

# AT Quick Guide

## Using the AlphaSmart or NEO to build keyboarding familiarity

Typically, students will be able to use keyboarding software to build 10-finger keyboarding fluency. However, early elementary students and students with finger dexterity issues may not be ready for traditional keyboarding software. In such cases, the AlphaSmart™ and NEO™ have a built-in feature that can increase functional keyboarding. Students can use the “Typing Timer” to increase familiarity with the location of keys on the keyboard by:

1. Opening a new file on the AlphaSmart 3000 or NEO
2. Pressing <cmd> <find> to open the Typing Timer.
3. Begin typing to start the timer, and press caps lock to stop the timer
4. Press Esc to exit

### **Suggestions for building keyboarding familiarity:**

- Encourage students to use the left thumb and index finger on the left side of the keyboard (from A to G and from Q to Z), and the right thumb and finger on the right side of the keyboard (from H to P).
- Use the keyboarding log below to track daily progress.
- Over the course of 4 to 6 weeks, use the Typing Timer on the Alphasmart 3000 or NEO in the following ways:
  - Type the full alphabet using the Typing Timer. Do this 3 times and record the highest word-per-minute score on the keyboarding log. Do this as a 5 to 10 minute daily activity. Once the student’s score is stable, move to the next activity.
  - Type each letter of the alphabet with a space between each letter (example: a b c d e ). (If possible, encourage the student to use the thumb on the spacebar.) Do this 3 times and record the highest word-per-minute score. Again, do this as a 5 to 10 minute daily activity. Once the student’s score is stable, move to the next activity.
  - Dictate simple sentences at the student’s level of spelling ability. Have the student practice this sentence until the student’s word-per-minute score is stable at or above a level commensurate with their rate of handwriting. Then provide a new sentence to practice.

### **Functional written productivity rates:**

Generally, students are functional keyboardists when their keyboarding rate is commensurate with typical handwriting rates.

- Upper elementary grades: 7 to 10 WPM
- Secondary levels: 12 to 16 WPM

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Keyboarding Log

During the Week of \_\_\_\_\_

Directions:

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		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Number of words per minute	30				
29						
28						
27						
26						
25						
24						
23						
22						
21						
20						
19						
18						
17						
16						
15						
14						
13						
12						
11						
10						
9						
8						
7						
6						
5						