

Solo



Later in the playground

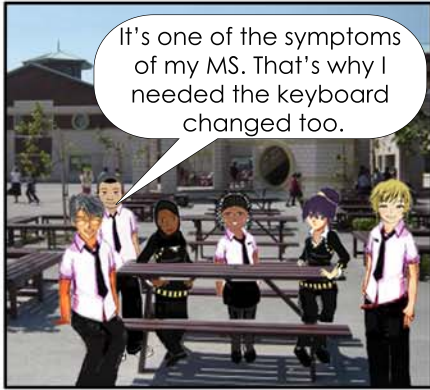
Hey Vinh. Why did you want the computer settings changed in IT?



'Cos sometimes my vision blurs and I have trouble reading the screen.



Why does it do that?
You don't wear glasses?



It's one of the symptoms of my MS. That's why I needed the keyboard changed too.



Do you have a normal keyboard at home or a special one?



No I have a normal one, but I can get adaptive technology if I want.



What's adaptive technology?



Its products or programmes that help people who cannot use the regular versions, like I have a screen reader for when my eyes are playing up.



Outside of School

Do either of you know what 'MS' is?

No, but I didn't think I should ask



Me neither.
Vinh looks alright though

Maybe it's just something to do with your eyesight?



I don't think so.
Maybe I'll ask Mr. Yoruba; bet he knows.



That evening at Nath's house

Hey Granddad, I learnt something today that will really help you.

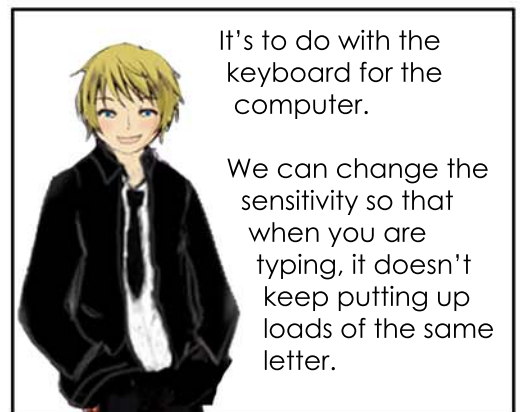


What's that lad?

Sticky keys!

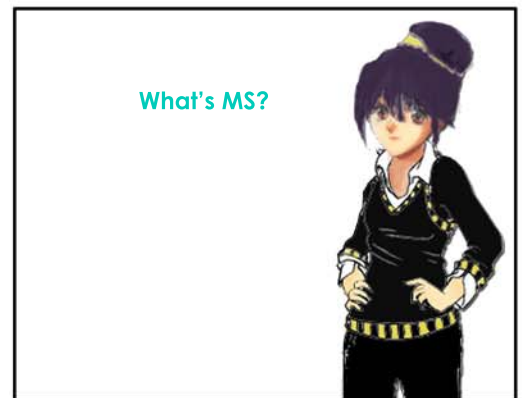
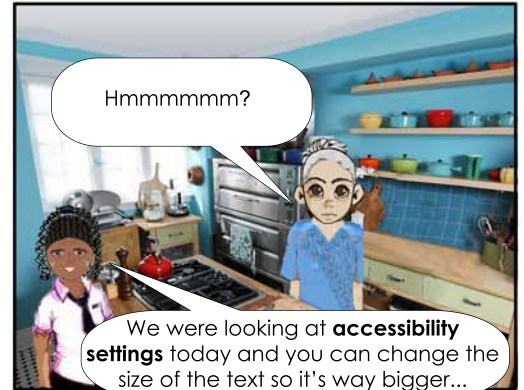
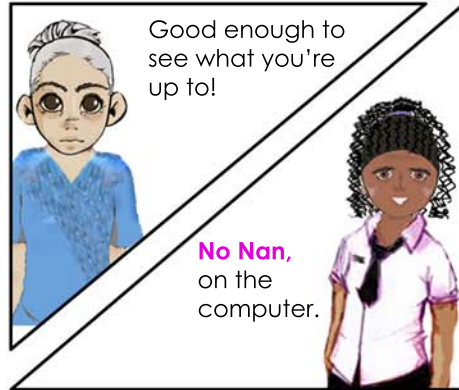


Huh?!?



It's to do with the keyboard for the computer.

We can change the sensitivity so that when you are typing, it doesn't keep putting up loads of the same letter.

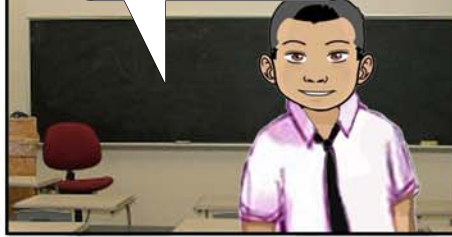


Next day in class

Some of the class have been wondering what MS or 'multiple sclerosis' is. So Vinh is going to give you a quick talk.



We moved to Birmingham recently 'cos I have MS and Birmingham has the only dedicated centre for children with MS.



Vinh, but what is MS?



MS is when there is damage to your myelin, which is like a protective cover around the nerve endings of your central nervous system.



This means that sometimes messages between my brain and body get interference and don't work properly, sort of like a bad radio signal.



Is that why you asked for the computer settings to be changed?



Yeah. When the messages don't get through properly I can have all kinds of problems, like my eyes won't focus on what I'm looking at, or I lose hand coordination.



My granddad hasn't got MS but he found 'sticky keys' really helpful for typing.



Thanks Vinh.

That's right Nath, changing the settings on the computer are there to help everybody.

It's all about accessibility and there is a wealth of information on the web that can help you and lots of different equipment too.



Top tips for Accessibility

Accessibility – settings in your computer.

www.bbc.co.uk/accessibility/index.shtml

Microsoft's - Ten Tips for the Awkward Age of Computing

www.microsoft.com/enable/aging/tips.aspx

AbilityNet's – My Computer, My Way - looks at the many ways you can make your keyboard, mouse, Windows, the internet and your favourite applications suit you and your needs...

www.abilitynet.org.uk/myway/

JAWS – screen reader

www.freedomscientific.com/products/fs/jaws-product-page.asp

AskSARA – an online self-assessment tool from The Disabled Living Foundation. AskSARA allows disabled people and their families to obtain advice about products that can help them in their daily live, produces a report with advice and suggestions.

www.asksara.org.uk/

SNAPI – Coming soon!

Public access points (like the library computers) tend to be designed for a 'typical' user but have to be used by people with a wide range of abilities. Therefore the ability to customise the terminal to suit an individual's needs would make the terminals usable by a wider range of people.

www.snapi.org.uk/project/index.htm

www.snapi.org.uk/project/example.htm