

T H E  
HANDBOOK  
F O R

**KIDTALK™**

*One of the Talking Notebook™ Series.*

*A Powerful Learning Tool  
for Reading and Writing Mastery.*



**First Byte®**

THE WORLD'S LEADER IN SOFTWARE SPEECH TECHNOLOGY.

## KIDTALK HANDBOOK



# KidTalk Handbook

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First Byte, Inc.  
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Long Beach, CA 90806

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## Introduction

Congratulations! You have just purchased **KidTalk™**, the first writing and reading skill builder that talks! **KidTalk** is designed to improve your writing and reading skills and let you have fun at the same time. **KidTalk** is a proud member of the **First Byte® Talking Notebook™ Series**, high quality educational software, using synthesized speech, to help the user/student learn better reading, writing and communication skills.

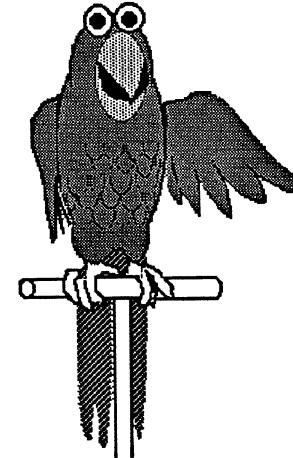
**KidTalk** is designed to help improve reading and writing skills from preschool through junior high levels. **KidTalk** allows the user to unite their own stories and then hear their written words spoken,

This **Handbook** is designed to be a general overview of **KidTalk**. Use it to learn about **KidTalk's** features and educational content.

**KidTalk** itself will assist the user with on-line Help at the moment the user wants more information. Unlike this general **Handbook**, the talking on-line options will address specific operating instructions for the exact brand and model of computer that is being used.

The First Part of this **Handbook** is aimed at the user/student, and includes exciting ideas to try and a quick reference to the **KidTalk** commands and picture symbols.

Part Two is for the parent or helper. It contains information that will help the parent or teacher assist the user as they work on **KidTalk** projects.



## PART ONE: USER'S GUIDE

### 1. Welcome to KidTalk

Congratulations! You have the first **Talking Notebook**, a powerful writer's tool that will help you turn your ideas into exciting talking stories. In fact, with **KidTalk** you can write stories, plays, TV scripts, poems, reports, messages to friends... anything you wish. You're the author, the creator and with your imagination and skill you will find that almost nothing is impossible!

**KidTalk** makes writing a new adventure! With the **SmoothTalker®** speech capability in **KidTalk**, for the first time you will be able to write your story and then hear it spoken, as well as see it on the screen and print it out on paper. With speech at your command, many new things become possible. **KidTalk**'s two voices let you create characters that talk to each other. Since you decide how a word should be spoken, you can create secret codes in your stories to stump your friends. Best of all you can try out your own ideas and see how they sound.

Think of the possibilities:

- Amazing talking stories that astound your friends and family.
- A way to leave messages to important people like "... I'm sorry I forgot to do the dishes. I'll do them twice tomorrow!"
- A chance for a future TV script writer to practice without the need for actors.
- A talking report for school that is sure to get attention!
- A tool to use when you have to memorize the Gettysburg Address, or anything else.

That's just the beginning! With **KidTalk** you are the writer in charge. You create the ideas and words and then control the way they are said. Enjoy the limitless possibilities that lie ahead of you as you write and create with **KidTalk**.

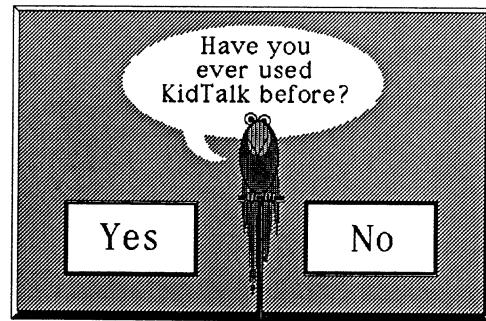
## 2. Getting Started

In your **KidTalk** package you will find two things that will help you get started. The first is this **KidTalk Handbook** you have in your hand. It tells you about the **KidTalk** program and gives you ideas to try. The second is the "Getting Started" Card.

The "Getting Started" Card will help you load your **KidTalk** disk into the computer and start making **KidTalk** selections in a hurry!

### Guided Tours

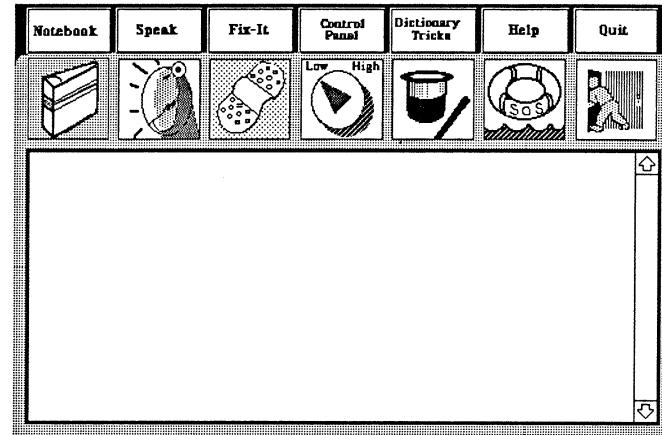
After you see the **KidTalk** welcome screen, you will be asked if you have ever used **KidTalk** before. If you answer NO you're going to get some special attention. You will be sent off on a quick **Guided Tour** of the entire program. You will learn where everything is located and how to get started.



## 3. The Main Menu

### Using the Main Menu

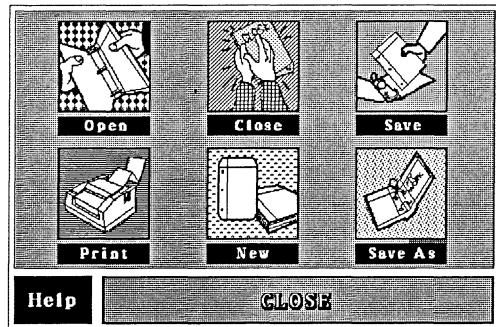
**KidTalk** is full of choices you can make. The Main Menu you see below presents seven different selections that will assist you in your writing. A picture is included in each box to help you remember what choice you are making and let you open a Picture Box. The **Guided Tour** will teach you **KidTalk**'s special way of opening menus and making choices.



## The Writing Box

KidTalk is like a **Talking Notebook**. When you use your notebook at school you open it and start writing on a piece of paper. With KidTalk you start writing in the **Writing Box**. It's like a piece of paper on the screen. It looks like a big white box with arrows on the side.

## Notebook



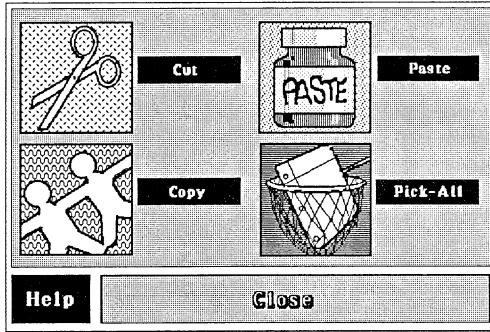
At school you keep your papers in a notebook on your desk. As you work, you do many things with your notebook and papers. You open the notebook, pull out a new sheet of paper, write on it, put a heading on the paper, put the paper away in a safe place and close the notebook.

In KidTalk you have a computerized or electronic notebook that may not fit in your desk, but does have some things in common with the paper type you know well.

For example, when you select **Notebook**, your menu choices will sound familiar. You can choose to...

- Get a **New Writing Box** and start a **New story**.
- **Open** a story you saved earlier.
- **Close** a story you have been working on.
- Put away a story and give it a new or special version name with **Save As**.
- **Save** a story you have already named.
- **Print** your work and get a paper copy.

## Fix It

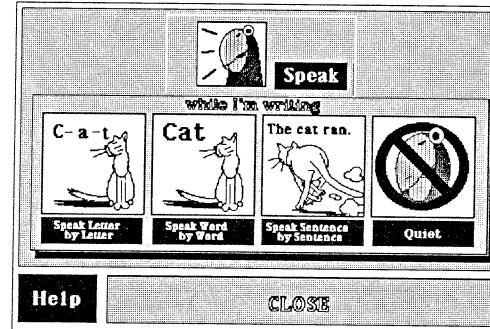


When working with paper and pencil, changing mistakes in your stories or reports can be troublesome. It takes a lot of time and it is sometimes difficult to make things look neat. But it is important to get a final version of your work that does not have mistakes in it.

The **Fix It** menu in **KidTalk** makes this editing easier for you. When you select this menu you can choose from four **Fix It** tools.

- You can **Cut** out the parts of your work that you don't like or need changing.
- You can **Copy** any part of your work that you want to use more than once or move to a new location.
- You can **Paste** anything you have **Cut** or **Copied** in a new place.
- You can use **Pick All** to select your whole story when you **Cut**, **Copy** or **Paste**.

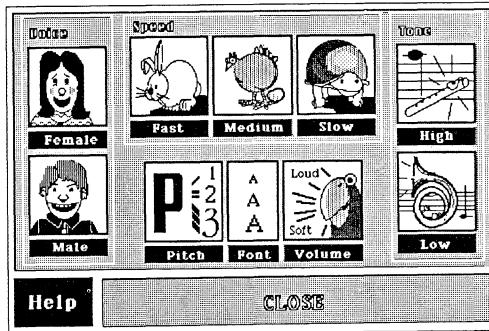
## Speak



I doubt the notebook on your desk has ever talked to you. The **KidTalk** program not only talks to you, but gives you the power to make your stories and reports talk. The **Speak** menu is the place to make this amazing thing happen. Here are your choices...

- **Speak** will speak the written words in your story.
- While you are Writing you can request the computer to speak your words **Letter by Letter**, **Word by Word** or **Sentence by Sentence**.
- The **Guided Tour** will show you how to turn off the speech feature.

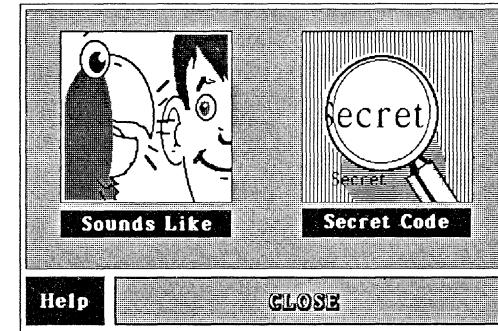
## Control Panel



**KidTalk** is special. Not only because it can speak and has two voices. It is also special because it puts you in control of how it speaks. You are the sound pilot!

The **Control Panel** menu lets you change speech **Volume**, **Speed**, **Pitch**, and **Tone**. It lets you decide when you want to use a **Male Voice** or a **Female Voice**. The **Control Panel** is also the menu to open when you want to change letter size, (small, medium, or large) of the entire story.

## Dictionary Tricks



Everyone likes to find shortcuts and play tricks. **KidTalk** lets you play *sound tricks*. When you select **Dictionary Tricks**, you enter a world where everything can be changed and what you hear may not be what you see! Confused? Read on...

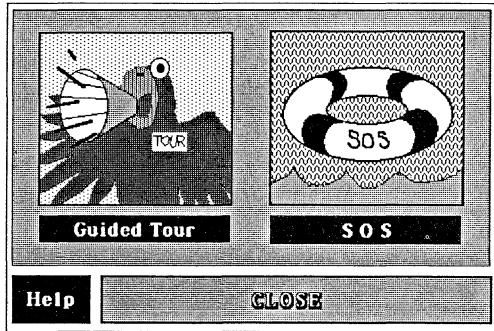
- Not all words that you type into **KidTalk** will sound the way you want them to sound. Some words (though not many) and names are difficult for **KidTalk** to say without some help from you. By selecting **Sounds Like** you can change any word so that it is spoken correctly.

Example:

Chihauhua sounds better as Chi wah wah  
library sounds better as lie brary.

- The trick of changing how words are spoken can be a very powerful thing and lots of fun! Select **Secret Code** and you will be able to write codes that will amaze your friends and family.

## Help



Everyone needs some Help once in awhile even though **KidTalk** is very easy to use. If you need Help you will find it in many different ways by selecting **Help** on the Main Menu.

- Guided Tour takes you on a quick over view of **KidTalk**.
- SOS gives you helpful hints about **KidTalk**.

## Quit

At one time or another, everyone has the need to quickly **Quit** what they are doing and go on to something else. In **KidTalk** when you select **Quit** you see a goodbye message and leave **KidTalk**. Make sure you **Save** your work before you **Quit**.

There is another word **KidTalk** uses that is important to remember. The word is **Close** and it puts away the **Picture Box**.



## 4. KidTalk Stories

### Jenny's Story: Strange But True!

For most of Jenny's ten years, she has liked to write stories and plays. Sometimes she'd talk her friends into being in her plays and they'd put on performances for the neighborhood.

On Jenny's tenth birthday her parents gave her **KidTalk** to use with their home computer. Now Jenny had a writing tool that could talk! She could try out her stories and ideas and hear how they sounded. **KidTalk** could help her proofread for mistakes and make corrections easily. Best of all, her friends and family could hear her stories anytime.

This is what Jenny did with **KidTalk** the first time she used it...

Of course, first she put the disk in the computer and watched the welcome screen appear. Since this was the first time she had used **KidTalk**, she took the **Guided Tour**. It gave her an idea of all the things she could do with **KidTalk**.

Jenny had a story idea that had been playing around in her mind for days! It was going to be a mystery about a beautiful sparkling rock that suddenly appeared in the neighborhood one day. With that in mind, Jenny selected the **Notebook** on the Main Menu and watched the **Picture Box** open.

She immediately selected **New** and began to write in the **Writing Box**.

### The Amazing Rock Mystery

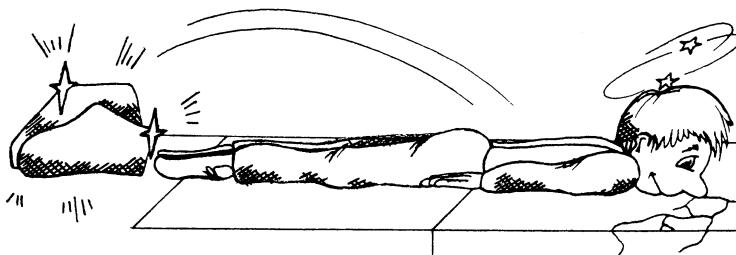
My neighborhood is usually a very quiet place. Nothing exciting ever happens around here which drives me crazy. My parents tell me I get bored easily. That's just not true. I think I have the right to have a little excitement once in awhile. Otherwise, I'll never have any good stories to tell my kids about what I did when I was little.

Jenny couldn't wait! She wanted to hear her words spoken so she selected **Speak**. Terrific! Jenny sat back like a critic and listened to her story being read to her. Not bad Jenny thought. Now I'm going to write about the rock!

Well, let me tell you, I finally got enough excitement in my neighborhood to last me a life time. Believe it or not, it all began with a stupid rock.

Karen, Ryan and I were walking to the park one day last summer because we had nothing better to do. We had already been to the park a thousand times so we weren't very excited about going again. What we really wanted to do was go to the beach and swim in the ocean. The beach was 500 miles away and as usual no one would drive us. We were walking along talking about what we would do if we were at the beach when suddenly Ryan tripped over something and fell flat on his face.

Jenny selected Speak again and listened to all of her story. It was up to this point, all spoken in the Male Voice. Now Jenny wanted to change to a Female Voice so Karen could yell at Ryan in the story. She selected Female Voice and then typed Karen's words.



"What is the matter with you? Can't you stand on your own feet like a normal person? Really, Ryan I'm tired of having to pick you up all the time!"

Now Jenny was ready to go back to the Male Voice so Ryan had a chance to answer Karen.

"Would you stop picking on me Karen" Ryan cried rubbing his knee. "I can't help it if someone left this stupid rock in the middle of the sidewalk. I can't always be looking down!"

At that moment all three of us looked down and believe me, our mouths dropped wide open. There on the sidewalk was a very large, beautiful rock. It was red and yellow and green and sparkled like the necklaces you see in stores. None of us had ever seen a rock like that before. If we had stopped at that moment and sensibly ran home and told our moms what we saw on the sidewalk, things would have probably turned out better. But Ryan immediately reached down and touched it. Without any warning, he just disappeared!

Jenny listened to her story up to this point. Not bad she thought but I want to have it spoken slower so that I don't miss anything. She once again selected **Control Panel** and found the **Speed** setting. She selected the **Turtle** to make the speed slower. She **Closed the Picture Box** and looked at her story again. There's nothing I want to change right now she decided, so she listened to her story again at the slower speed.

Before she could add to this exciting beginning, her mother called her to come to dinner. Of course Jenny did not want to lose her story. She wanted to be able to work on it next time so she selected **Save As** from the **Notebook Picture Box**. She gave her story the name of *ROCK* because that's what it was about. She could hear the computer saving her story. When it was finished, she selected **Quit**, took her disk, put it away and turned off the computer. Now she could work on her story again after dinner.

What if Jenny never has time to finish this story? The mystery will never be completed or solved. You be the story teller and detective! Use **KidTalk** to finish *The Amazing Rock Mystery*. It's already on your disk. Open *ROCK* using the **Notebook** menu.

### Eric's Story: Secret Code Tricks

Eric has been using **KidTalk** for a long time. He bought it with his paper route money when he first saw it in the computer store. He bought it because he likes to try new things and he liked the idea of a "talking computer". In fact, when he has enough money saved, he would like to buy a robot.

Lately, Eric has been working on a talking letter for his friend named Aaron who lives down the street. When Eric uses **KidTalk** to continue to work on the letter he selects the **Notebook** menu and looking carefully at his list of choices selects **Open**. Immediately a new screen appears which lets him select which title he would like to **Open**. The computer goes to work and suddenly the **Writing Box** appears with the *AARON* letter in it. Not finished of course, but ready for changes and additions. Here's what the Eric's letter to his friend looks like...

Dear Aaron,

I bet this is the first time you have ever received a talking letter. I can't send it through the mail but at least you can come over any time and hear it. Why don't you guys buy a computer so you can send me talking letters?

**I have an idea! Why don't you ask your mom if you can set up your big tent in your backyard next week. We could get all our friends together and their pets and put on a circus. We could keep the animals in the tent and then make a performing ring for them to do tricks outside.**

Eric selected **Speak**. Sitting back in his chair he listened to the letter and thought about it. Something was wrong. He was going to have to take the part about keeping animals in the tent out of the letter. If Aaron ever told his mother there would be animals in their tent, the whole circus idea would be thrown out the window. Eric decided that what he had to do was get rid of that sentence. Eric selected the unwanted sentence and then opened the **Fix It** menu and picked **Cut**.

The computer went to work and the unwanted sentence disappeared from his letter. Now Eric was ready to add to the letter.

**I know you hate seeing the circus.  
When my dad gets this year's  
circus tickets at work I'm not  
going to invite you.**

Eric laughed. Boy am I going to fool him! He'll think his eyes are playing tricks on him. I'm going to select **Secret Code** from the **Dictionary Tricks** menu and change the word "hate" to "love" and the word "not" to "for sure". Aaron will read the letter and think he's not going to the circus with me. But, when he hears **KidTalk** speak the words, he'll know he's going to be invited!

Eric did exactly that. In the **Secret Code Room** he typed "hate" in the **Real Word Box** and "love" in the **Code Word Box**. In the same way he changed "not" to "for sure".

He couldn't wait to try the letter out on Aaron so as soon as he finished in the code room, added a "Your Friend Eric" to the end of the letter. He wanted to give Aaron a paper copy of the letter before he heard it on the computer so he selected the **Notebook** menu and **Print**. Once he had a printed copy, he selected **Save** and then **Quit** the program. He smiled and picked up the phone. "Aaron, come on over, I have something to show you!"

**Secret Codes** are fun! You can look at Eric's letter to Aaron if you **Open AARON** using the **Notebook** menu. Why don't you write a talking letter to one of your friends? Include some **Secret Code** words and introduce them to the world of the unexpected!

## Laura's Story: The Cat Tale

Laura's story is different from either Jenny's or Eric's because she is only five years old and just learning how to read and write. Her parents bought **KidTalk** to help her learn words and write small stories. As you know, very young people have very interesting stories to tell. They just need extra help from grown-ups.

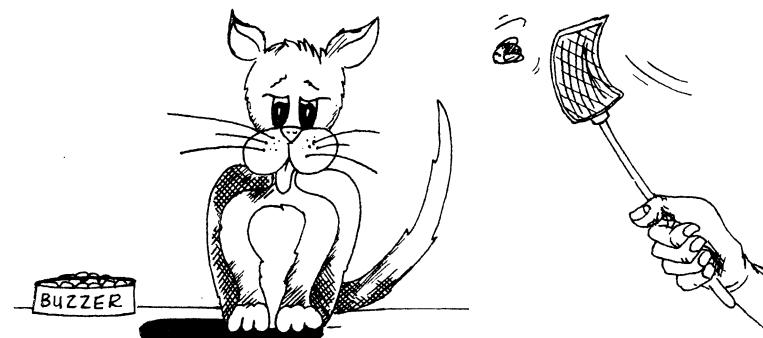
Laura's mother and father helped her put the disk into the computer and get the **KidTalk Writing Box** on the screen. Because they wanted her to hear the letters and words she was typing, her mom showed Laura how to select the **Speak** menu. When the **Picture Box** opened Laura selected all three pictures that will make **KidTalk** speak while she is writing. Now while she types her story, **KidTalk** will say each letter, each word, and each sentence. This will help Laura learn how to recognize and read letters and words.

Now Laura was ready to begin. She told her parents what she wanted to say. They showed her where the keys were that she needed and helped her spell the words correctly.

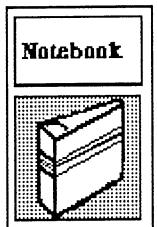
I have the best cat in the world. Her name is Buzzer because she likes to catch flies. There are not many cats that can catch flies. She is grey and white and meows very loud to wake me up in the morning.

When Laura was finished, she and her parents selected **Speak** to hear her story. Laura could follow along as each word was spoken. Working together they used the **Print** selection in the **Notebook** menu to make a paper copy of her story.

The next time her grandparents came to visit, Laura could read the story to them by herself. Animals, especially your pets which have their own special personalities, are fun to write about. You can use **Open** in the **Notebook** menu to see Laura's cat story. Better yet, why don't you write a story that describes an animal you know and love. You are the best person to describe what makes them special.



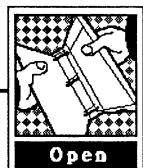
## 5. Picture Dictionary



Select this **main menu** choice to work with your **Notebook** and **Writing Box**. You have **New**, **Open**, **Close**, **Save As**, **Save** and **Print** to choose from.



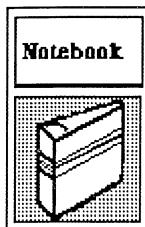
This selection opens a new blank **Writing Box**. It can be found in the **Notebook** menu.



Make this selection to **Open** a story you saved earlier. Find **Open** in the **Notebook** menu.



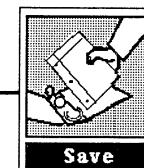
Make this selection to **Close** a story you are finished working on. You'll find it in the **Notebook** menu.



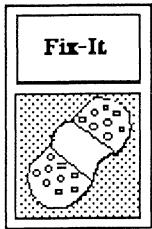
This **Save As** selection in the **Notebook** menu will let you give your story a new or special version title.



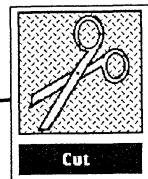
After you are finished writing a story, you will select **Save** to store your story on your disk. You'll find **Save** in the **Notebook** menu.



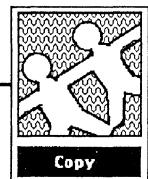
Often you will want a paper copy of your work. Select **Print** in the **Notebook** menu.



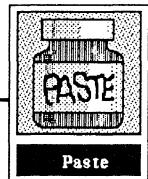
Fix It on the Main Menu is the choice to select if you want to make changes in your work. In the Fix It menu you can select Cut, Copy, Paste and Pick All.



Make this selection from the Fix It menu when you want to erase or Cut part of your story.



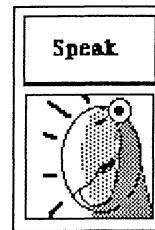
Make this selection from the Fix It menu when you want to Copy any part of your story to use again.



Select Paste in the Fix It menu and you can Paste any words you have Cut or Copied in a new location.



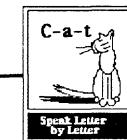
Choose Pick All in the Fix It menu to select your whole story when you Cut, Copy or Paste.



Select Speak from the Main Menu to hear KidTalk speak your words. The Hear It menu contains Speak and While You are Writing choices.



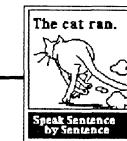
Make the Speak selection to hear your story spoken to you.



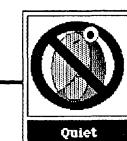
Before you start writing, make this selection and hear each *letter* spoken as you write. Find it on the Speak menu.



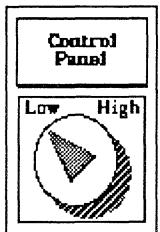
Before you start writing, make this selection from the Speak menu. Then you will be able to hear each *word* spoken as you are finished typing it.



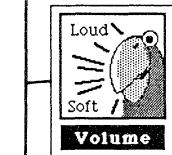
Before you start writing, make this selection from the Speak menu. You will hear each *sentence* spoken when you are finished typing it.



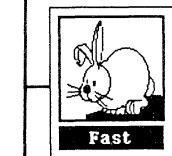
Before you start writing, make this selection from the Speak menu. You will **not** hear anything spoken as you type.



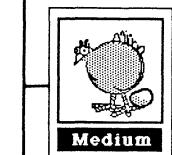
Select this **Control Panel** Picture Box from the Main Menu and you will become a sound pilot. With this menu you can choose **Volume, Speed, Pitch, Tone, Male Voice or Female Voice** and even change **Letter Size**.



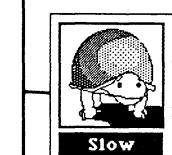
From loud to soft, use the **Volume** control to make KidTalk speak loud or soft. Find **Volume** in the **Control Panel** menu.



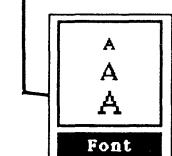
Make this selection in the **Control Panel** menu to make KidTalk speak your words rapidly.



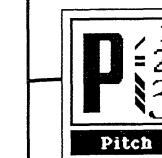
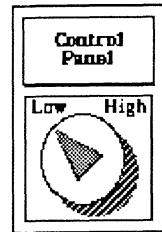
Make this selection in the **Control Panel** menu to make KidTalk speak your words at a medium speed.



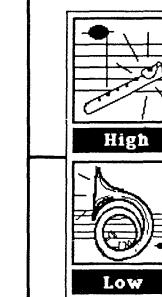
Make this selection in the **Control Panel** menu to make KidTalk speak your words very slowly.



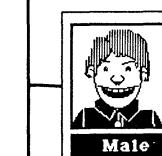
Choose the **Letter Size** you want for the entire story.



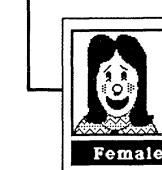
You can change **Pitch** on the **Control Panel**. Select #1 for high **Pitch**, #2 for medium **Pitch**, and #3 for low **Pitch**.



KidTalk has two **Tones** to choose from. Select the one that sounds best to you. You can change the **Tone** in the **Control Panel** menu.



You decide who's talking! You can select the **Male Voice** in the **Control Panel** menu.



Voices can change in KidTalk. If you want to select a **Female Voice**, you will find it in the **Control Panel** menu.



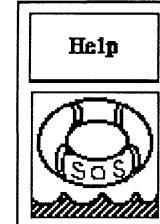
This Main Menu selection lets you change how words sound. Your **Dictionary Tricks** menu choices are **Sounds Like** and **Secret Code**.



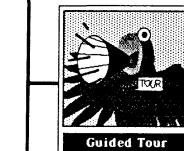
If you use a word that **KidTalk** does not say correctly, select **Sounds Like** to change the sound spelling. You can make this selection in the **Dictionary Tricks** menu.



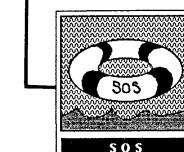
Make this selection in the **Dictionary Tricks** menu to make your own **Secret Code**.



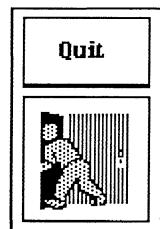
You will find **Help** when you select this word on the Main Menu. The **Help** menu contains **Guided Tour** and **SOS**.



The **Guided Tour** will take you on a quick trip through **KidTalk**. This tour is made especially for the first time user.



The **SOS** sign is where you look for help, about each **KidTalk** activity.



**Quit** is the Main Menu selection that will take you out of the **KidTalk** program.

## 6. KidTalk Brain Teasers

Your creative imagination will take you on all kinds of **KidTalk** adventures. Write, experiment, and play with all the controls and choices at your command. **KidTalk** is really a tool. In the hands of an adventurous writer like you, there are an amazing number of possibilities.

Just to get you started, here are some **KidTalk** Brain Teasers or writing ideas that you can try.

1. Write a sound effects story. Using combinations of letters, you can make **KidTalk** sound like a bee buzzing, a fog horn or even a car coming down the road. Spend time trying all different types of letter combinations and see what they sound like. Choose the ones you like best and build a story around them.
2. Everyone has crazy dreams sometimes. Dreams can be happy, exciting, sad or even scary. Use **KidTalk** to write about a dream you had that you don't want to forget. Write about a dream you wish you would have.
3. You never know when you might be in Hollywood! Since you have **KidTalk**'s speech and dual voices to play with, write a TV, movie or play script that talks. Although the voices are

described as **Male** and **Female** in the **Control Panel**, they could become a giant and an elf if you wish. You're the writer.

4. Have you ever thought of writing a neighborhood or family newsletter. It's like a small newspaper that could give your friends interesting information about what is going on in the neighborhood. You could **Print** it out so everyone would have a copy. You could also invite friends over to hear it on the computer.
5. Write a mystery story that is a mystery itself. How? Use **Secret Code** words and scramble clues. Stump your friends and then help them solve it!
6. Stories about real people are fun and interesting. Pick who you think is the most unusual person in your family or neighborhood, interview them, and write a short biography about their life.
7. Have you ever thought about writing about your own life? That form of writing is called an **autobiography**. You tell your own story. Make a list of the most important things that have happened in your life. Use your list to organize and write your autobiography. If you get things started, you might convince everyone in your family to write their story too.

8. Poetry is a very special form of writing. There are many types of poems like haiku and sonnets. Get a book from the library about different kinds of poetry and use **KidTalk** to write some poems of your own. People who write poetry books often share their poems by having a *poetry reading*. They read their poems to friends and other interested people. You could have a poetry reading at your house. Read your poetry outloud yourself or let **KidTalk** do the reading! Let your friends use **KidTalk** to write poetry too. Print the poems on paper and make a neighborhood poetry book!
9. Can you imagine what a visitor from outer space might look like? What about a super robot that will clean the house? Write a description of these and other interesting characters. I bet you can think of more descriptions you want to write.
10. Explore **KidTalk**'s ability to speak number names, use addition and other number operation symbols and abbreviations, (like etc. and Dr.). You can use **Dictionary Tricks** to teach **KidTalk** new abbreviations that you want to use in your stories.

## **PART TWO: PARENTS AND HELPERS**

### **1. Overview**

Welcome to the world of **KidTalk**. Parents like you, who are concerned about their children's education, will find **KidTalk** to be a high quality learning tool that will extend your children's ability to read, write and communicate their ideas. Part of the **First Byte's Talking Notebook Series**, **KidTalk** was designed as a versatile learning tool that will bring a rich educational environment into your homes. You'll find that **KidTalk** will be the software package that will stay with your child all through their school age years.

Returning the **KidTalk** Registration Card to **First Byte** will also entitle you to periodic newsletters that present new projects to try with your child as well as information about new educational products in the **Talking Notebook Series**.

Educators know that children who have genuine love for reading and writing come from homes in which these activities are a family activity shared by all. Research also shows that the best way to teach reading, writing and other communication skills is by

using materials that involve the child in three ways: visually, auditorily and kinesthetically. In other words, the child learns best when he can hear, see and physically work with the material he is trying to learn. Leave out any one of these modalities and the learning experience is impaired. For the first time, **KidTalk**, using the **SmoothTalker** speech technology makes the computer a total learning environment. Using this dynamic tool, children can see their words, hear them spoken and type them into the computer.

## 2. KidTalk's Learning Objectives

1. To provide children with an educationally sound learning environment for building of reading, writing and communication skills.
2. To encourage children to use their skill and imagination in experimenting with different writing forms.
3. To put the control of the **KidTalk** learning tool into the hands of the child by designing an easy to use program with easily accessed **Help** features.
4. To provide children of all ability levels and learning styles with an exciting learning environment and tool.
5. To get children started by including motivating writing ideas for experimentation.

## 3. Helping Your Young Child with **KidTalk**

- Take the time to read this **KidTalk Handbook** and use the program yourself.
- Have your child take the **Guided Tour** to learn how to make menu choices by opening **Picture Boxes**.
- Let **KidTalk** help you make learning fun. Put your child in charge as much as possible. Your initial help should eventually be replaced by your child's ability to make lists and use the program features himself.
- Let the young child start small. You can use **KidTalk** to play with the alphabet. When you type capital letters alone followed by a space, **KidTalk** will speak the letter name. Children also enjoy printing and hearing their names and the names of their friends, pets and family members.
- Young children learn to read best from their own writing. In spite of the limited vocabulary in basal readers, children in first grade have a 2000 word speaking vocabulary. Help them write their own stories like Laura's cat story. (See page 23). Any word they can say with your help they can write and later read. They may need your help with the keyboard and spelling, but they will have no trouble finding words to write.

- Children enjoy receiving letters in the mail. Encourage them to use **KidTalk** to write letters to family and friends and ask for a reply.
  - Make it a habit to **Print** all of the children's work. Hang it on the refrigerator and share it with the family. Having their own paper copy helps children practice their reading skills away from the computer.
  - Use **KidTalk** to play with numbers. **KidTalk** will correctly read up to a 24 digit number. Play this game. Type in a number for your child to read. Then give your child a chance to type in numbers for you. Watch out, kids like big numbers!
  - The easy editing features of **KidTalk** allow children to quickly make changes in their writing. They begin to look and listen to their work with a critical eye and ear. With paper and pencil this revision process is time consuming and often frustrating because the final paper never looks "neat". **KidTalk** will **Print** a perfect copy according to the child's specifications.
  - When your child starts school and has spelling words to learn each week, encourage him to use his spelling words in stories.
- Give your child the chance to prepare a talking report or story for school. With the teacher's permission, take your computer and **KidTalk** into the classroom with a printed copy of the story for all the students. Your child will appreciate your help and the chance to share his work.
  - Make sure you let your child's teacher know about his **KidTalk** adventures at home. The Teacher may have some suggestions for home projects that would complement activities in the classroom.

#### **4. Helping Your Older Child with KidTalk**

The best assistance you can give the older child is to provide him with the most effective tools for learning that are available. Of course, your interest and encouragement is valuable, but your child is on the road to becoming an independent life time learner. As a parent, it is important to encourage this independence.

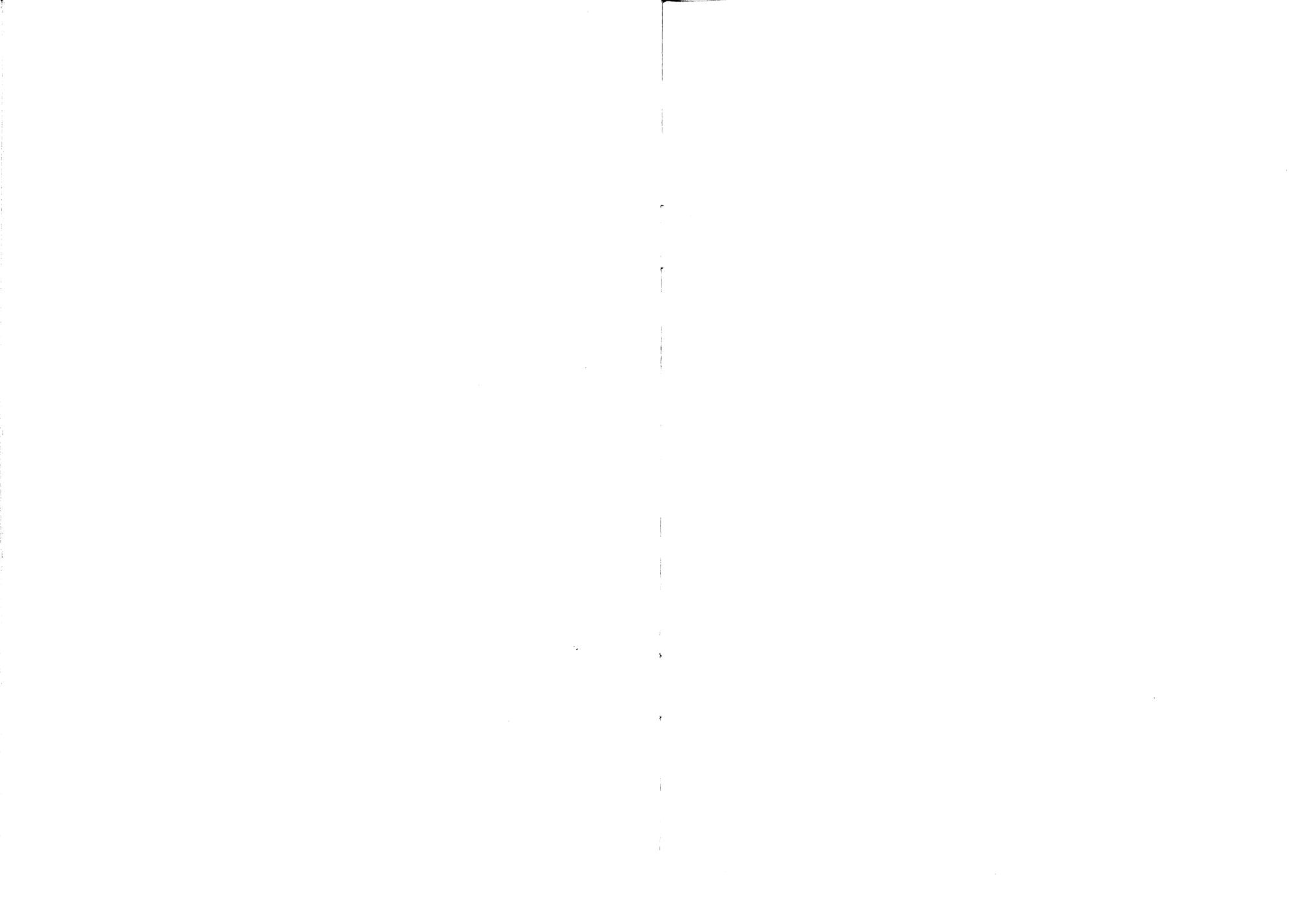
The entire **Talking Notebook Series by First Byte** will help the older student independently acquire reading, writing and communication skills. Your student will be able to do all written reports, journals, stories and assignments at home using these important microcomputer educational learning tools.

Here are some ideas you can use to help you encourage your child and show your support.

1. Encourage your student to try the **KidTalk Brain Teasers** in this Handbook. (See page 33).
2. Use **KidTalk** yourself to leave messages, make lists and generally show your interest in writing.
3. Introduce **KidTalk** as an excellent tool for proofreading documents before they are turned in at school.
4. School assignments or activities often require memorizing speeches, poems or parts in a play. Suggest that **KidTalk** can be used to help make memorizing easier.
5. Encourage your child to use **KidTalk** to work on projects with other kids or family members. **KidTalk** lends itself to collaboration and sharing.
6. Support experimentation and the playful manipulation of words. The goal is clear communication and development of an individual creativity and style.

Yearly, in your child's educational career, he will be given *writing proficiency tests*. The content and form of these vary from state to state. To guide you in helping your child, the following are generally seen as characteristics of an excellent written document.

1. Events are presented in a clear sequence.
2. The subject or intent stated in the beginning of the composition is consistent throughout.
3. The story develops with clarity and includes only relevant descriptions and information.
4. The composition has a clearly identifiable beginning, middle and end.
5. The story includes an interesting, not repetitious, choice of words.
6. Interesting details that support important ideas or characters are present.
7. Correct and complete sentence structure is consistent throughout.
8. There are minimal errors in punctuation marks, capital letters and spelling.





**First Byte®**

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