

Kurzweil Educational Systems

Customer Profile

Joyce Johnson*

Mother of Four Daughters Using
Kurzweil 3000



Believe you **can**

The Situation

Learning disabilities often run in families. While no one in Joyce Johnson's family was formally diagnosed with a learning disability, she, her brother and her father all had difficulty with spelling. As Joyce puts it, "we were non-spellers and just accepted it, but it took perseverance and hard work to make it through school." Her struggles as a student taught Joyce to respect her own abilities even when others doubted them, and made her more sensitive to learning differences in others. When her own four daughters had difficulty learning to read, Joyce was not surprised to discover that each had a significant learning disability. "I knew that each in her own way was curious, articulate, and intellectually capable," she recalls, "and I was determined that each be allowed to live up to her full academic potential despite being a painfully slow reader."

When Katy*, her eldest daughter, started school, she was placed in a program for gifted students. Joyce was horrified when in second grade the school wanted to put Katy in a class for slow learners. "I knew Katy was like a sponge when it came to absorbing information," Joyce recounts, "but reading was not her thing. She had to hear it to learn it." After many sleepless nights, Joyce decided to contest the school district's decision. It wasn't easy, and required legal help and testimony from a learning specialist to show that Katy had the ability to keep up with her classmates. "It was a long, hard fight," Joyce says triumphantly, "but we won for Katy - as well as for our other three daughters, Liz*, Jean*, and Reilly*."

Joyce's two eldest daughters, Katy and Liz, went to elementary, middle and high school "pre-Kurzweil 3000," as she refers to that time. They had to rely primarily on human readers until college. That meant being taken out of their classrooms and being on a completely different schedule than their classmates. Joyce remembers how isolated the girls felt, and how despite all their efforts, their grades suffered because human readers were not available for test taking. "I was continually challenged," she recalls, "to keep Katy and Liz motivated despite mounting pressures and regular setbacks."

For more information on Kurzweil 3000,
see www.kurzweiledu.com



"Kurzweil 3000 has helped each of my four daughters follow their dreams. It provided them with the support they needed to successfully pursue rigorous academic programs in architecture, social work, law and medicine."

"Kurzweil 3000 gave them their independence, and made them stronger readers and writers."

Joyce Johnson Parent

The Solution

It was with great relief that Joyce learned about Kurzweil 3000 from a neighbor. "It's difficult to look back on our lives before Kurzweil 3000," she muses. "The program is now an essential staple on our home computers, and it has followed my older daughters to college and graduate school."

Jean and Reilly, Joyce's younger daughters, have had the advantage of using Kurzweil 3000 since middle school, when the amount of reading and writing significantly increases and the curriculum becomes more specialized. They use Kurzweil 3000 to read their assignments and take tests independently and in real time, so schoolwork and homework are no longer full-time chores. Jean and Reilly can do assignments in half the time it took Katy and Liz, and unlike their sisters, they have time for friends, sports, and just everyday life. No more laboring over an assignment or depending on human readers. They can now run a few pages through a scanner and read their assignments themselves. In addition, built-in study and writing aids in the software, such as on-screen highlighters and word prediction, make it easier for them to review materials and write reports. Joyce also recalls that "pre-Kurzweil 3000" the girls had to rely on their father to proofread and correct their papers. Now they can type their own papers, spell check their work, and listen to what they've written to correct grammar and syntax. "Kurzweil 3000 gave them their independence," Joyce notes, "and made them stronger readers and writers."

The Results

Joyce can now look back with satisfaction. Katy is completing graduate school in architecture and Liz is pursuing a career in social work administration. Jean graduated from high school in three years and plans to complete college in three years as well. Reilly, going into her senior year in high school, relies heavily on Kurzweil 3000 to pursue her passion for science. The program helps her learn scientific terms and concepts, read complex texts filled with diagrams, and use the vast resources on the Internet. After college, she hopes to attend medical school.

Joyce believes that Kurzweil 3000 has played, and continues to play, a critical role in helping her daughters achieve their full potential. "My girls will always be slow readers. That's how their brains are wired. But with Kurzweil 3000, there's no stopping them. It's allowed them to pursue their interests, read as widely and deeply as they choose, and keep pace with their classmates and colleagues."

*The names have been changed to protect the privacy of the family.

Joyce Johnson (cont.)



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