WRITE ACTIVITY

INTRODUCTION
1. Introduction to Write

1. INTRODUCTION TO WRITE

The Write Activity serves as the document creation Activity in Sugar. Its simple interface provides an easy starting point for children, presenting tools that make writing a story, poem, or essay simple and straightforward. It also supports tools for inserting images, creating tables, and performing layout operations.

The Write Activity utilizes the Journal—your work is automatically saved. The Activity also supports collaboration in the form of peer editing, group storytelling, etc.

The Write Activity can be used to open and edit most common file formats, including ODT, DOC, RTF, TXT, and HTML.

TIP OF THE HAT

Write is based upon Abiword; the Sugar port was done by J.M. Maurer, Martin Sevior, Tomeu Vizoso and Robert Staudinger
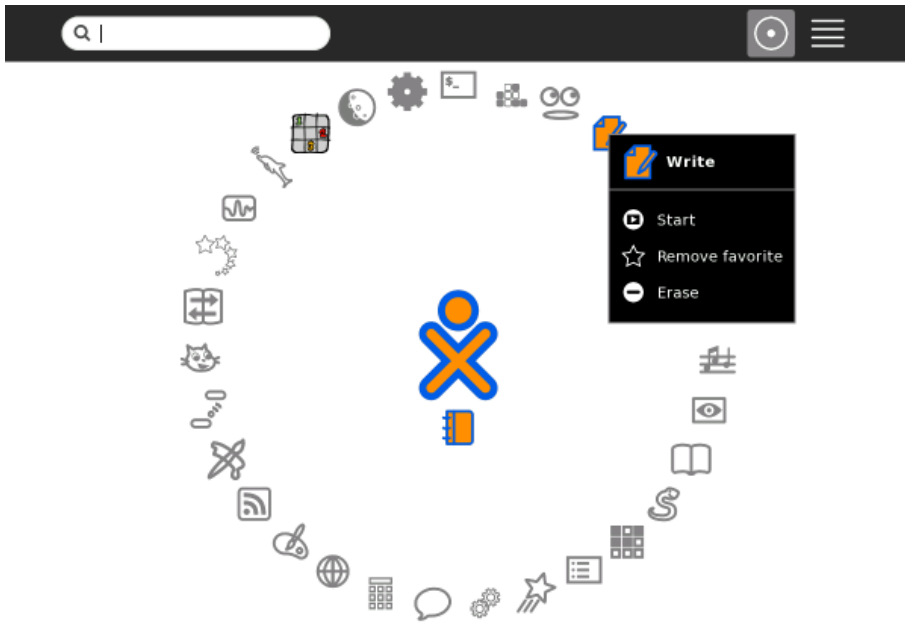
GETTING STARTED
2. The Basics
3. Write Basics
4. Collaborating

2. THE BASICS

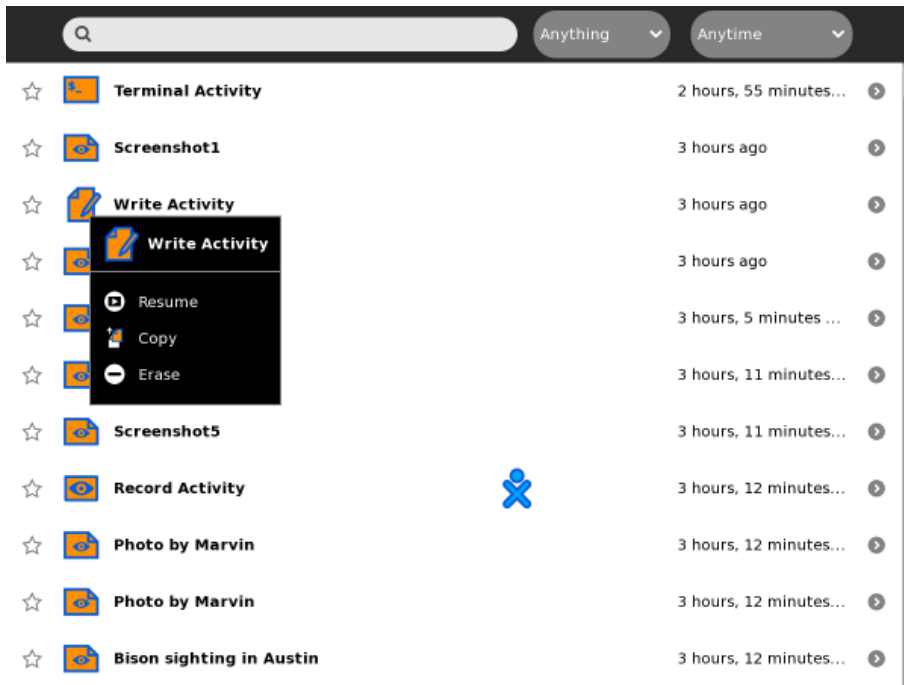As is the case with most Activities, Write can be launched in multiple ways:

- from the Home View
- from the Journal
- from an invitation
- from a shared session
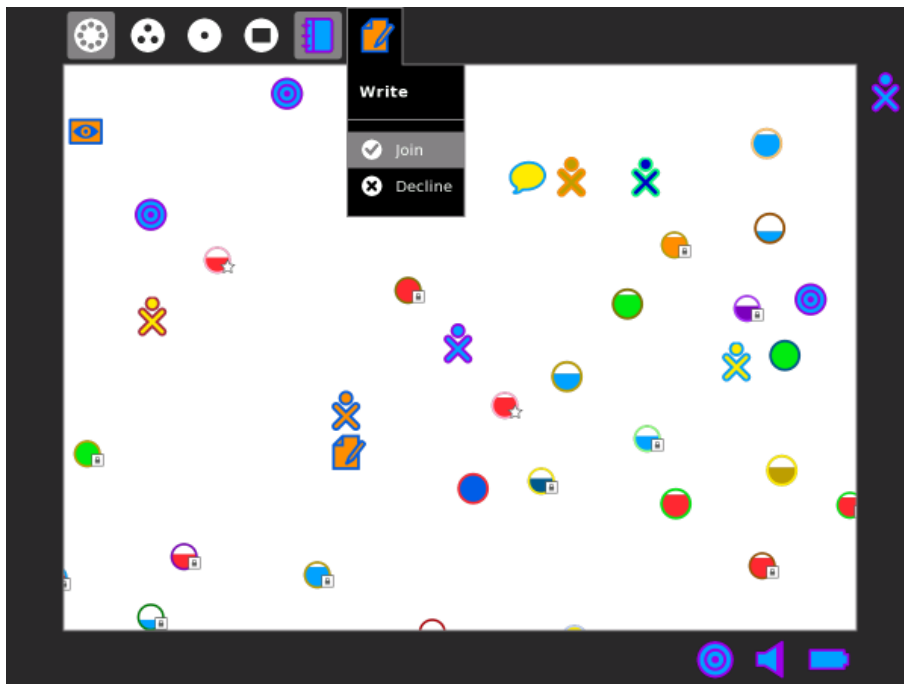
OPENING FROM THE HOME VIEW

RESUME EDITING AN EXISTING DOCUMENT

From the Journal you can open an existing Write document by clicking its icon.

ACCEPTING AN INVITATION TO WRITE

You can also join a shared Write session by accepting an invitation from someone else. To do this you must accept the invitation from the top of the Frame (or upper-left corner of the screen).

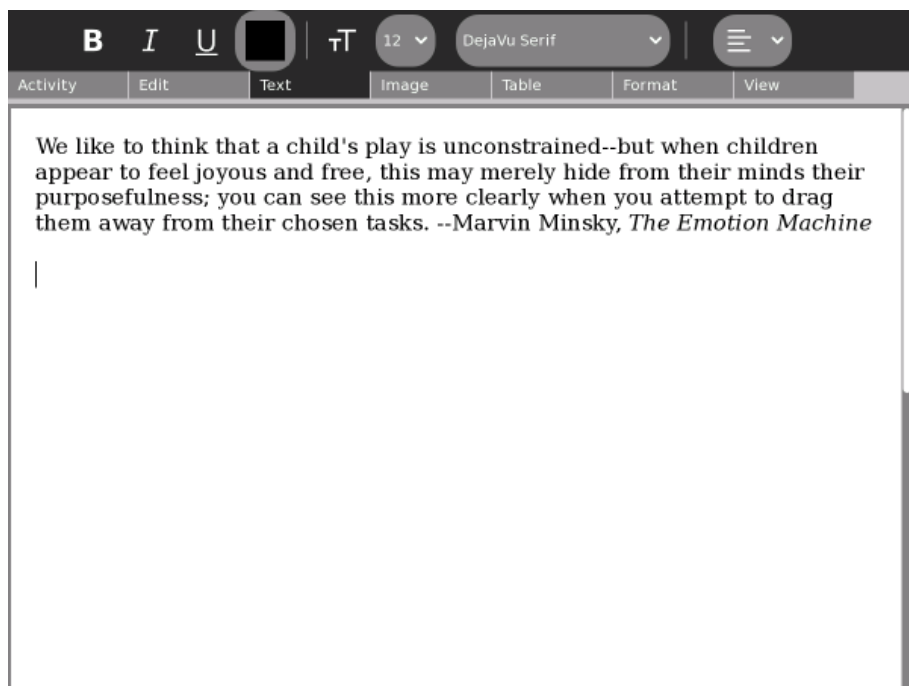Invitations appear in the upper-left corner of the screen in all views.

JOINING A SHARED WRITE SESSION

If Write is shared in the Neighborhood View, you can join the shared session by clicking the Write icon.
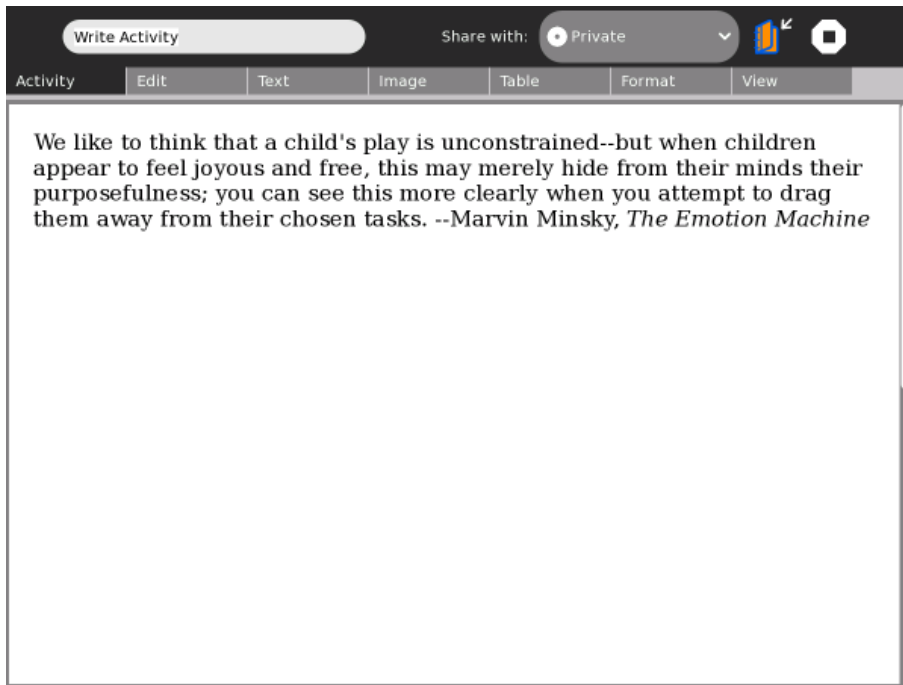
3. WRITE BASICS

When you start Write, you can immediately begin typing. Text is input behind the cursor, which appears as a vertical line like this | on the screen.
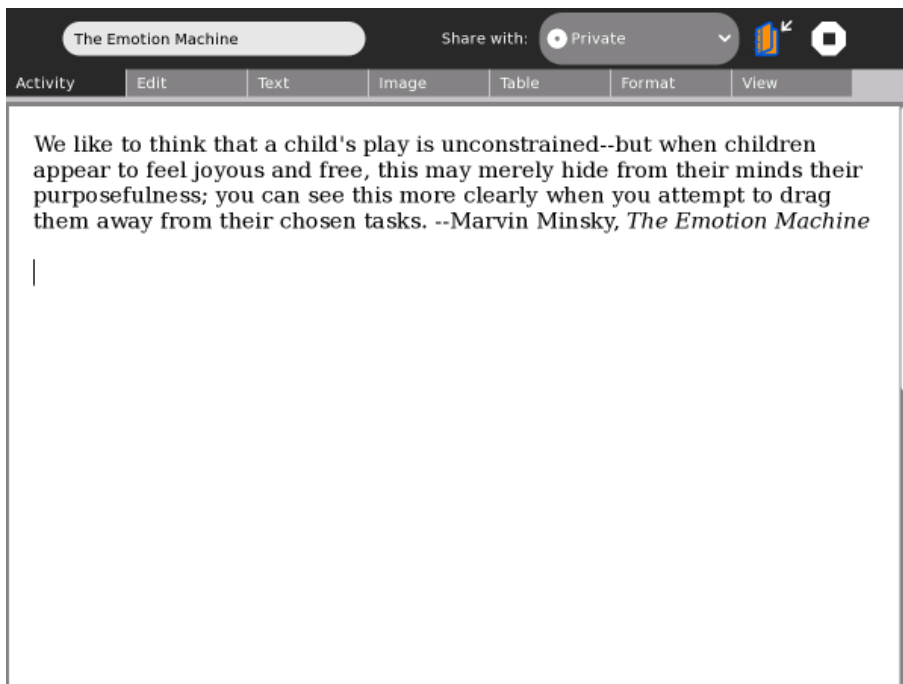

NAMING YOUR DOCUMENT

You can name your document by typing into the field found on the Activity tab in the upper left hand corner of the screen.
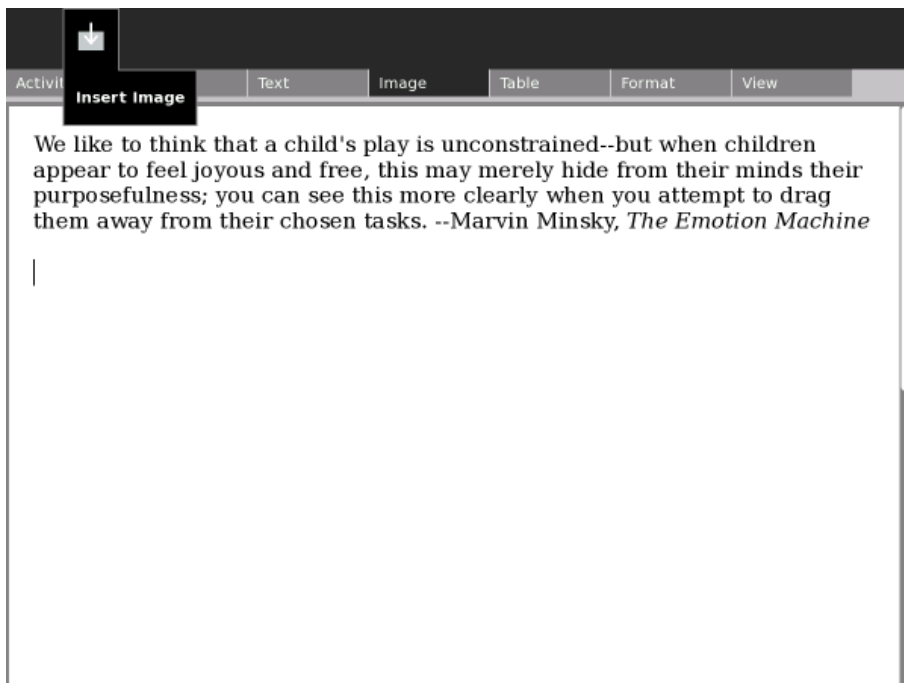
Below, the name of the document has been changed to "The Emotion Machine."
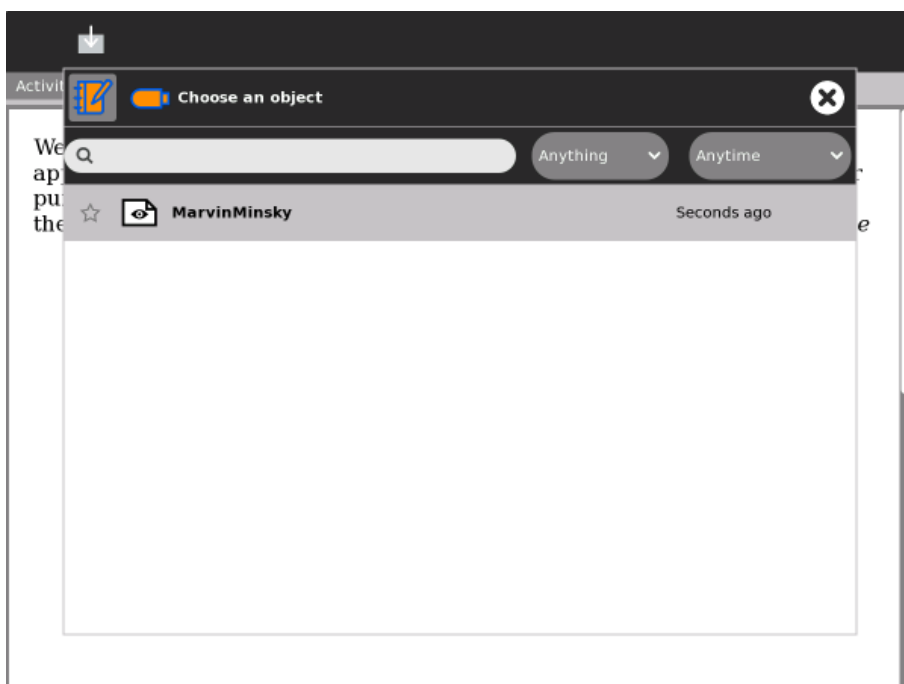

INSERTING PICTURES

You can place pictures in your text either from the Journal or the clipboard.

From the Journal: Click the Image tab, and then click the Insert button to open a dialog box for searching in the Journal for Images.

We like to think that a child's play is unconstrained--but when children appear to feel joyous and free, this may merely hide from their minds their purposefulness; you can see this more clearly when you attempt to drag them away from their chosen tasks. --Marvin Minsky, *The Emotion Machine*
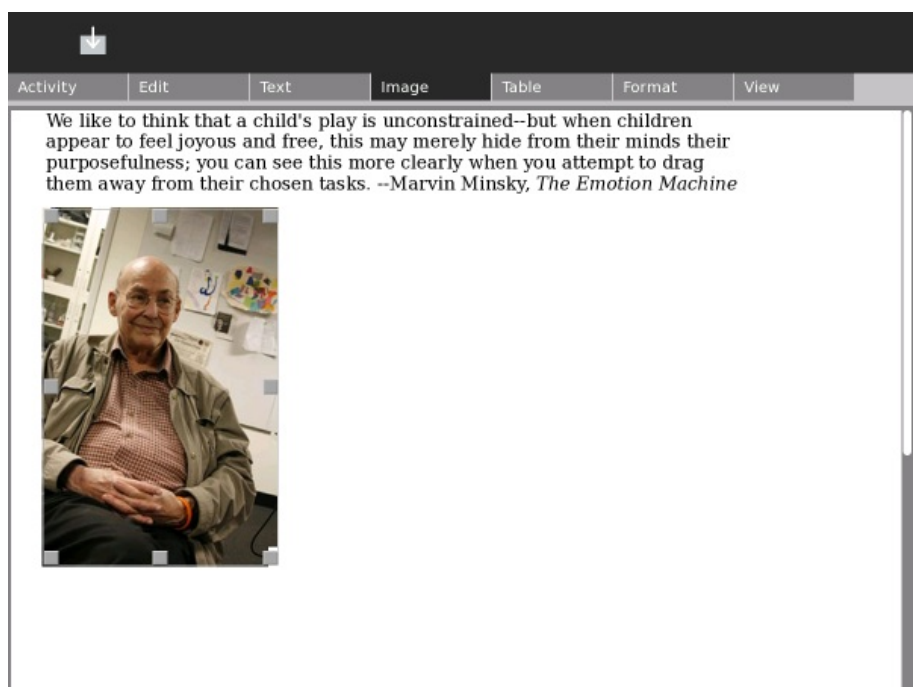
SEARCHING THE JOURNAL FOR IMAGES

Here is a picture of the author for this quote, Marvin Minsky.
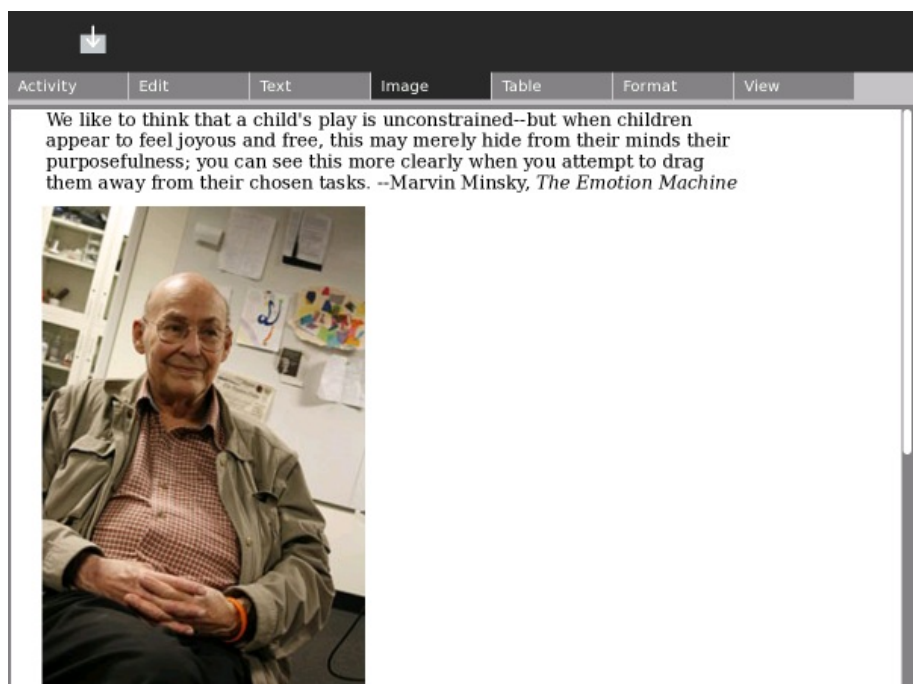
You can reposition the image by clicking on it, then dragging it. Gray boxes in each corner work like "handles" you can drag to resize (rescale) the image.


Tip: You can include an image of a web page in a Write document. Type **alt + 1** while in the Browse Activity to save an image of a web page in the Journal. (It will be named "Screenshot"). Insert the screenshot into your Write document using the Insert Image dialog.

EDITING

Just like other word processors on computers, Write supports copy, paste, cut, undo and redo. Buttons are on the Edit tab. Also, you can use keyboard shortcuts: **ctrl + c** (copy); **ctrl + v** (paste); **ctrl + x** (cut); **ctrl + z** (undo); and **ctrl + y** (redo).
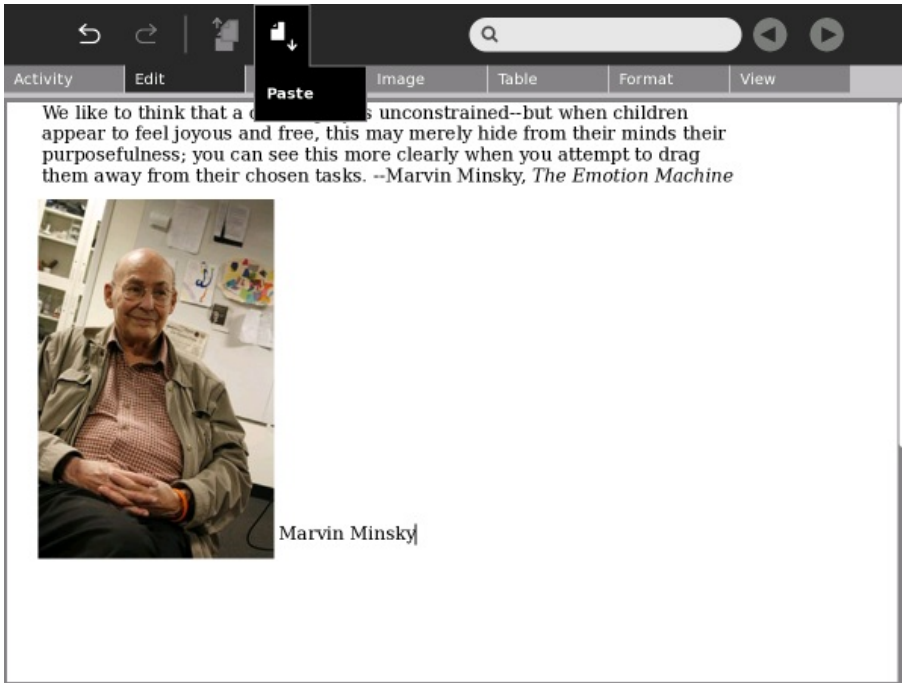
Highlight the text you would like to copy by dragging the cursor across it with the left mouse-button depressed. This example shows the words "Marvin Minsky" highlighted.
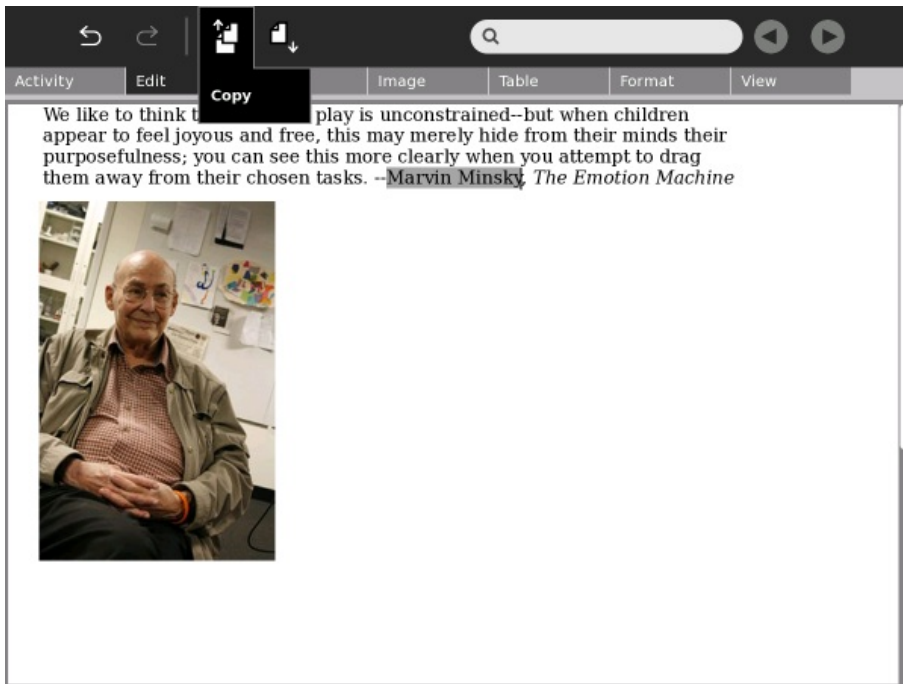
Click the Copy button or press **ctrl + c**. Sugar copies the text to the clipboard.
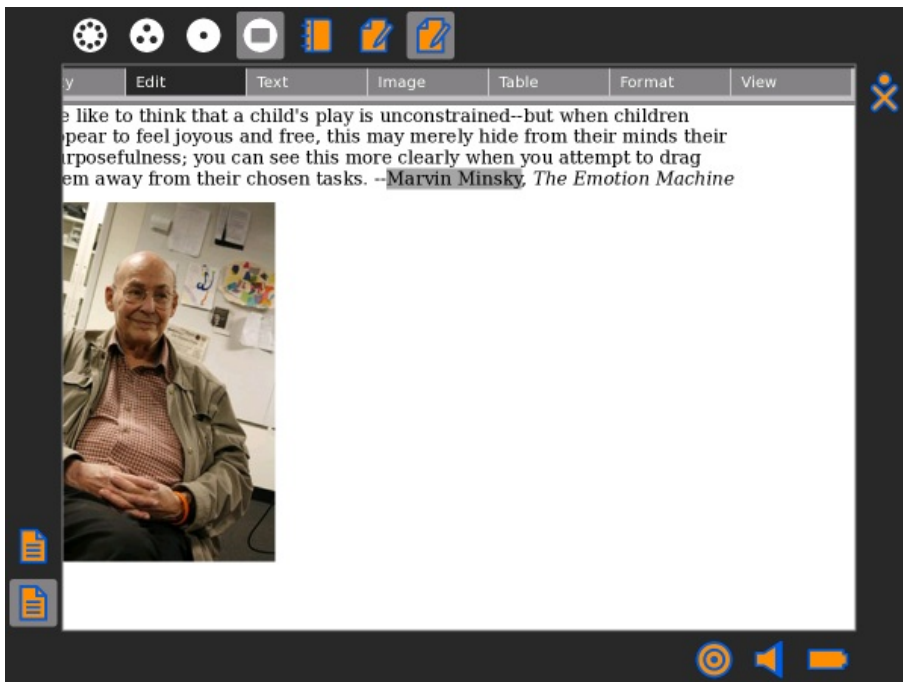
Press **ctrl + v** or click the Paste button to insert text. Sugar pastes the text where the cursor is blinking.

You can also drag images from the clipboard or drag ones that are already pasted into the document.
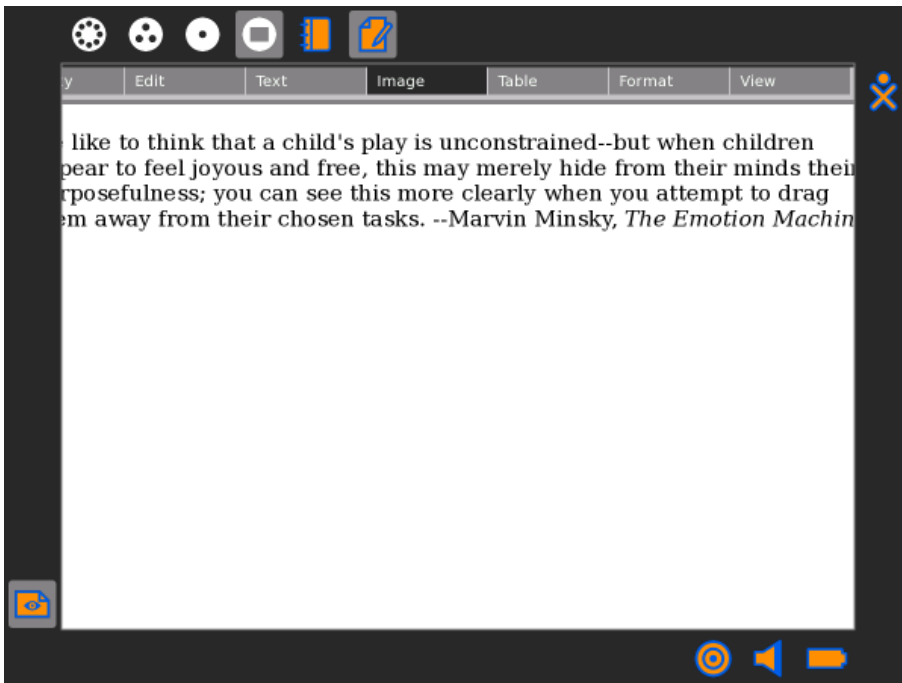
FORMATTING CHARACTERS

Write supports a number of character formats: **bold**, *italic*, underline, color, point size (small and large), and font family (e.g., serif and sans-serif).

We like to think that a child's play is unconstrained--but when children appear to feel joyous and free, this may merely hide from their minds their purposefulness; you can see this more clearly when you attempt to drag them away from their chosen tasks. --Marvin Minsky, *The Emotion Machine*

Marvin Minsky

Change the selected text using the pull-down menu on the Text tab.

We like to think that a child's play is unconstrained--but when children appear to feel joyous and free, this may merely hide from their minds their purposefulness; you can see this more clearly when you attempt to drag them away from their chosen tasks. --Marvin Minsky, *The Emotion Machine*

Marvin Minsky

Bold text by clicking the Bold button or pressing **ctrl + b**.

Italicize text by clicking the Italics button or pressing **ctrl + i**.

<u>Underline</u> text by clicking the Underline button or pressing **ctrl + u**.

Change color by opening the color palette (click the square on the Text tab).

Click on the multicolored circle or triangle to select a color. Click the OK button when you have made your choice.

Use the pull-down menu to select the font family.

FORMATTING PARAGRAPHS

Paragraph alignment is set with the pull-down menu on the Edit tab.

The example below is left justified.
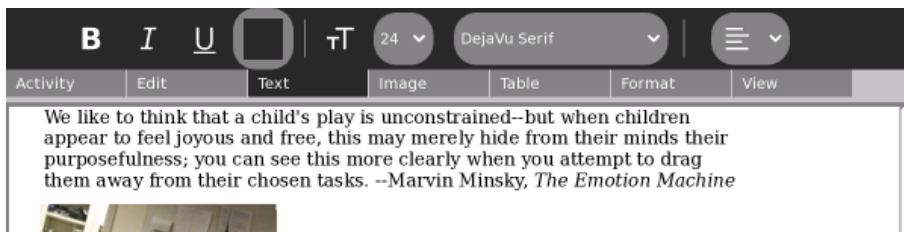
The example below is right justified.

The example below is centered.

The example below is justified (it looks like a newspaper column).
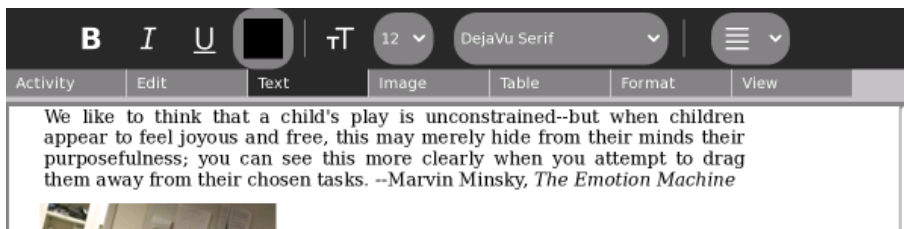
Formatting with styles

The drop-down menu on the Format tab has additional paragraph styles, such as bulleted list, dashed list, numbered list, and others. You can try them all by clicking the drop-down list.

INSERTING TABLES

Use the Table tab to insert tables into your document. By dragging the mouse across the left-hand icon (the grid), you can select the size and dimensions of the table. Other buttons let you add or remove rows and columns.

Note: Tables are a bit finicky, meaning they may not behave exactly as you expect. Take care when you use them and don't rely on a table for meaning.

SAVING YOUR WORK

Write automatically saves your work to the Journal. You can resume editing a document clicking its icon in the Journal.

By default, Write stores documents in the ODT file format. ODT is the OpenDocument format for text documents and this format can be opened with OpenOffice.

However, there are times when you may prefer to output your document in another format. The Keep button lets you save a copy of your document in rich text (RTF), hypertext (HTML), or plain text (TXT) formats in the Journal.
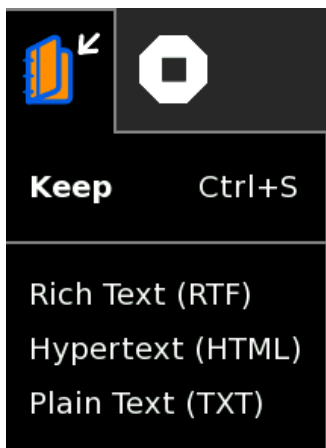
Note: Only use the Keep button when you want to store a new, separate copy of your document. Each time you click this button a new Journal entry will be created with the same name as the present Activity. You are not switched to the new Activity, so be sure to go to the Journal and rename it to a distinguishing title so you don't get confused. The keeping feature is useful when you want to create a series of separate documents based on the current Activity.

Importing documents

Write can import a variety of file formats, including Microsoft Word® DOC files. If you have a DOC file in your Journal (or on removable media), you can open it in Write using the Resume button.

In the example below, a Word document is opened in Write from a USB storage device.

VIEW

Write lets you zoom into and out of the page.

We like to think that a child's play is uncon
appear to feel joyous and free, this may me
purposefulness; you can see this more clea
them away from their chosen tasks. --Marv

We like to think that a child's play is unconstrained--but when children appear to feel joyous and free, this may merely hide from their minds their purposefulness; you can see this more clearly when you attempt to drag them away from their chosen tasks. --Marvin Minsky, *The Emotion Machine*

Marvin Minsky

4. COLLABORATING

The Write Activity supports collaborative (peer) editing, which means that multiple people can edit the same document at the same time.

To start a collaboration, either:

- send an invitation, or
- share with the Neighborhood

As with all Sugar Activities, invitations go to specific individuals, but sharing is open to anyone in the Neighborhood View. Please see the chapter on Collaboration in the Sugar Manual for more details about invitations and sharing.

OPEN A DOCUMENT
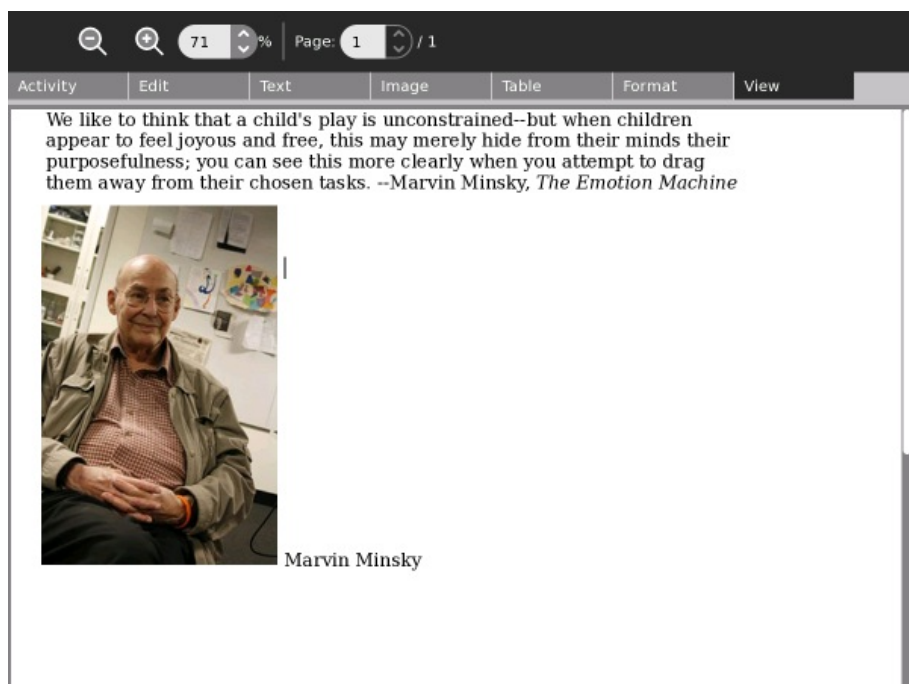
SEND AN INVITATION

Go to the Neighborhood View or Group View to share your document. Click a friend's XO icon to send an Invite request.
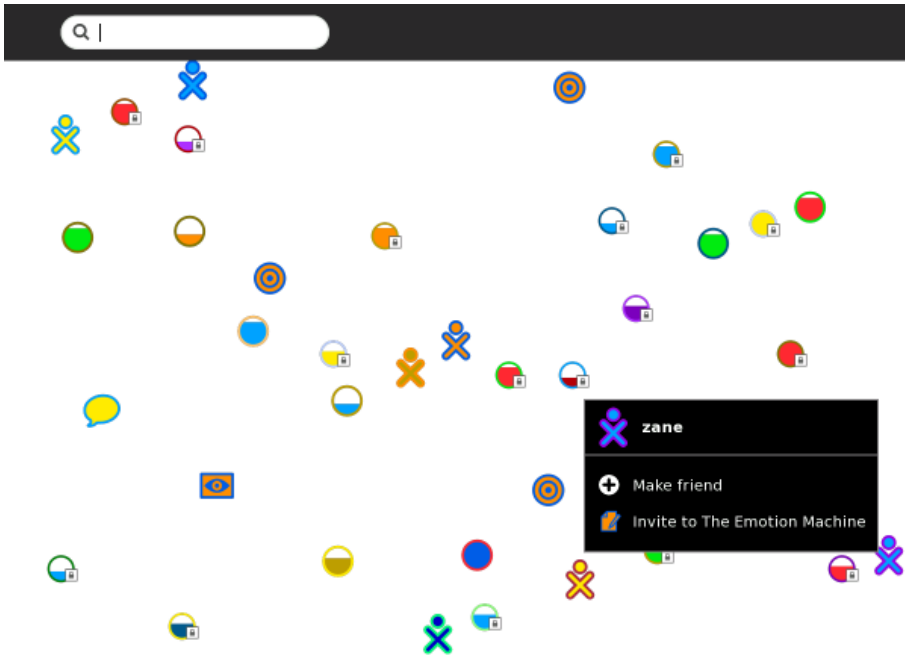
RECEIVE AN INVITATION

Once you've invited your friend, have him or her click the Write icon in the Frame that's the color of your Sugar XO icon to accept the invitation.
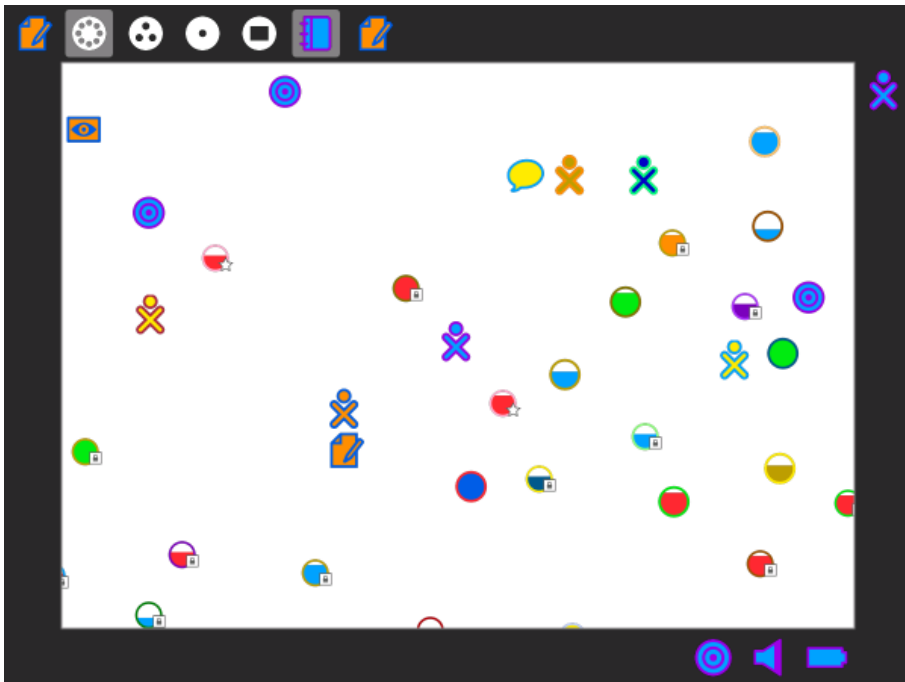
ACCEPT THE INVITATION

Have your friend click the Write icon in the Frame and choose Join.
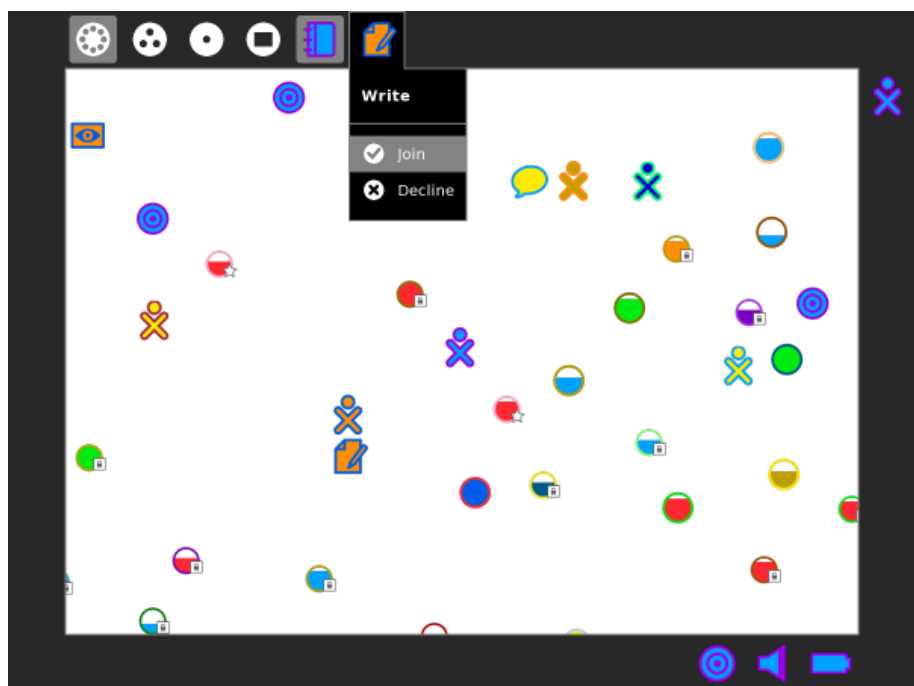
SHARING WRITE

Once you and your friends have shared the Write Activity, everyone sees the same document.

We like to think that a child's play is unconstrained--but when children appear to feel joyous and free, this may merely hide from their minds their purposefulness; you can see this more clearly when you attempt to drag them away from their chosen tasks. --Marvin Minsky, *The Emotion Machine*

Marvin Minsky
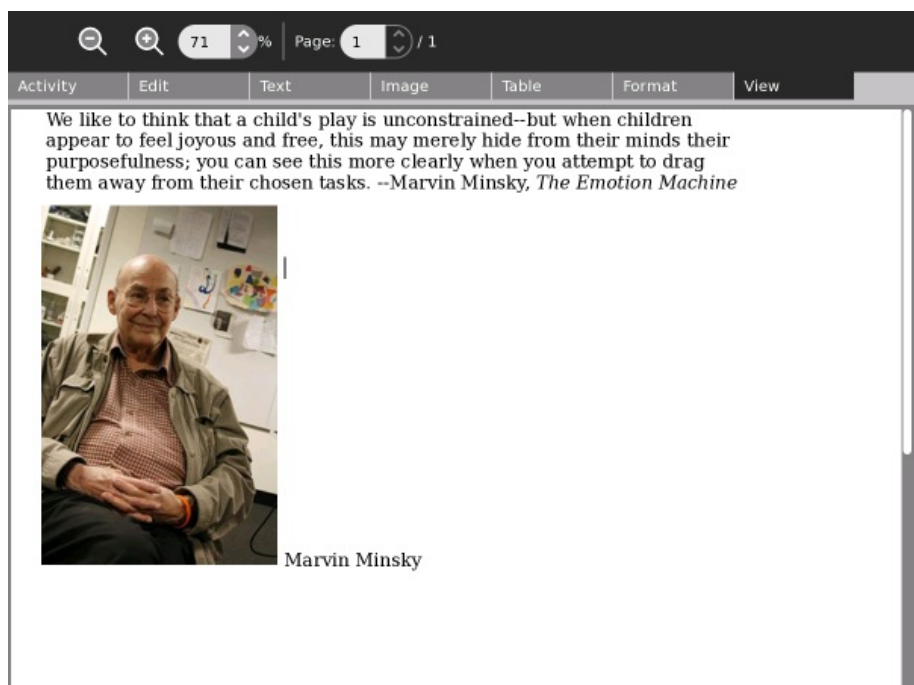
TWO PEOPLE TYPING

No need to take turns. Changes appear simultenously in all copies of the shared document.

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Zane: My text is blue
Marvin: My text is red

Marvin Minsky

We like to think that a child's play is unconstrained--but when children appear to feel joyous and free, this may merely hide from their minds their purposefulness; you can see this more clearly when you attempt to drag them away from their chosen tasks. --Marvin Minsky, *The Emotion Machine*

Zane: My text is blue
Marvin: My text is red

Marvin Minsky

The Journal entry has the color of the person who shared the document (see below).

☆	▪ Terminal Activity		1 hour, 2 minutes ago
☆	Write Activity	😊	Seconds ago
☆	Screenshot		Seconds ago
☆	Screenshot		2 minutes ago
☆	Screenshot		2 minutes ago
☆	Screenshot		2 minutes ago
☆	Screenshot		4 minutes ago
☆	Screenshot		4 minutes ago
☆	Screenshot		4 minutes ago
☆	Terminal Activity		2 days ago
☆	PeterPanAndWendy		1 week, 2 days ago

The detail view has the icon of the person who shared the document (see below).

NOTE TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Collaboration is a powerful feature of Write, but it is recommended that when you do collaborate, keep the number of people editing the same document to just 2–3 people. Otherwise, there tend to be delays that cause the document to get out of synch from one computer to another. Also, try to avoid using too many large pictures or tables when collaborating, as these objects tend to get scrambled.

TUTORIALS
5. Peer Editing
6. Group Storytelling
7. Letter to the Editor
8. E-mailing a Write Document

5. PEER EDITING

The late Don Murray taught generations of journalists how to write. He had three simple rules for great writing:

1. revise
2. revise
3. revise

Revision is an essential part of the writing process and one of the easiest and most effective ways to revise is to share the burden of editing among your friends. Hand your writing to a friend, who will read it and make comments and suggestions. You return the favor by doing the same for your friend's writing.

A peer is a classmate, or someone your age, or someone who shares an interest with you.

Editing is the process of offering compliments about what you like, honest critique of what you don't like or don't understand, and also making corrections, such as identifying spelling mistakes or grammatical errors.

Thus, peer editing is simply editing by a peer!

Writing is difficult and it is easy to become discouraged, so it is important that a peer editor make positive comments. Always start by saying something you like about the writing.

At the same time, it is important to be honest and thorough in your criticism. We can learn though acknowledging and correcting our mistakes, but we often need feedback to become aware of where we can make improvements in our writing.

USING WRITE FOR PEER EDITING

It is fun and easy to use Write for peer editing. Simply share your document with a friend, who then can make comments and corrections directly in your document.

Steps:

1. Open the document you are working on in Write by "resuming" it from the Journal.
2. Go to the Neighborhood View.
3. Find your peer's XO icon.
4. Use the hover menu to send an invitation to join Write.
5. Go back to the Write Activity and watch as your friend makes edits.
6. Thank your friend for helping you learn to be a better writer.

Alternative

You can have two instances of Write open so that you can be editing your friend's document while your friend edits yours.

Steps:

1. Open the document you are working on in Write by "resuming" it from the Journal.
2. Go to the Neighborhood View.
3. Find your peer's XO icon.
4. Use the hover menu to send an invitation to join Write.
5. Wait for your friend to sent you an invitation to join Write.
6. Accept the invitation.
7. Edit your friend's document, remembering to be positive, yet thorough.
8. Thank your friend for helping you learn to be a better writer.

Hint

When editing, chose a color that stands out, such as red or blue. This color difference makes it easier for your friend to see what changes you have made.
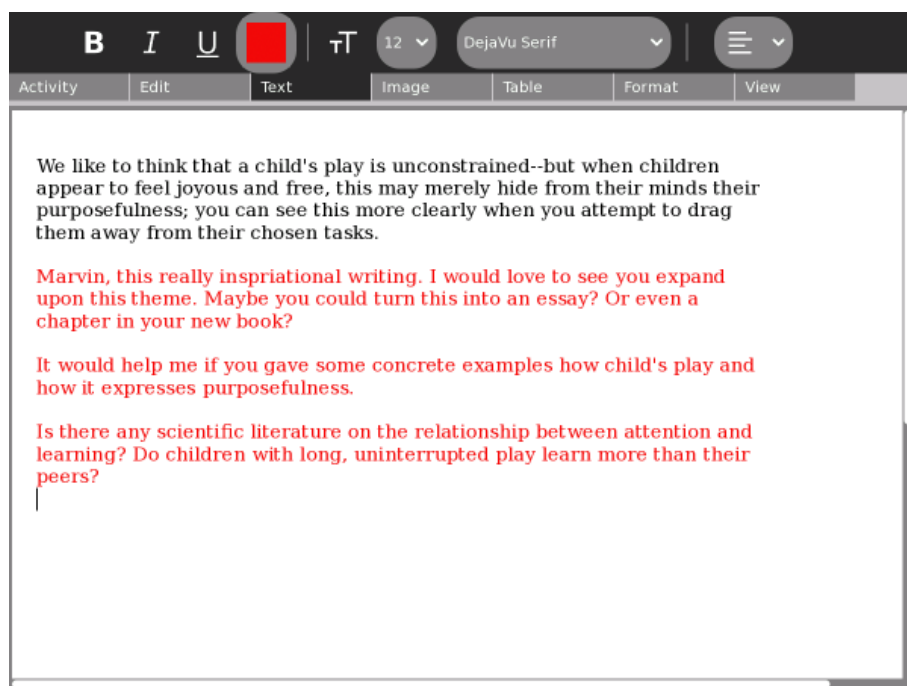
6. GROUP STORYTELLING

The Dadaists, a cultural movement that began in Europe towards the end of World War I (1916) invented a number of art-construction techniques, including collage and photo montage. Many of their works were collaborative, including *exquisite corpse*, a method by which a collection of words or images was collectively assembled. Each collaborator adds to a composition in turn, either by following a rule or by being allowed to see the end of what the previous person contributed.

A shared instance of Write can be used in a similar way to create a collaborative story, poem, rhyme, or group stream of consciousness.

USING WRITE FOR GROUP STORYTELLING

It is fun and easy to use Write for group storytelling. Simply share a document with a group of friends (or your class); take turns opening the document and adding to the story.

Steps:

1. Open a document in Write.
2. Type in a rule on the first line for everyone to follow. (Some examples are listed below.)
3. Go to the Activity tab.
4. Select "Share with Neighborhood".
5. One at a time, each person in the group should open the shared document by clicking it in the Neighborhood View.
6. During their turn, they should follow the rule to add to the end of the story.
7. They should exit Write after they have added to the story. (Important: the person who originally shared the document should *not* exit Write until everyone has taken their turn.)
8. After each person has added to the story, the person who started the story should read it aloud to the group.

Examples

- Add a sentence that continues the theme of a story.
- Add a new sentence that starts with the last word of the sentence that comes before it.
- Add a new word that begins with the same letter as the last letter of the word before it.
- Add an adjective after a noun, a noun after an adjective.
- Add a word with one more letter than the word before it (this gets hard for a large group!)
- Add words in alphabetical order.

Rule: add a word that begins with the last letter of the word before it.

zebra
apple
elephant
tree
eagle
eye
easy
yak
kangaroo
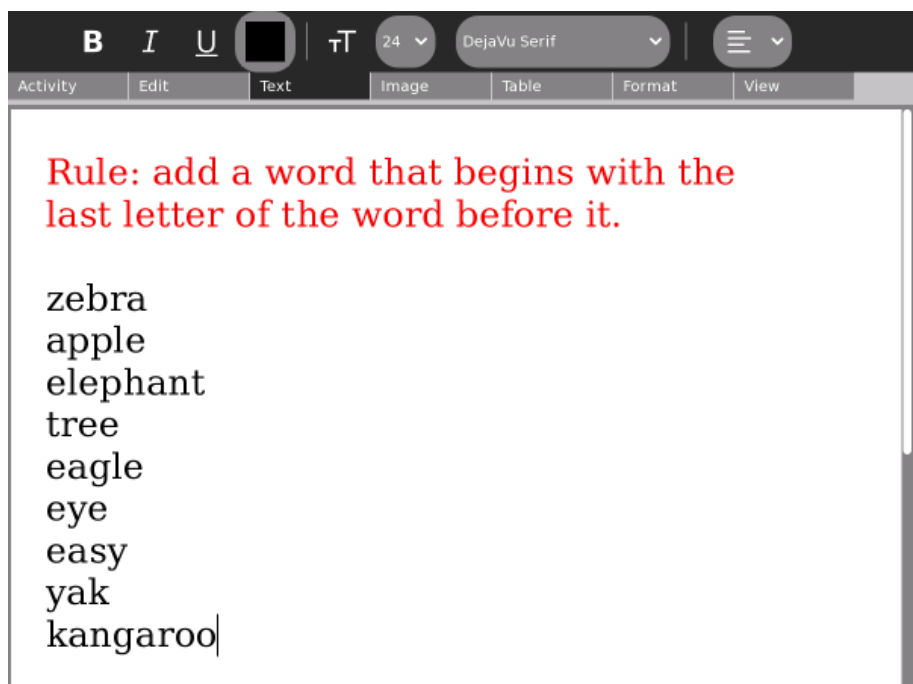
TELEPHONE

You can use Write to play a variant of the Telephone Game (See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_whispers).

Rather than passing a sentence around the room by whispering a phrase, each successive participant in turn repeats a short story though words and pictures. The cumulative errors that result from the interpretation of illustrating a story and subsequently captioning a picture is both amusing and an opportunity to discuss narrative techniques.

Steps:

Alternate between writers and illustrators.

1. Writer:

   A. Create a new document in Write.

   B. Write a short story—two or three sentences.

   C. Share the story with the next student.

2. Illustrator:

   A. Open the shared document and read the story.

   B. Create a new document in Paint.

   C. Create a picture to illustrate the story.

   D. Share the picture with the next student.

3. Continue until every student has either written a story or made a drawing.

4. Share the results with the class in the order in which the stories were created.

7. LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Writing is one of the most powerful means of personal expression ever invented. The expression, "the pen is mightier than the sword" has rung true through out history.

It is important that the world hears your voice and you can make your voice heard, whether through a blog, a letter to the editor, a comment on a page in the Wikipedia, or by some other means. Write gives the power of expression as well as the means to share your expression with others.

If you want to write a letter to the editor, you first need to look in the newspaper or on the paper's web site to find their e-mail address for letters. Some newspapers have a policy of publishing all appropriate letters sent to the editor, but most are more selective. All require you to include your complete name, address, and a contact telephone number. You can, however, request that your letter be published with "name withheld" if you want. Most editors call you to verify that you really did write the letter before printing it. They also reserve the right to edit your letter to fit the available space on the page.

If you keep your letter short and to the point, you have a better chance of experiencing the thrill of seeing your own words in print. Good luck!

EXAMPLES

Children in the Galadima School in Abuja, Nigeria used Write to write letters to the president of Nigeria with suggestions about how he could improve the conditions of school for all the children of Nigeria.

Children in Ban Samkha, Thailand used Write to share ideas with their teachers, their families, and their community.

Children in Khairat, India use Write (and Record) to survey their village and compile a report to the community.

Children in Uruguay and Colombia are writing blog entries, also known as blogging. Blog entries are typically chronologically ordered essays or stories.

OTHER LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Start a school newspaper.
- Write an autobiography.
- Interview someone from your community.
- Write an article for the Wikipedia about your community.

8. E-MAILING A WRITE DOCUMENT

When you have finished writing and editing a letter in Write, you can transfer it to e-mail.

To do this, begin by opening the Write Activity and composing your letter. When you finish writing it, click the Edit tab at the top of the page. Select the Copy icon (the third from the left at the top) and click it. Then open the Browser and go to your e-mail account. Start a new message. Press **ctrl + v** to paste the text from Write to your e-mail message. Once you paste, the e-mail contains the letter you wrote in Write.

ATTACHING PHOTOS

If you would like to attach a photo from the Record Activity to your e-mail, you can do that too. Your e-mail should have something that says "Attach files" or something similar. Select it. It offers you the opportunity to "Browse" (they are referring to looking for the photo, not to the Browse Activity). Click that. It opens the Journal page for you. Select the photo you want and click on it. Then click "Attach". It is then ready to send with your e-mail.

APPENDICES
9. License

9. LICENSE

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