

Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability.

Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading. Students with dyslexia usually experience difficulties with other language skills, such as spelling, writing, and pronouncing words. It is referred to as a learning disability because dyslexia can make it very difficult for a student to succeed academically in the typical instructional environment. One in five students, or 15-20% of the population, has a language based learning disability. Dyslexia is the most common of the language based learning disabilities.

Symptoms

Dyslexia affects some people more severely than others, your child's symptoms may look different from those in another child. Some children don't seem to struggle with early reading and writing. But later on, they have trouble with complex language skills, such as grammar, reading comprehension and more in-depth writing. Dyslexia can also make it difficult for people to express themselves clearly. It can be hard for them to structure their thoughts during conversation.

Kindergarten

- > Has trouble recognizing the letters of the alphabet
- > Struggles to match letters to sounds, such as not knowing what sounds *b* or *h* make
- > Has difficulty blending sounds into words, such as connecting C-H-A-T to the word *chat*
- > Struggles to pronounce words correctly, such as saying "mawn lower" instead of "lawn mower"
- > Has difficulty learning new words

Elementary or Middle School

- > Struggles with reading and spelling
- > Confuses the order of letters, such as writing "left" instead of "felt"
- > Has trouble remembering facts and numbers
- > Has difficulty gripping a pencil
- > Has difficulty using proper grammar
- > Has trouble learning new skills and relies heavily on memorization
- > Gets tripped up by word

High School

- > Struggles with reading out loud
- > Doesn't read at the expected grade level
- > Has trouble understanding jokes or idioms
- > Has difficulty organizing and managing time
- > Struggles to summarize a story
- > Has difficulty learning a foreign language

- > Has a smaller vocabulary than other kids the same age
- > Has trouble learning to count or say the days of the week and other common word sequences
- > Has trouble rhyming
- > Has a tough time sounding out unfamiliar words
- > Has trouble following a sequence of directions

Testing & Diagnosing

There is no one definitive test for dyslexia. Testing can range from a brief assessment to a full psycho-educational battery of tests. You can often get the information you need from a brief screening test or assessment that can be done by a reading tutor or language therapist. A brief screening assessment can tell you

- > what decoding strategies your child uses
- > whether your child reads at grade level
- > what skills your child should be learning
- > whether your child has good silent reading comprehension

Keep in mind, however, that a brief assessment is not a formal diagnosis of dyslexia, which can only be done by a licensed psychologist. In a formal diagnosis, the child undergoes a battery of tests that usually measures IQ, language abilities, and academic achievement in specific areas. The testing is normally done by a licensed psychologist or a team that includes a psychologist and one or more reading specialists.

Teaching Strategies

Audio Books

Audio books can help children become better readers and more effective learners. They level the playing field for students with dyslexia when eye reading is a challenge. For a website with audio books, click on the button!

Reduce Material

Give simplified directions, present smaller amounts of work, and block on extraneous stimuli. Directions written in paragraph form or large amounts of writing can be overwhelming for students.

Graphic Organizers

Provide for students so they can listen for key information. They can also be used as a modification for student performance. For example, have student complete graphic organizer versus writing an essay. Click on the button for graphic organizers.

Repetition

Repeat directions with visual cues. Have students repeat directions in their own words to the teacher or other students. Create daily routines in the classroom so students know what to expect.

Assignment books

Students can use calendars to record assignment due dates, school activities, test dates, and homework.
*Have a system for students so that they know what they have turned in.

More time

Students who work slowly can be given additional time to complete written assignments. Allow more time to complete projects instead of oral reports or vice versa. If tests in written format, provide more time or allow them to give information in oral format.

- <https://www.understood.org>
- <http://eida.org>
- <http://www.dyslexia-hawaii.org>
- <http://www.learningally.org>
- <https://www.eduplace.com>
- <http://dyslexiacenterofutah.org>
- <http://www.allaboutlearningpress.com>

Glossary

