoting literacy through research, education, and advocacy.

THE INTERNATIONAL DYSLEXIA

ASSOCIATION

ONTARIO BRANCH

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KINDLE'S TECHNOLOGY AS SIGNIFICANT FOR DYSLEXIA AS BRAILLE TO THE BLIND

Toronto, November 24, 2009 – The introduction of Amazon's Kindle to the Canadian market means that children and adults with dyslexia have a powerful new tool that may help them overcome a lifelong learning disability.

Amazon has finally made its Kindle wireless reading device available in Canada after previously being released in more than 100 other countries. While Canadians have limitations on available e-book titles and web browsing, the Kindle still unlocks a world that can seem unreachable for people with dyslexia – an incurable learning disability affecting 1 in 10 Canadians. With its text to speech functionality the Kindle provides a new reading tool for those who struggle with it the most.

Youth with dyslexia can often understand books written at a much higher level and with a more sophisticated vocabulary than books that they can read independently," said Sally Shearman, President of The Ontario Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (ONBIDA). Ms. Shearman noted that reading for individuals with dyslexia can be incredibly effortful which translates into a tiring and frustrating task, especially for children. By using a Kindle, individuals with dyslexia can now access books according to their interests with no stigma attached to the tool itself. "Individuals with dyslexia can now read and enjoy popular books alongside their peer group by using a device as socially acceptable as an iPod," Ms. Shearman added.

The chance to see a child with dyslexia excited about reading books should make the Kindle's \$259 US price tag more palatable to parents. "The Kindle is essentially democratizing the senses so that students with dyslexia can now read with their ears," said learning disabilities technology advocate Dr. Gordon Sherman. Kindle could also be setting the stage for digital textbooks containing video that will level the playing field for students with learning disabilities. Dr. Sherman, who also runs The Newgrange School for children with learning disabilities, advised that parents of children with dyslexia should start advocating now for the use of Kindles in the classroom. "Reading is a basic right - just as visually impaired students have braille to read, students with dyslexia should be provided with tools like the Kindle."

About The Ontario Branch of the International Dyslexia Association

The Ontario Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (ONBIDA) was founded in June 2004 and is operated by volunteers providing free information, support and referral services to the public. Members include individuals with dyslexia and their families, educators, diagnosticians, physicians, researchers and other professionals in the field of dyslexia and learning differences. ONBIDA believes that all individuals have the right to achieve their potential, that individual learning abilities can be strengthened, and that social, educational and cultural barriers to language acquisition and use must be removed. For more information about dyslexia and learning disabilities, call 416-716-9296 or visit www.idaontario.com.

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