

# Operation Guide



by **Keyboard Instructor**™

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by **K**eyboard **I**nstructor™

**Contact us:**

Toll Free ..... (800) 797-7121

Fax ..... (805) 239-8973

Web site ..... [www.KeyboardInstructor.com](http://www.KeyboardInstructor.com)

E-mail ..... [Info@KeyboardInstructor.com](mailto:Info@KeyboardInstructor.com)

Mailing Address .....

Advanced Keyboard Technologies, Inc.

PO Box 2418

Paso Robles, CA 93447-2418

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# Introduction

## Preface

Congratulations on your purchase of *The Writer*. *The Writer* combines powerful portable word processing features along with the most complete and comprehensive portable keyboard instruction program available. Designed by teachers with years of experience both in the classroom and with portable processors, *The Writer* is easy to use, incredibly durable, and packed with powerful features.

Portable technology tools, like *The Writer*, are rapidly becoming the technology of choice for educators around the world. Inexpensive, durable and instructionally focused, these tools combine power and accessibility to help teachers and students to achieve academic goals. *The Writer* includes innovative and patented features not found on any other portable word processor; a thesaurus, formatted files, home row and shift key reinforcement features and much more.

Designing and creating *The Writer* is a responsibility we at AKT, Inc. take very seriously. We have made every effort to design a thoughtful and powerful instructional tool. It is important for you to know that we stand behind our product and encourage you to call us at AKT, Inc. with any problem or suggestion that you might have. A representative would be happy to speak with you.

### **Three year limited warranty**

Advanced Keyboard Technology, Inc. warrants *The Writer* and display to be free from defects in materials and workmanship for a period of three years from the date of original purchase. During this period, if a defect should occur, AKT Inc. will, at its option, repair or replace *The Writer* at no charge. *The Writer* must be returned during the warranty period to AKT Inc. This warranty is invalid if *The Writer* has been damaged by abuse, accident or modification. There are no other warranties, express or implied.

# Operation

*Simple operation... sophisticated and powerful application*

## **Starting Out**

Be certain that good quality AA alkaline batteries have been installed properly.

Backup important files on the computer regularly. Backing up your files from time to time will help ensure the safety of your valuable files, as technical problems do occur.

Pressing *Esc* at any time will return you to the previous screen and main menus.

Pressing *Enter* will move you forward to the next screen.

## Enrolling and Opening a “Work Folder”

Press the *On* key located at the top right of the unit. You will be prompted to open a “Work Folder” F1-F8 and the “Folder Selection” screen will appear. (Eight additional folders can be accessed by pressing *Alt* at the folder selection screen.) Each folder will have a name associated with it or be marked, “Available.” An “Available” folder indicates that no name has been given to that folder and that it is available for use.

F1 John D.	F5 Available
F2 Lab Section 1	F6 Available
F3 Sarah J.	F7 Available
F4 Available	F8 Available

Press the *F* key corresponding to the folder you would like to begin working in. If it is an “Available” folder, you will be prompted to fill in four fields:

**Folder Name** – This name will appear on the opening Folder screen

**Student Name** – This name will appear on file Printouts and can be sent with a file to the computer

**Teacher Name** – This name will appear on file Printouts and can be sent with a file to the computer

**Grade/Class** – This name will appear on file Printouts and can be sent with a file to the computer

Press *Enter* after filling in each field.

After filling in the last field, your screen will go directly to your new “Work Folder” screen.

John Reagle

K = Keyboarding

N = New File

The next time you turn the unit on, the name you typed in the Folder Name field will appear in the Folder Selection screen. Pressing the corresponding F key will take you directly to your folder.

## Beginning a New File

To begin writing or to begin a new “file,” you must open your Work Folder, then press the *N* key for New File. You will be prompted to name your new file. Type in the file title or name and press enter. A blank screen will appear – ready to receive your text. The name given to the file will appear both in your folder screen and it can appear on file that you send to the printer or computer.

## Exiting a File

While in a file, simply press the *Esc* key to exit the file. You will return to the Work Folder screen and your file name will be listed at the top left. All text is automatically saved.

## Editing a File

To edit (add, change, delete or rearrange) a file, you must enter your Work Folder, locate the file name on the left side of the screen, place the > in front of the file name (by using the up and down arrow keys), then press *Enter*.

> Old Yeller	Joanie Anderson
President Report	
Daily journal	K = Keyboarding
Our Principal	N = New File

*Student Work Folder*

Upon pressing Enter you will be in the text file and can now make any changes you wish. Use the arrow keys to move the cursor up, down, left or right within your file. The Home and End keys will take you to the begging of the line or the end of the line you are currently on. Pressing Ctrl-Home will take you to the beginning of your file. Pressing Ctrl-End will take you to the very end of your file. Pressing the Delete key removes the character directly above the cursor. Pressing the Backspace key removes the character directly behind or to the left of the cursor.

## Deleting a File

In order to delete a file, you must be in that file. Open your work folder F1-F8, arrow to the file name and press enter. While in your file, press the Delete File key (very top row). You will be asked to confirm this decision.



**WARNING** – *Once deleted, your file can not be retrieved. If you are concerned about someone deleting your file, you should protect entry to your work folder by creating a folder password. (see Password Folder Protection, p. 10)*

# Spell Check

*The Writer* features an advanced Spell Check system. Not only will it offer suggestions, but it will allow you to view the misspelled word in context and it will allow you to edit the text while in Spell Check mode.

Access the file you would like spell checked. While in the file, press the Spell Check key located in the top row. *The Writer* will immediately locate words not in its 80,000 word dictionary. One of the two screens shown below will appear:

This is an egzample of the spell check screen

No suggestions - To Skip, press  
Spell check or edit text above

This is an exsample of the spell check screen

> example		TO SKIP
ensample		Press Spell Check
sample		or edit text above

**Replacing the word** – Suggested spellings are located in a list to the left. Using the up and down arrow keys, scroll through the list. If you locate a word that you believe is the correct spelling for the word above, press the *Enter* key and the word will immediately be inserted into your text.

After *The Writer* has checked your entire file for spelling errors, the text, “Spell Check Complete” will appear and then you will be returned to your file.

**Skipping the word** – If you would like to skip the word highlighted, simply press the *Spell Check* key again and the spell check process will continue.



You may also edit your text while in the Thesaurus mode. After editing you may press the *Thesaurus* key or *Esc* to exit.

**Special Note:** *Often a word will have more than one meaning and thus have more than one set of synonyms. By pressing the Thesaurus key once or even twice again, you may be shown a second or even third set of word choices.*

## Automatic Shutoff

To preserve battery life, *The Writer* is preset to turn off after 45 seconds of non-use. No student data will be lost. Simply press the *On* key to restart. If the student was working on a lesson at the time of automatic shutoff, that lesson will need to be repeated.

## Saving Text

All text and keyboarding scores are automatically saved. No special “Save” steps are necessary. If your unit displays a “Low Battery” signal, you needn’t be concerned about losing data. Your unit will continue to store text for many days even if you are receiving this signal.

## Batteries

*The Writer* runs for approximately 300 hours on three good quality AA alkaline batteries. A “LOW BATTERY” signal will be displayed when batteries become low. The batteries can be changed at any time without loss of file data. Rechargeable NiCAD AA batteries and rechargeable Alkaline AA batteries may be used with *The Writer*. However, these batteries must be recharged outside of *The Writer*.

During long periods of non-use (summer break), it is best to remove the batteries from *The Writer*.

## **Battery replacement recommendations**

Do not remove the old or low batteries until you have the new replacement batteries ready. Remove the old or low batteries, then immediately insert the new batteries. While there is a backup battery on board, it will not save text indefinitely.

Use only high quality AA Alkaline batteries.

*The Writer* uses a super capacitor as a backup power supply to prevent data loss when the unit is turned off or while batteries are being replaced. This capacitor should be good for up to 10 years and can be replaced.

## **Password – Folder Protection**

When there are a number of students using one *Writer*, it is recommended that students protect access to their work folder through the use of a password. We do not recommend folder password protection be used for students in grades one or two. Additionally, we recommend that teachers stress the confidential nature of the password, that it not be shared with anyone.

**Enabling Folder Password Protection** – Open your work folder and press Alt-P. You will be given a prompt to enter a password (up to three digits). The length was purposefully kept short so that it can more easily be remembered.

<p>Enter New Folder Password</p> <p>Password: [    ]</p> <p>Verify:</p>
---

We recommend that students be told to use something very familiar, i.e. their initials, address, first three letters of their middle name or birth date.

After typing in the password the student must verify the password by typing it again. The next time that student or anyone attempts to access this folder, they will be prompted to type in a password.

**Changing a password** – The password for a folder can be changed at any time. However, we strongly recommend that students NOT be told how this is done. Students who can change their folder password sometimes change it too frequently, thereby creating confusion and uncertainty. We recommend that students be told that their folder password can be changed only under very unique circumstances and only with the teacher’s approval.

Open the work folder, then press Alt-P. A harmless password screen will appear. At this time press Alt-P once again and there will be a password prompt “Enter New Password.” This prompt will allow you to change the folder password.

**Deleting a password** – If a student forgets his/her password or for some reason the teacher would like to access a folder that is password protected, the teacher will need to access the Password Override screen. To access the Password Override screen,



## Sending Files

Written files and keyboarding reports can be sent via infrared to both computers and some printers. Both must be equipped with a *The Writer* IR receiver. See installation instructions below.

Once the IR receivers are properly installed, files may be sent.

## Sending Steps

- Turn your computer on and open any writing application
- On your computer, position the cursor within the text box where you would like the text to begin. (You may also pick the size and type of font now, that you would like to receive)
- Turn *The Writer* on, open your folder, then open the file you would like to send
- Point *The Writer* at the receiver and press the *Send to Computer* key located on the top row
- *The Writer* should be positioned approximately 1 to 5 feet from the receiver
- If the file is not being received accurately, you may need to slow the speed of transmission. While in your Work Folder, press Alt-I and enter a number 0-9. (0=fast; 9=slow)
- To send only the text file (no heading or checklist) simply follow steps above, but hold down the *Option* key at the bottom left of keyboard while pressing the *Send to Computer* key.

# Sending Keyboarding Progress Reports to the Computer

- Turn your computer on and open any writing application
- **Select Courier font, 9 or 10 point**
- On your computer, position the cursor at the top left corner of your screen
- Turn *The Writer* on and open your Work Folder
- Press *K* to open the Keyboard Instruction menu
- Point *The Writer* at the receiver and press the *Send to Computer* key located on the top row
- *The Writer* should be positioned approximately 1 to 5 feet from the receiver
- If the file is not being received accurately, you may need to slow the speed of transmission. While in your Work Folder, press Alt-I and enter a number 0-9. (0=fast; 9=slow)
- If report columns are not aligned properly, check to see that the font is set at 9 or 10 point Courier. Additionally, you may need to make the right and left margins smaller.

**Special Note:** *We recommend creating stationery or a document template with the proper settings for report printing.*

## Sending “Formatted” Text to the Computer and Printer

A Formatted file contains a heading which includes the student data provided when the work folder was first created, i.e. student name, teacher name, etc. It will also provide a “Good Writing Checklist” at the end of the file.

### ***There are four checklist templates available:***

1. Good Writing Checklist
2. Perfect Paragraph Checklist
3. Multi-paragraph Checklist
4. Six Trait Writing Checklist
5. (No Checklist)

Teachers can select the appropriate checklist for the writing sample being worked on and have it appear at the bottom of the text file. To choose the checklist, open to the text file and press *Alt-C*. A selection menu will appear.

To send only the text file (no heading or checklist) to your computer, simply follow all steps above for sending a file, but hold down the Option key at the bottom left of the keyboard and at the same time press the *Send to Computer* key.

**Note:** *When sending a file or progress report the computer or printer, The Writer unit must be held very still until all data has been sent.*

## Connecting the IR Receiver to the Computer

The IR receiver should be connected in a pass-through mode. That is your PC or Mac keyboard cable will pass through the IR receiver and then continue on to the back of your computer. See *illustration*.

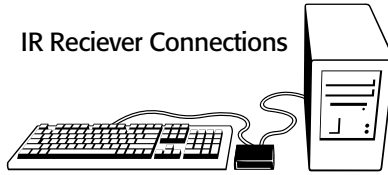
The IR receiver is a passive device, allowing you to work at your computer without any interference. It is ready at all times to receive a file sent from *The Writer*.



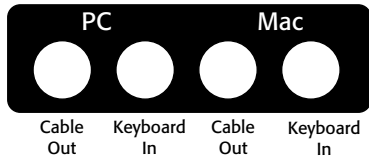
### ***Your desktop computer must be turned off when performing these steps:***

- Remove the keyboard cable from the back of your computer
- Plug the keyboard cable into the back of the IR receiver
- Using the keyboard cable supplied, connect the IR receiver to the keyboard port of your computer
- After you have connected the IR receiver, you can safely turn your desktop computer on.

## IR Receiver Connections



### Back of IR Receiver



## QuickWrite

At times, all that may be desired is a quick open file to jot something down or take some notes. For this reason *The Writer* features a QuickWrite folder. Simply turn *The Writer* on and press the *QuickWrite* key located on the top row of the keyboard. You will be prompted to open a "file" F1-F8. Press an *F* key to open a blank writing file. Press *Esc* to exit or press *QuickWrite* to open another quick file. These unnamed files can also be deleted, sent, spell checked, etc.

## Special Functions

The Work Folder screen must be opened to initiate these special functions:

Password Protection	Alt - P
Delete Folder	Alt - D
Change Folder Name	Alt - F
Change IR Transfer Speed	Alt - I

## Care and Maintenance

*The Writer* is ruggedly designed. If taken care of properly it will provide years of trouble-free service.

- Keep *The Writer* away from extreme heat and moisture. Care should be taken so that the unit is not left for extended periods of time in direct sunlight. Do not leave units in an enclosed automobile.
- Extended exposure to dirt or dust can also cause damage to the keyboard and circuitry
- Store *The Writer* in a case or storage compartment of some type, whenever units are not in use
- Clean the plastic shell regularly to keep the unit looking sharp and new. Use a mild cleaner and a damp rag to wipe down keys and the plastic areas.
- Take care when cleaning the clear overlay. Use a very soft cloth only. Do not use abrasive paper towels or strong cleaning fluids as this will mar and scratch the finish.
- Keys that come off can be snapped back into position. Simply place into correct position and press.
- Turn off *The Writer* immediately when not in use to preserve battery life and always store units in a cool, dry location
- Remove batteries whenever the units will not be used for an extended period of time

## Keyboard Instruction Operation

*The Writer* is equipped with the most sophisticated portable keyboard instruction available. It is equipped with sophisticated and patented keyboarding features. Features that will help instill homerow and shift key discipline.

*The Writer* is preprogrammed with 116 sequential keyboarding lessons. Important benchmarks must be passed in each lesson in order for the student to progress to the next lesson. The main Keyboard Instruction window offers students these choices:

- To begin their next lesson
- To practice any lesson of their choosing
- To be assessed with a 60 second timed assessment lesson
- To practice in a “free type” mode

## Keyboarding Mastery Features

*The Writer* includes three “mastery” features. Each presents a benchmark or bar that must be passed in order for the student to proceed to the next lesson. The benchmarks are:

- Words Per Minute
- Accuracy
- Homerow Points

### Words per minute and accuracy levels

The Words Per Minute and accuracy benchmark is set at level one at the time students enter their initial data.

Level 1 – 6 WPM 75% Accuracy

Level 2 – 15 WPM 80% Accuracy

Level 3 – 30 WPM 85% Accuracy

Level 4 – Customized WPM and Accuracy levels

**Changing Levels** – At any time this level can be changed. To change levels, open to the keyboarding menu screen and press *Alt-L*. You will be prompted to input the new level.

Set Lesson Level
New Level : [ ]
Level Now : 1 (6 WPM, 75%)

Press *Enter* when done.

## Homerow Points

During the course of each lesson, *The Writer* will flash this message on the screen three times: PRESS ALL HOMEROW KEYS. Pressing all homerow keys within 1 second will earn the student one homerow point. (These points will be displayed on the screen and on the Student Progress Report.) Students must achieve two Homerow points during the course of each lesson in order to proceed to the next lesson.

## Homerow Discipline and the Homerow Advantage™

Homerow discipline is a critical attribute of a proficient keyboardist. Along with the small bumps located on all F and J keys, *The Writer* utilizes its special custom key screening and the Homerow Advantage – homerow reinforcement feature to establish homerow discipline within your students. Homerow discipline means that fingers return to a “base” position after moving to type different keys. **Fingers needn't be in constant contact with the homerow keys, rather fingers should float lightly above the homerow keys.**

The Homerow Advantage is a special program code built into *The Writer*. This special code requires students to press all homerow keys both before starting a lesson and at certain specific intervals during each lesson in order to continue the lesson. This reinforcement feature helps provide the ongoing practice and monitoring necessary, especially as students are first learning to develop homerow discipline. When requested by *The Writer*, students should press all homerow keys firmly and evenly for about ½ of a second.



**Note:** *For special circumstances, this homerow reinforcement feature can be disabled by pressing Alt-H in the keyboarding menu screen.*

### Disabling the Homerow Advantage feature

Pressing *Alt-H* while in the keyboarding menu screen will disable the homerow reinforcement feature.

When the homerow feature is disabled, the LCD will no longer show the homerow point count in the lower left corner of the display during the lesson

Pressing *Alt-H* while in the keyboarding menu screen will reactivate this homerow feature.

## Shift Key Discipline and Shift Key Advantage™

*The Writer* also offers a powerful shift key reinforcement feature. Often students use an incorrect shift key when making a capital letter. They will use the shift key that is on the same side of the keyboard as the letter they wish to capitalize. *The Writer* will not allow students to do this. During their keyboarding lessons, students will only be able to use the correct shift key in order to make capital letters. *Example:* In order to make a capital A, only the shift key on the right hand side of the keyboard will work. In order to make a capital K, only the shift key on the left hand side of the keyboard will work.

Using the shift key properly and proficiently is an important but very difficult keyboarding skill for students (especially young ones) to learn. The Shift Key Advantage is a powerful feature that can greatly assist with instruction.

### Disabling the Shift Key Advantage

The shift key reinforcement feature can be disabled (or enabled) simply by pressing *Alt-S* while in the Keyboard Instruction menu screen.

## Assessment

*The Writer* is equipped with a special assessment feature. This feature can be accessed at any time by pressing **A** in the Keyboard Instruction menu screen. The assessment is 60 seconds long and measures wpm and accuracy. Prior to beginning the assessment, the student will be asked to type in the date. The date and assessment score will be displayed on the Keyboarding Progress Report.

### ***This assessment feature can be used to:***

- Establish the proper benchmark level for the student
- Provide information for pre and post testing
- Provide information on general progress

## Sending a Keyboarding Report to the Computer or Printer

After each lesson, and for each individual student, *The Writer* automatically records words per minute, accuracy, homerow points, lesson attempts, the student skill level and assessment scores. At any time, the student may print out his/her complete progress report.

The computer and printer must be equipped with a special Keyboard Instructor IR receiver. One of these IR receivers comes with each “Bundle” purchased or it can be purchased separately from your Keyboard Instructor dealer.

## **Sending to the printer**

- Power ON the printer.
- Power ON *The Writer*, open up the student work folder then press *K* to display the Keyboard Instruction menu screen. Point *The Writer* at the IR receiver and press the *Send to Printer* key. Hold the unit very steady while sending. A SENDING signal will flash on the screen for approximately 5 seconds. The printer may take a moment or two to begin printing.

## **Sending to the computer**

See “Sending Keyboarding Progress Reports to the Computer” on page 14.

## **Pause Key**

The pause key located on the top row of keys, pauses the keyboarding lesson. When this key is pressed during a keyboarding lesson, the lesson timer will freeze and the screen will display a “Paused” signal. This is designed to allow students to stop, stretch and rest at any time during their lesson.

## Keyboarding Special Functions

You must be in the Keyboard Instruction menu to make these adjustments.

Changing keyboarding levels	Press Alt - L
Enabling/Disabling Homerow Reinforcement	Press Alt - H
Enabling/Disabling Shift Key Reinforcement	Press Alt - S
Advance student lesson number	Press Alt - N

### After Last Lesson

After students complete their last lesson successfully, (lesson 116), we recommend that students restart their lessons at lesson 1 and move their benchmark level up. This is also a very good time to repeat the lessons using the PowerSkin keyboard covers.

To restart at lesson one, press *Alt-N* while in the keyboarding menu screen.

To change benchmark levels, press *Alt-L* while in the keyboarding menu screen.

# Notes:

# AKT

ADVANCED  
KEYBOARD  
TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

P.O. BOX 2418  
PASO ROBLES  
CALIFORNIA 93447-2418  
800.797.7121  
805.239.8973 FAX  
[WWW.KEYBOARDINSTRUCTOR.COM](http://WWW.KEYBOARDINSTRUCTOR.COM)

