

Dragon Naturally Speaking

Notes from a One-Fingered Typist

Bernice Sicely



The Old Days

When I was growing up in the 1940s, all we had was a radio and some books. My mother had 13 children, and when she got upset with us, she sent us outside. We played hide-and-seek, kickball, and other outside games.

These Days

Nowadays, parents send their kids to their rooms, and the kids play on computers or Xbox. They text their friends and listen to music. With all the technology today, families don't spend as much time together; they don't talk as much. All they do is text.

I Write by Talking

Technology does have some good points. I am a one-fingered typist, and sometimes I can't read my own writing. I am writing this with a computer software program called Dragon Naturally Speaking. I talk into a microphone and the program writes for me.

Dragon Naturally Speaking is a great program, but it doesn't know where to put punctuation, and sometimes it gets words confused such as there, their, and they're. Also, if I talk too fast it doesn't understand what I'm saying so I have to speak very slowly, which is kind of funny. Another funny thing about Dragon Naturally Speaking

is that you have to tell it to "wake up" to start and "go to sleep" when I'm done.

Helps and Hurts

Technology helps us in many ways. It helped me write this article! But it hurts us, too. Sometimes, it gets in the way of families being close to each other, and that's the sad part.



Bernice Sicely (middle, with her teachers, Randy Cole and Janet Baker) is a student at Vermont Adult Learning in Rutland, VT. She is working on her reading and math skills so she can someday pursue her GED. After she found out her article was accepted for publication, she bought a new laptop. She is hoping to put this new technology to use because her kickball-playing days are long over, and she needs something new to play with.