



Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Instructional Resources Library

www.tsbvi.edu | 512-454-8631 | 1100 W. 45th St. | Austin, TX 78756

Basic Concepts: Opening Microsoft Word and Computer Focus with JAWS (with or without a Focus 40 braille display)

Age(s) / Grade Level(s): Elementary

Subject(s): Technology

Length of time: 30-45 minutes

Curriculum Standards:

- RULE §126.8 Technology Applications, Grade 3, Adopted 2022
 - (11) Practical technology concepts--processes. The student engages with technology systems, concepts, and operations. The student is expected to:
 - (A) compare and contrast applications such as word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation tools for relevance to an assigned task; and
 - (B) perform software application functions such as inserting or deleting text, inserting images, and formatting page layout and margins.

Objective(s):

- Student will learn how to open Microsoft Word
- Student will learn what the term "Computer Focus" means and how to switch focus from one program to another
- Student will learn how to check the program or application title in order to verify "Computer Focus"

Materials Needed:

- Computer

Lesson/Activity Sequence:

1. In this lesson, you will learn how to open Microsoft Word. You will also learn what the word Computer Focus means and how to switch your focus. Lastly, you will learn a helpful command for checking your Computer Focus when you are unsure of where you are located on the computer.
2. First, let's talk a little bit about Microsoft Word. Do you remember from our earlier lesson on basic concepts what the word software means? That's right! Software are programs (also known as applications) that are installed on the computer so that you can perform tasks. Microsoft Word is a kind of program or application that is loaded on your computer so that you can use it to complete work. We usually just call it Word for short but the reason the full name is Microsoft Word is because Microsoft is the company that makes it. Do you know what Word is used for? Yes, Word is used for writing. This kind of program (the kind where you write) is called a word processing program.
3. Let's open up Word!
 - a. In order to open Word, you will go to the area of your Start Menu called "Search Box" and JAWS will announce this as "Search Box Edit" to let you know that this is a place where you can edit (or type).
 - b. Press Windows Key (or Dots 3 4 chord)
 - c. Start typing in the letters "W-o-r-d" and wait until you hear JAWS say "Word app" then press Enter (Dot 8)
 - d. Once Word opens, it may open in something called "backstage view." To get out of backstage view, press your Escape key (Dots 1 3 5 6 chord)
 - e. You will now be in the area where you can edit in Word.
 - f. Congratulations! You opened up Word! We will practice writing in Word in the next lesson. Before we do that, we're going to talk about a concept called "Computer Focus."
4. Computer Focus
 - a. Computer Focus refers to the program, file, or tool the user is currently located in. What you hear the screen reader say is where you are focused. You can only have focus on one program or location within a program at a time.
 - b. For instance, in the previous lesson, you learned how to go to the Computer Desktop. Let's go there now (Windows Key + D or Dots 4 8 chord, Dots 1 4 5)
 - c. When you press Tab (Dots 4 5 chord) to move to the different areas of your desktop, what you are actually doing is shifting focus to each of the different areas of the desktop.

- d. Practice shifting focus and noticing what the screen reader says and what is displayed on the display as you do so. Utilize the Tactile Desktop (if needed) to illustrate how focus shifts around to the various areas of the computer desktop.
 - e. Now, let's say you want to put the focus back on Word, so that you can do some writing. The way that you shift focus between programs that you have open is by pressing your Alt key and holding it down with one finger while you press the tab key gently over and over (lifting your finger each time) and when you hear the program you want, you lift your fingers up and your focus will be in that program. (Note, this command has no equivalent on the braille display so is best executed using the keyboard). Let's practice!
 - f. What did you notice when you pressed Alt Tab...Tab...Tab...? How many programs do you have open?
5. Check your Program Title
- a. Let's say you've taken a break from your computer and now you're back on it and want to do some work but you've forgotten where your focus is. You can use a key command to check your program's title. This command is Caps Lock + T (Right Shift + B).
 - b. Let's practice!
6. Excellent! You opened up Microsoft Word, learned how to move your focus from one program to another, and also learned how to check your program title. These are super helpful tools that will help you navigate the computer. Let's review. First, show me one more time how you open up Word. Great job! In your own words, what does Computer Focus mean? What command allows us to move focus from one program to another? Can you show me? How can you check your program title?
7. Let's play a game (student teaches teacher). First, I want to open up Word - please describe for me how I should do this (perform skill according to student direction). Now, I am going to navigate the programs I have on my computer. What command should I press to move through them? Listen and tell me how many programs I have open (perform skill). Remind me, how can I check my current program title (perform skill)? Great job! Thank you for teaching me these valuable skills.
8. Questions?

How will I assess student progress?

- Student is able to open Word
- Student can explain what computer focus means
- Student can navigate through open programs to put focus on the desired choice
- Student can execute the command in order to verify a program's title

Differentiation:

1. Differentiate by Learning Modality

- **Tactile Learners:**
 - Use a tactile desktop or keyboard overlay to physically demonstrate focus movement.
 - Let students trace screen reader/Braille display feedback with fingers as they switch programs.
- **Visual Learners:**
 - Provide large-print screenshots or diagrams of the Start Menu, Search Box, and Alt+Tab interface.
 - Color-code keys like Windows, Tab, and Alt for quick recognition.
- **Auditory Learners:**
 - Emphasize JAWS announcements and sound cues as indicators of program focus.
 - Use call-and-response (e.g., teacher says “Alt+Tab,” students repeat and describe what they hear).

2. Differentiate by Skill Level

- **Beginner:**
 - Focus only on opening Word from the Start Menu and identifying current focus with Caps Lock + T.
 - Give extra guidance with hand-under-hand prompting or verbal step-by-step instructions.
- **Intermediate:**
 - Practice switching between Word and the Desktop using Alt+Tab, with repeated practice cycles.
 - Encourage students to narrate what they are doing.
- **Advanced:**
 - Challenge students to open multiple programs, switch focus between them independently, and explain what’s happening.
 - Introduce keyboard navigation without relying on tactile aids.

3. Differentiate by Support and Scaffolding

- **High Support:**
 - Pre-teach key vocabulary (focus, program, title bar) with physical objects or tactile graphics.

- Provide a printed or braille step-by-step checklist.
- **Medium Support:**
 - Offer a guided practice phase, then gradually reduce prompts as students become more confident.
- **Low Support:**
 - Have students take the lead by teaching the teacher, explaining commands, or troubleshooting when focus gets “lost.”
 - Give a “mystery challenge” (e.g., “I’m in the wrong program—help me get back to Word”).

Next steps/lesson:

- Microsoft Word: Creating and Saving a Document