

## SEN AND ICTs – SOME IDEAS THAT MAY HELP – SLIGO EDUCATION CENTRE.

*All websites mentioned in this course can be accessed via hyperlinks on this one webpage: [stpatsbns.eu/sen](http://stpatsbns.eu/sen)*

### Literacy Websites

#### a. Content Websites 1 – [Storyberries](http://Storyberries)

A selection of short stories to be read to children can be chosen (as shown in Fig 1) by Age, Time, Type, Topic or Conversation. All are free and each one is presented in one scrollable page, keeping the format simple and uniform throughout. The stories are beautifully illustrated and can be purchased in book form if desired.



This is an example of a story from Storyberries – Choose by Type – Chapter Books – the famous story “The Little Princess” (Fig 2) is reproduced here in 19 chapters with each chapter being presented on a single webpage – ideal for end of the day reading to encourage pupils with SEN to anticipate what might happen next – opportunities for development of oral language etc.



The option is available at the bottom of the home page to select books from a huge selection of books by conversation and category (Fig 3)



#### b. Content Rich Websites 2 - Oxford Owl

[Oxford Owl](http://Oxford Owl) is an amazing one stop shop for literacy development, has expanded hugely over the last few years and now provides most content free of charge. In the “For Home” Section alone, the site includes graduated activities and videos on [phonic development](#), [grammar and punctuation](#), [spellings](#), [handwriting](#), [reading](#), [creative writing](#) – even colouring activities (Fig 4)



Fig 4

[Colouring Activities](#) – chance to develop knowledge of characters.



Fig 5

[Ebooks](#) – Numerous ebooks, available in full colour, can be sorted by age, level, type or series (Fig 5). These ebooks are very engaging for pupils with SEN as they are very colourful, are fully graded allowing for correct level of vocabulary and success for pupils in being able to finish a book.



Fig 6

The book on the left (Fig 6) is called “Fetch” and is Level 1 – no words accompany the pictures. Clicking on the button on the bottom right hand corner allows the reader to turn the page. The



Fig 7

inside cover provides instructions on how to discuss the pictures with the pupil(s). It also ask you to introduce the words “fetch” and “catch”. The back cover provides follow up questions. As can be seen in Fig 6 there are two Play Activities also per book. Above (Fig 7) is one of the completed “Fetch” activities for this book. The pupil can self-assess their progress by clicking on the blue box with the correct symbol (mark it) in determine if they have completed the activity correctly.

The two page spread below (Fig 8) is from “Incredible Animals” – very colourful, informative but easy vocabulary, just enough text but would be appropriate, in relation to content, for pupils with SEN right up to secondary school level. There are specific instructions on the inside cover on how best to approach non-fiction books and there is a glossary and wordsearch at the back of the book.



Fig 8

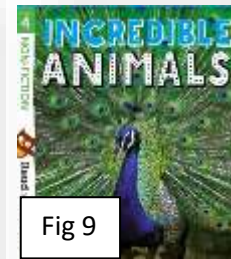


Fig 9

**c. Content Rich Websites 3 - [Teach Your Monster to Read](#)**

Interactive phonics game, hugely engaging for pupils, allowing a teacher to set up multiple accounts for pupils – tracks progress of pupils, app version involves payment, computer version (PC and Apple) completely free. Teacher signs up and creates pupil account as in Fig 10. Make passwords editable – below creation of pupil accounts.



Fig 10

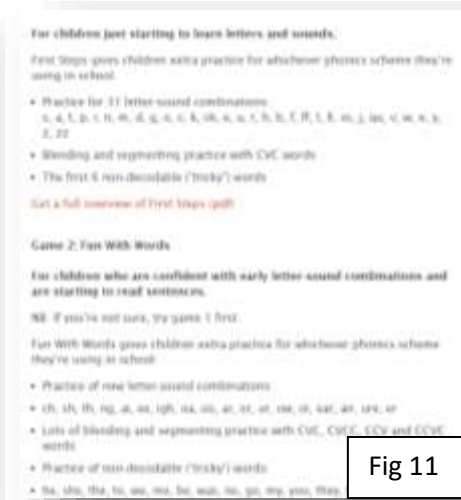


Fig 11

Below, Fig 12, is a sample of a printable activity and Fig 13 (hyperlinked) provides information on how to involve parents to assist pupils gain the necessary phonic skills. Fig 14 is taken from the [full instructional guide](#) which is available in pdf format.



Fig 12

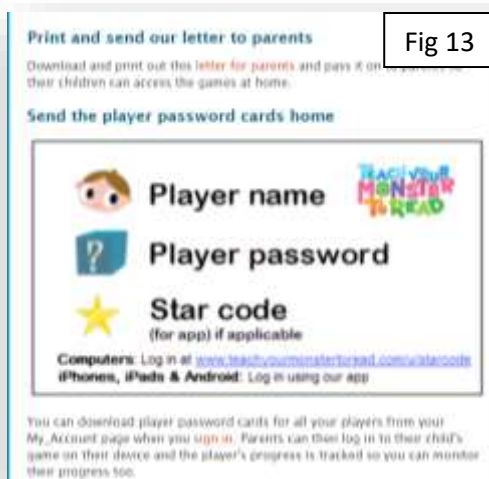


Fig 13



Fig 14

### Criteria for Assessment of Good Literacy Website for Pupils with SEN.

- fun, interactive and engaging
- has been tried and tested over time, pupils return willingly to continue work.
- peer-reviewed with testimonials/reviews/research links provided by site.
- content set at appropriate level
- at a minimum, outline of educational content and progression provided, preferably, full online manual (probably in pdf format) provided for educators (as Fig 14 above)
- pupil accounts allowing for tracking of individual progress
- teacher account allowing for monitoring of pupils, resetting of passwords and printing of results.

### Content Creation Websites 1 – [Sightwords](#)

Unlike the section above, with these websites, though there may be content, advice, tips, instructions available, our focus for these sites is on creating own content.

- Huge resource which includes video step by step links to explain the key concepts of language attainment. e.g. Basics of Phonological and Phonemic Awareness [explained](#) and Basics of Sentence Construction [explained](#)
- Opportunity to create own [flashcards](#), [bingo cards](#),



Fig 15



Fig 16

Fig 18 shows the first of 13 pages from the pdf in quarter-page layout of the first set of Kindergarten (52 words) flash cards (Fig 17)

The cards are presented in a clear font that is universally acceptable for all pupils and show the reading direction to remind pupils to read from left to right and teacher to start moving his/her finger from the circle.

As can be seen from the drop down menu on Fig 19 there are many word games that can be played with Sight Words resources.

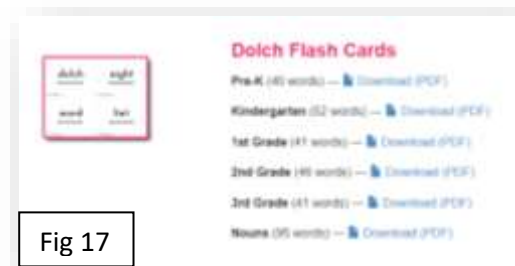


Fig 17

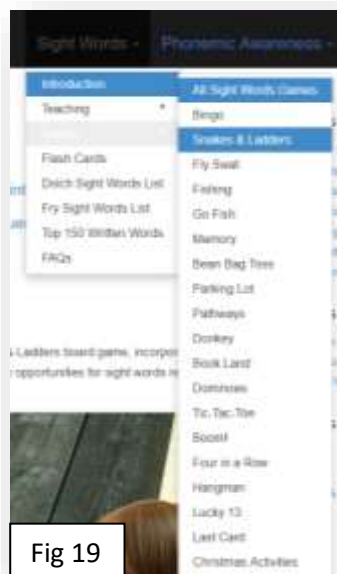


Fig 19

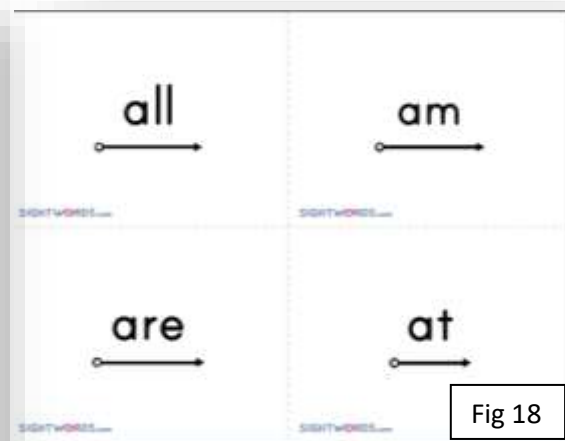


Fig 18

## Content Creation Websites 2: [SEN Teacher](#).

SENTeacher.org is a huge content creation website for literacy and numeracy and is completely free. It is THE website that every teacher catering for pupils with SEN should be fully aware of and comfortable using the tools it provides in order to create customised resources. The many advantages of SENteacher include:

- Templates are totally customisable allowing for individualised resources to be created
- Numerous worksheets at the same level can be created to allow pupils with SEN more time to practise at one level before moving on to a higher one
- All the basics are covered in both literacy and numeracy: common sight word lists, word games, time, money etc.
- Search tools make finding symbol search for e.g. autism resources much easier (Fig 20).
- The web links section is very focussed and a great one stop shop to find out more on any particular SEN need (Fig 21)
- In Printables section, every resource, made available for printing, is fully customisable.



Fig 20



Fig 21

### Sample Customised Resource - SENTeacher – Creating a Customised Word & Picture Card Set



Fig 22

1. Click on Printables – Literacy – Word & Picture Cards (6th option on this page)
2. The page in front of you should look like Fig 22
3. Above the page there are choices – select “Load Cards” – this option is ringed above pictures
4. After clicking this option the resultant page offers a choice of 425 prepared wordlists (Fig 23)
5. Scroll down the page (Fig 24) to “a words”



Fig 23

6. The resultant page of a words should look like Fig 24 below (minus the extra pics/writing)

This is Page 1. As new cards are added more pages will be accessed from here.

Add any number of new cards here

STEP 1

STEP 2

STEP 3

STEP 4

Fig 24

### To Customise by Adding a Card:

STEP 1 – Click on blue button “Add a card” as shown in Fig 24. This will open a picture like STEP 1 pic above.

STEP 2 – Type in arm in Label box. Click on blue button underneath picture “Symbol search”. Search for “arm” shows the choices shown.

STEP 3 – Choose the second symbol and ensure the label “arm” is applied above it.

STEP 4 - This will be added as a new card – either on the end of P1 or start of P2 as shown.

The power of SEN teacher to provide quality customised resources quickly should be immediately apparent on completion of this simple activity. Bingo card game illustrated in Fig 25.



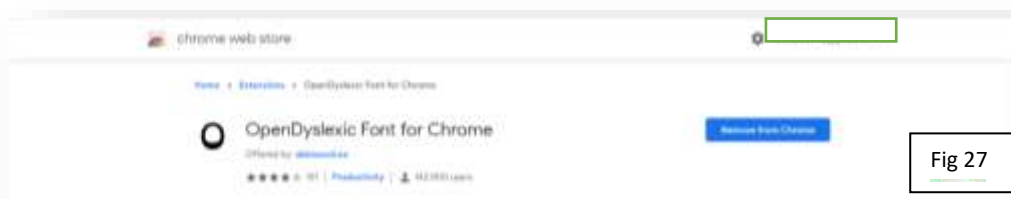
Some further literacy suggestions be found here: <https://www.stpatsbns.eu/sen>

## Using Google Chrome Extensions to level the playing field!

Google Chrome has the capacity to add extensions to its browser in order to increase its functionality. This is very important information for all SEN teachers as it affords the teacher, of all pupils with SEN from Third Class to Senior Cycle, the opportunity to complete assignments on their own and so enhance self-esteem. These add-on tools include, OpenDyslexic font, Google Dictionary, Select and Speak, Voice Recognition and Read and Write for Google Chrome. They are all available by direct link from the [stpatricksns.eu/sen](http://stpatricksns.eu/sen) page (Scroll to the bottom of the page in order to add them to Google Chrome – Fig 26)



1. **OpenDyslexic font** – when you click on the link it opens Google Web store. Because the extension is already installed on my computer (see Fig 27) the only available option is to “Remove from Chrome”. If you haven’t installed before then the “Install” button should be available on the top right corner.



This font allows pupils with dyslexia to view **any** webpage with a weighted font that is easier for them to read and to distinguish between letters, particularly b,d,p. To determine that this is so, once the font is switched on, top right of webpage (Fig 28 below), go to Irish Independent and view – you may need to refresh the screen in order to view the page with dyslexia font but Fig 29 shows what it should look like. The letters are now weighted to suit the reader with dyslexia. Once installed it will always be available on the top right toolbar of Google Chrome – don’t forget to switch off as other users may prefer to use alternative font.



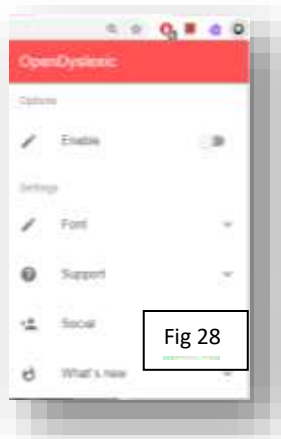


Fig 28



Fig 29

2. **Google Dictionary** – a very useful tool in the promotion of independence for pupils with SEN. The extension is installed in the same way as OpenDyslexic font. When installed it will appear on the top right toolbar with a red book symbol. Now, the meaning of any word on any webpage, provided it is not a link to another page, can be found simply by double-clicking on the word (Fig 30). The word meaning opens in a pop-up with the option to speak the word also present.



Fig 30

3. **Select and Speak** – allows any piece of text from any website to be read aloud when selected. When installed and text selected (not hyperlinked text), right click on the text and the option to “Read with Select and Speak” will now be available – Fig 31.

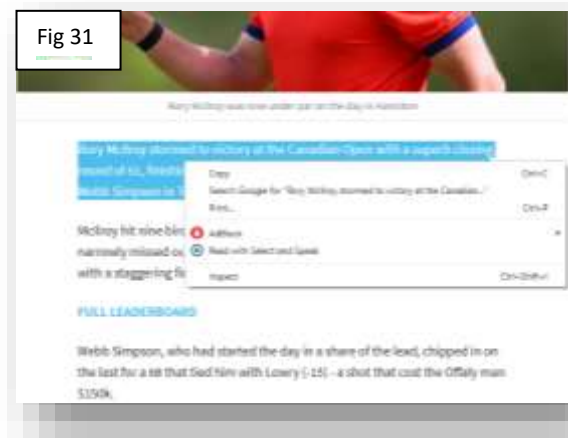


Fig 31

4. **Voice Recognition** – this extension/app has now been superseded by Voice Typing in Google Docs – simple and effective tool (which will be evaluated later in the course).

5. **Read and Write for Google Chrome** – this extension involves installation of an extra toolbar for use with Google apps such as Google Docs and Slides. View the [video](#) on YouTube. It is very useful, ideal for pupils with SEN, but ordinarily quite expensive for them to purchase. Everyone is allowed a 30 day trial after download but only teachers are entitled to continue to use the extension free after the trial period. In order for teachers to continue to have full access to all the available tools they must [sign up](#), (link also on [stpatbns.eu/sen](http://stpatbns.eu/sen)) to verify that they really are teachers. Once that is done, teachers can continue to use the extension free of charge. When installed from Google Web Store – the toolbar can be viewed by clicking on the rw logo on the top right of Google Chrome (Fig 32).

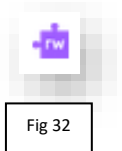


Fig 32

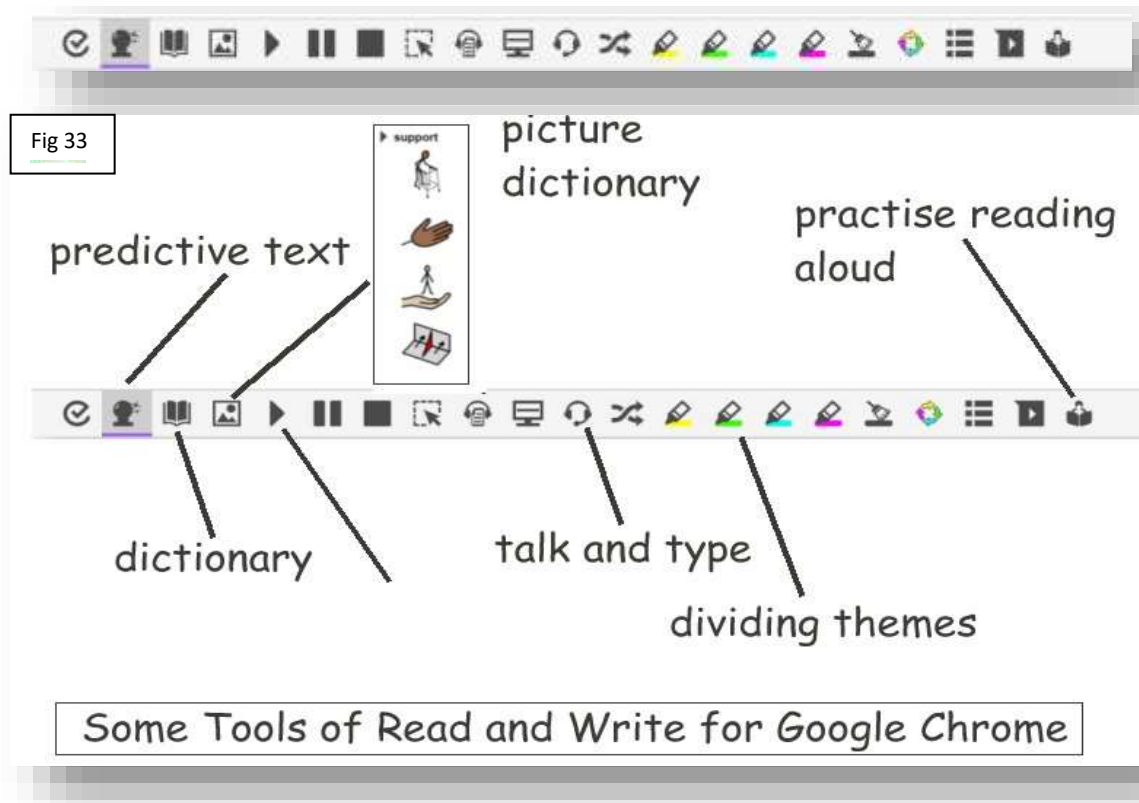
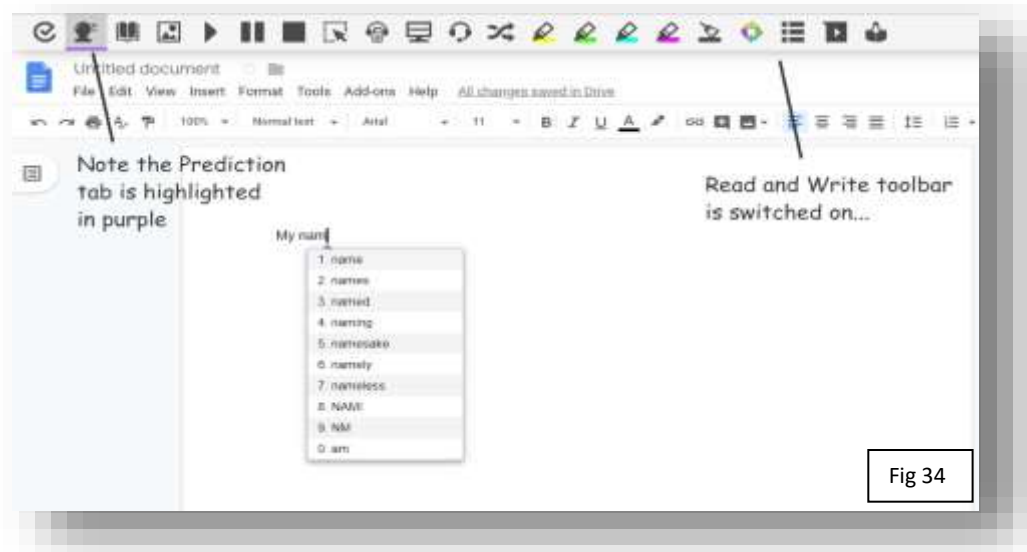


Fig 33

The tools as shown on Fig 33 are very powerful for pupils with SEN as it affords them independence in their reading and writing process.

- predictive text –works like phone text allowing the pupil with SEN to overcome motor skills deficits, if present, and relieve the frustration of not being able to get their thoughts on paper as quickly as able-bodied pupils.
- picture dictionary – is very visual and gives an excellent graphic to explain concepts. It is quite good at even abstract concepts.
- talk and type –works like the voice type tool in Google Docs.
- colour dividing –allows pupil to select similar ideas and group them, it will even bring all the same coloured text together – not used very often.
- practise reading aloud – very useful, again encourages ownership and independent learning. Pupil can monitor their own progression in reading skills.

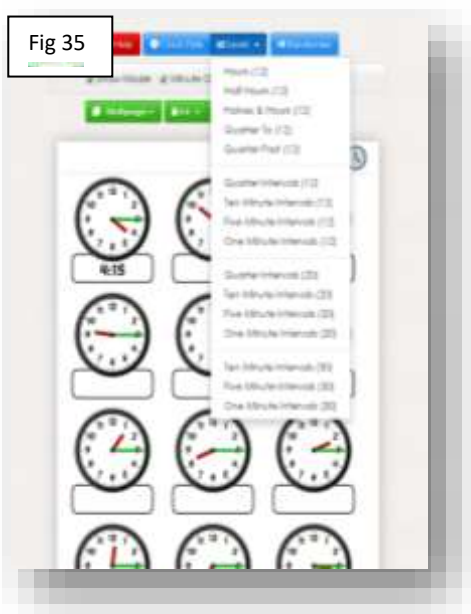


In the example above (Fig 34), Prediction is being used with Google Docs.

### Numeracy Websites Suitable for Pupils with SEN.

Like the Literacy Websites, there are two types – content websites and content-free websites. The content websites are those that encourage pupils to gain knowledge of a chosen topic. A full list of numeracy websites suitable for pupils with SEN is available on the course webpage. To refer to just two of each here:

1. [SENteacher.org](http://SENteacher.org) – Again the pre-eminent website for numeracy resources due to the ability to customise the available resources to cater for the specific needs and progression rate of the pupil with SEN. Two topics which are crucial for all pupils to gain knowledge of, are time and money. SENteacher is very strong on both.



- Worksheets for topic of **TIME** (Fig 35) can be created according to current knowledge level.
- Multiple different worksheets can be created at the same level e.g. if a pupil needs further practice at half hour level new worksheets can be created at that level.
- Up to 6 random sheets can be created at a time using Multipage – green button.
- Teacher can decide to leave in or omit minute gradations.
- When in Print Preview the option to save as pdf is available allowing the teacher to save and print again later.
- Very colourful, well presented worksheets.

- Worksheets for MONEY can be set at any level starting from 1c and 2c coins.
- The default currency is sterling but this can be changed under Coins – blue button.
- Clicking off the €1 button and leaving only 1c and 2c coins ticked ensures worksheets are at basic level.
- The number of coins in each question can be reduced by changing level (see Fig 36)
- Reducing level, if necessary, keeps the calculation inside the child's Zone of Proximal Development.
- Again, randomise, multipage and saving as pdf are all available as before.

Fig 36

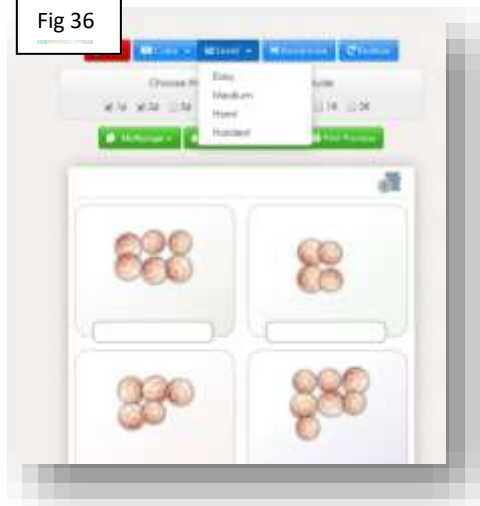
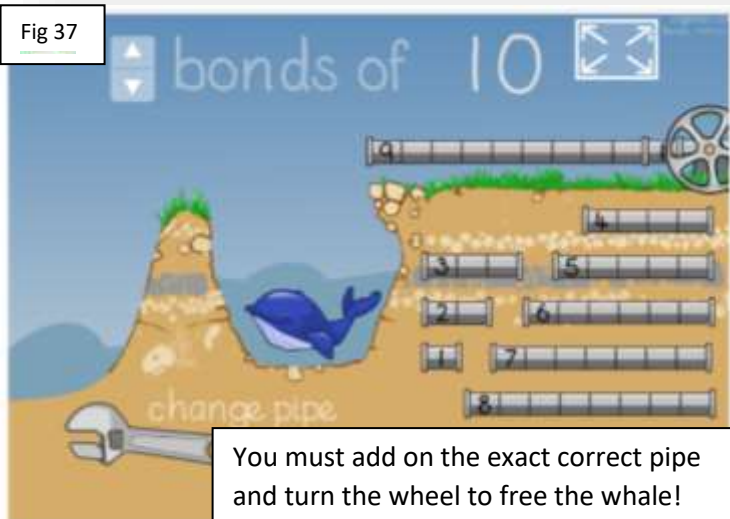


Fig 37



This is Bonds of 10 (Fig 37) from the Interactive Sites for Education –

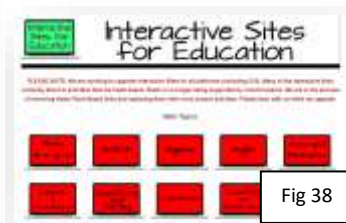


Fig 38

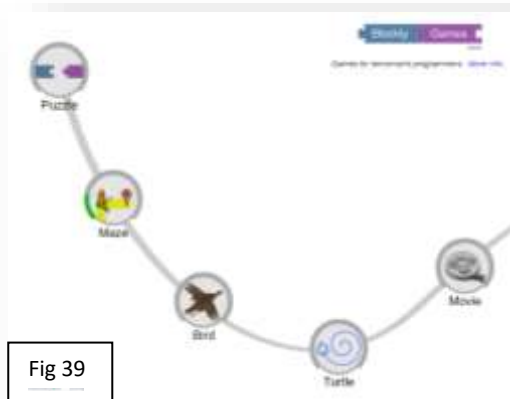
Addition. This is great for assisting individual pupils gain the concept of number

- This is just one of a huge bank of websites under Weebly – Maths websites.

Please note that, due to the use of Adobe Flash, some of these sites work better with Microsoft Edge rather than older versions of Google Chrome. They seem to work fine if your Chrome is up to date. Some sites are no longer available.

Sometimes, pupils with SEN are very strong visual learners. They need to be challenged. Consider Blockly (Fig 39) for this purpose at senior primary and secondary SEN.

Fig 39



Of particular importance are the challenges in Puzzle and Maze – note the green strip on Maze (Fig. 39) - this shows some levels have been completed.

Blockly leads pupils to programming in general and Scratch in particular.



Fig 40

This picture (Fig 40) is taken from one of the many TopMarks games available for use with SEN pupils – they are all tablet friendly.

### Apps of Interest for iPad

- [Reading Eggs](#) (Fig 41) – colourful, fun, interactive engaging games, cost per year per SEN child. Includes a placement test to determine child's reading level and much more.
- [Book Creator](#) – excellent free app allows pupils to create their own books. Now includes Google's Autodraw on the PC version.
- [Teach Your Monster to Read](#) (Fig 42) – app costs around €5. Can be used on a whole class level on the interactive whiteboard, in the computer room with children working independently or as part of literacy stations where children use the app for 15-20 minutes before moving to a new station. The game can be used with children who are in the first stages of learning to read or with older children who need more practise. 3 levels – First Steps, Fun with Words, Champion Reader
- [Readtheory.org](#) (Fig 43) - Free website based on reading comprehension. Teacher provides accounts for each pupil and can monitor their performance. Pre-test determines reading level. It will tell you who is performing at, above or below their average.
- More iPad app suggestions can be sourced at: [www.stpatsbns.eu/sen](http://www.stpatsbns.eu/sen)



Fig 41



Fig 42



Fig 43