Helping Students Overcome Challenges and Achieve High Results with PDFfiller

An Occupational Therapist Uses A Digital Solution to Assist Students with their Schoolwork

Who?

Lindsey Scheffel is an occupational therapist at Temecula Valley Unified School District in Temecula, California, between San Diego and Los Angeles. Here, the crinkled lines of the map – Glen Oak Hills, De Luz Heights, and Palomar Mountain – converge to form a U of dry rolling hills, in which Temecula is located.

Scheffel works specifically with special needs middle school students between the ages of 11 and 14 to help them with their education and development. Her work demands that she find solutions to the problems her students face and ways to help facilitate and support their educational development.

The Problem

Scheffel was looking for a digital service to assist special needs students with handwriting related problems.

"Special education students are often hindered by their handwriting abilities. They may understand the subject matter and know the answer to a question, but be unable to write it down," said Scheffel.

Because the problem was a question of communication, rather than comprehension, Scheffel needed a tool that would facilitate students' ability to articulate themselves through the written word. "I wanted to find a tool that would allow them to work alongside their peers in a classroom on the same assignments without the handwriting holding them back," said Scheffel.

Completing assignments through a digital service would mitigate the question of handwriting and make it less of an obstacle to finding success in the classroom.

The Solution

Scheffel "searched the Internet for a tool to do PDF editing and filling in the blanks" and found PDFfiller – the perfect solution for a problem that was plaguing her students. The transition was simple: "It was very user-friendly and easy to figure out. I did have to train the teachers and figure out the correct workflow, but we got through that pretty easily," Scheffel said.

"I needed the ability to scan and upload a document and send it directly to the student for filling," said Scheffel. After comparing it to the other online solutions, she realized that PDFfiller offered more flexibility and power than other digital services.

The process of taking a document from concept to completion is quick and easy. Scheffel simply has to scan a document, designate certain fields as fillable, and can then distribute documents for completion to students in just a few clicks.
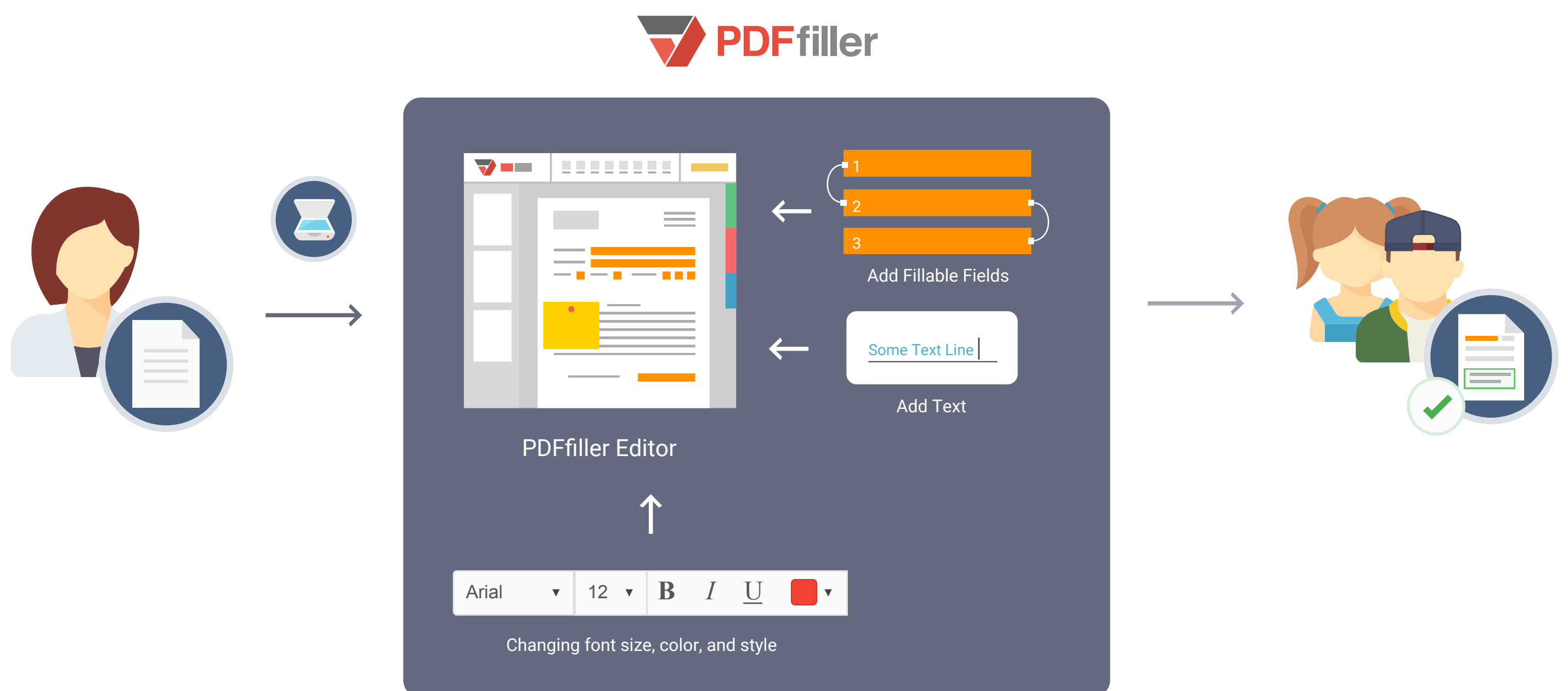
Before PDFfiller, Scheffel was "setting students up with a blank document to type their answers," but a simple text-based document wasn't ideal for a variety of reasons. Blank documents are not as convenient to modify and complete and, most importantly for Scheffel, they don't look like the papers of their classmates, drawing a distinction between special needs students and others. "I wanted their assignment sheet to look same as their classmates, not just a blank document," said Scheffel. PDFfiller allows users to preserve formatting while entering text wherever they want.

PDFfiller works on any Internet-connected device, meaning that Scheffel and her students can work anytime, anywhere. Because "our classrooms have Chromebooks but not PCs, I needed something that would work on a Chromebook," Scheffel said. Oftentimes students have personal computers at home, and Scheffel "needed something that they can connect to from home to finish their assignment." PDFfiller allows these students to work alongside their peers on the same assignment and take it home with them," Scheffel said.

Additionally, PDFfiller is more powerful than standard text-based documents. It allows the user to make specific fields fillable, designate the order of their completion, specify certain fields as mandatory, and even create drop-down menus that allow those completing the form to select from a range of specific answers.

Besides making convenient fillable documents, PDFfiller also makes it easy to customize these documents in a variety of ways. "PDFfiller is easy to use, change font size, drag text around. There is just more you can do with it. PDFfiller was more user friendly [than the competition]," Scheffel said.

Other instructors have used PDFfiller to create scholarship applications and distribute and receive permission slips. For students who are digital natives completing their homework digitally seems natural. With a digital solution, teachers no longer have to worry about deciphering handwriting. Instead, homework can be distributed, completed, and collected in the click of a mouse.

The uses of an electronic document management platform in the classroom are endless, and going digital makes it easier for teachers and students.

Conclusion

Lindsey Scheffel and fellow teachers in Temecula Valley Unified School District are now using PDFfiller on a daily basis to make documents easier for their students to complete and more comprehensible for peers and teachers.

Ultimately, Scheffel said, PDFfiller "helps remove the handwriting hindrance and move these students forward."

PDFfiller provides a simple solution to Scheffel's problem! She envisions it "being used throughout the school district and beyond" to make homework simpler for every student to complete and easier for teachers to collect and grade.

Without PDFfiller

With PDFfiller