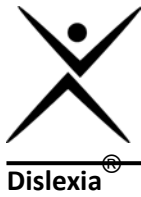




## **Additional Resources/Handouts: Dyslexia**

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Información provista por la Asociación Internacional de

Dislexia®

## **Información básica sobre dislexia**

### **¿Qué es la dislexia?**

La dislexia es un trastorno específico de aprendizaje, con base en el lenguaje. Dislexia se refiere a un conjunto de síntomas que causan que las personas tengan dificultades con destrezas específicas de lenguaje, particularmente con la lectura. Los alumnos con dislexia generalmente presentan dificultades con otras destrezas de lenguaje como la ortografía, la escritura y la pronunciación de palabras. La dislexia afecta a las personas durante toda la vida; sin embargo, el impacto que tiene puede cambiar según la etapa de vida en la que se encuentre la persona. Se le llama trastorno de aprendizaje porque la dislexia puede causarle a un alumno mucha dificultad para ser exitoso académicamente en un ambiente académico típico, y en su manifestación más grave, requerirá que el alumno reciba educación especial, acomodos o servicios adicionales de apoyo.

### **¿Cuál es la causa de la dislexia?**

Las causas exactas de la dislexia no están del todo claras, pero estudios anatómicos y de imágenes cerebrales muestran diferencias en el desarrollo y el funcionamiento del cerebro de una persona con dislexia. Aún más, se ha encontrado que la mayoría de las personas con dislexia tiene dificultad identificando sonidos individuales dentro de una palabra o para aprender cómo las letras representan esos sonidos, un factor clave en las dificultades de lectura que presentan. La

dislexia no se debe a falta de inteligencia o pocos deseos de aprender; con el uso de métodos educativos adecuados, los alumnos con dislexia pueden aprender exitosamente.

### **¿Qué tan generalizada está la dislexia?**

Entre el 13% y el 14% de la población escolar nacional presenta una condición incapacitante que le califica para recibir educación especial. Estudios recientes indican que la mitad de los alumnos que califican para educación especial se clasifican como alumnos con trastornos en el aprendizaje (6-7%). Cerca del 85% de esos alumnos exhibe como dificultad principal un trastorno de aprendizaje en la lectura o el procesamiento del lenguaje. Sin embargo, muchas más personas (tal vez hasta del 15% al 20% de la población) presentan algún síntoma de dislexia, tal como lectura lenta o imprecisa, mala ortografía o confusión de palabras similares. No todos ellos califican para recibir educación especial, pero muy probablemente luchan con muchos aspectos del aprendizaje académico y probablemente se beneficien de recibir enseñanza sistemática y explícita en lectura, escritura y lenguaje.

La dislexia ocurre en personas de cualquier procedencia y nivel intelectual. Las personas con dislexia pueden ser muy brillantes. Frecuentemente, son capaces, y hasta talentosas, en áreas como el arte, la informática, el diseño, las artes teatrales, la electrónica, las matemáticas, la mecánica, la música, la física, las ventas y los deportes.

## **Información básica sobre dislexia-2**

Además, la dislexia tiende a correr en familia; es muy probable que padres con dislexia tengan hijos con dislexia. En algunas personas, la dislexia se identifica temprano en la vida, pero en otros no se identifica hasta que están mayores.

### **¿Qué efectos tiene la dislexia?**

El impacto de la dislexia es distinto en cada persona y depende de la gravedad de la condición y la eficacia de la educación o la remediación. La dificultad principal es con el reconocimiento de palabras y la fluidez de lectura, el deletreo y la escritura. Algunas personas con dislexia logran aprender destrezas iniciales de lectura y deletreo, especialmente si cuentan con una enseñanza excelente, pero más adelante experimentan problemas más debilitantes cuando requieren del uso de destrezas de lenguaje más complejas, como la gramática, entender material de un texto y escribir ensayos. Las personas con dislexia también pueden presentar problemas con el lenguaje hablado, aun luego de haber estado expuestos a modelos de lenguaje en el hogar y educación adecuada en la escuela. Pueden tener dificultad para expresarse claramente, o para comprender a cabalidad lo que otros quieren decir cuando hablan. Estos problemas con el lenguaje son difíciles de identificar, pero pueden conducir a problemas más graves en la escuela, el trabajo y las relaciones con otras personas. Los efectos de la dislexia van más allá del aula. La dislexia también puede afectar la imagen propia de la persona. Los alumnos con dislexia frecuentemente terminan sintiéndose "tontos" y menos capaces de lo que realmente son. Un alumno puede perder el deseo de continuar en la escuela luego de experimentar niveles de estrés altos debido a problemas académicos.

### **¿Cómo se diagnostica la dislexia?**

Antes de referir a un alumno para una evaluación abarcadora, la escuela o el distrito pueden decidir vigilar el progreso del alumno con una prueba breve e identificar si el alumno está progresando a un nivel "de referencia" que predice éxito en la lectura. Si el alumno está por debajo de ese nivel de referencia (que a nivel nacional es equivalente a cerca del 40 por ciento), la escuela puede inmediatamente proveer educación suplementaria intensiva e individualizada en lectura antes de determinar si el alumno necesita una evaluación completa que llevaría a determinar la elegibilidad para servicios de educación especial. Algunos alumnos sencillamente necesitan enseñanza más estructurada y sistemática para corregir el rumbo pues no tienen trastornos de aprendizaje. Para estos alumnos, e incluso para alumnos con dislexia, tiene sentido hacer hincapié en la intervención preventiva o temprana. El niño no se beneficiará si la enseñanza especializada se retrasa por meses mientras se espera por un proceso de evaluación completa. La política pública federal conocida como Respuesta a la Intervención (RTI, por sus siglas en inglés) fomenta la práctica de enseñar primero, y luego determinar quién necesita una evaluación diagnóstica basada en la respuesta a la enseñanza.

Sin embargo, los padres deben saber que en cualquier momento tienen el derecho de solicitar una evaluación completa bajo la ley IDEA, sea o no que el alumno esté recibiendo enseñanza bajo un modelo de RTI. Una evaluación abarcadora típicamente incluye pruebas de inteligencia y de aprovechamiento académico, así como una evaluación de las destrezas críticas subyacentes que están íntimamente relacionadas con la dislexia. Entre estas figuran las destrezas de lenguaje receptivo

## **Información básica sobre dislexia-3**

(auditivo) y expresivo, las destrezas fonológicas que incluyen el conocimiento fonológico, y también la capacidad del alumno para nombrar rápidamente letras y números. También debe evaluarse la capacidad del alumno para leer listas de palabras aisladas, así como palabras en contexto. Si surge un perfil característico de lectores con dislexia, debe desarrollarse un plan individualizado de intervención, que debe incluir modificaciones apropiadas, como por ejemplo, tiempo extendido. La evaluación puede hacerla un especialista en la escuela o fuera de esta. (Véase la Hoja Informativa sobre Pruebas y Evaluación para obtener más información.)

### **¿Cuáles son los indicadores de la dislexia?**

Los problemas que presentan las personas con dislexia se relacionan con dificultades para adquirir y usar el lenguaje escrito. Es un mito la creencia de que las personas con dislexia "leen al revés," aunque en ocasiones el deletreo puede parecer bastante enredado porque los alumnos tienen dificultad para recordar las letras que va con el sonido y para memorizar las palabras. También pueden presentar dificultad para aprender a hablar, aprender las letras y los sonidos de las letras, organizar el lenguaje hablado y escrito, memorizar datos numéricos, leer con la rapidez esperada para comprender, permanecer en la lectura por periodos prolongados y comprender lo que leen, deletrear, aprender otro idioma o realizar operaciones matemáticas correctamente. No todos los alumnos que presentan dificultades con estas destrezas tienen dislexia. Si se sospecha dislexia, la única forma de confirmar un diagnóstico de este trastorno es mediante una evaluación formal de las destrezas de lectura, lenguaje y escritura.

### **¿Cómo se trata la dislexia?**

La dislexia es una condición de por vida. Con la ayuda adecuada, muchas personas con dislexia pueden aprender a escribir y a leer bien. La identificación y el tratamiento tempranos son clave para ayudar a personas con dislexia a ser exitosas en la escuela y en la vida. La mayor parte de las personas con dislexia necesitan ayuda de un maestro, tutor o terapeuta especialmente adiestrado en el uso de un acercamiento lingüístico multisensorial y estructurado. Es importante enseñarles usando un método sistemático y explícito que involucre varios sentidos (audición, vista, tacto) al mismo tiempo. Muchas personas con dislexia necesitan ayuda individual para que puedan avanzar a su propio ritmo. Además, los alumnos con dislexia frecuentemente necesitan muchísima práctica estructurada y retroalimentación correctiva inmediata para desarrollar destrezas automáticas de reconocimiento de palabras. A los alumnos con dislexia les ayuda mucho el que su terapeuta académico trabaje mano a mano con el maestro. Las escuelas pueden implantar modificaciones académicas para ayudar a alumnos con dislexia a ser exitosos. Por ejemplo, a un alumno con dislexia se le puede dar tiempo adicional para terminar las tareas, ayudarlo a tomar notas y asignarle tareas que estén modificadas según la necesidad. Los maestros pueden ofrecer exámenes grabados en audio o permitirles a los alumnos con dislexia usar modos alternos de evaluación. Los alumnos pueden beneficiarse de escuchar audiolibros y de usar programas electrónicos de lectura o procesadores de texto. Es posible que los alumnos también necesiten ayuda con asuntos emocionales que en ocasiones surgen como consecuencia de las dificultades académicas. Especialistas en salud mental pueden ayudarles a manejar las dificultades emocionales.

## **Información básica sobre dislexia-4**

### **¿Qué derechos tiene una persona con dislexia?**

El Acta de Educación de Individuos con Discapacidades 2014 (IDEA, por sus siglas en inglés), la Sección 504 del Acta de Rehabilitación de 1973 y el Acta de Estadounidenses con Discapacidades (ADA, por sus siglas en inglés) definen los derechos de alumnos con dislexia y otras discapacidades relacionadas con el aprendizaje. Estas personas tienen el derecho legal de recibir servicios especiales para ayudarles a acomodarse y a sobreponerse a sus problemas de aprendizaje. Tales servicios incluyen programas académicos diseñados para suplir las necesidades de estos alumnos. Las Actas

también protegen a personas con dislexia contra la discriminación injusta e ilegal.

### **Lecturas sugeridas**

Moats, L. C. y Dakin, K. E. (2008). Basic facts about dyslexia and other reading problems. Baltimore: The International Dyslexia Association.

Shaywitz, S. (2003). Overcoming dyslexia: A new and complete science-based program for reading problems at any level. New York: Knopf.

La Asociación Internacional de Dislexia (IDA, por sus siglas en inglés) agradece a Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D. y a Karen E. Dakin, M.Ed., por su ayuda en la preparación de esta hoja informativa.

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## Dyslexia Basics

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#### **What is 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. Dyslexia affects individuals throughout their lives; however, its impact can change at different stages in a person's life. 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, and in its more severe forms, will qualify a student for special education, special accommodations, or extra support services.

#### **What causes dyslexia?**

The exact causes of dyslexia are still not completely clear, but anatomical and brain imagery studies show differences in the way the brain of a person with dyslexia develops and functions. Moreover, most people with dyslexia have been found to have problems with identifying the separate speech sounds within a word and/or learning how letters represent those sounds, a key factor in their reading difficulties. Dyslexia is not due to either lack of intelligence or desire to learn; with appropriate teaching methods, students with dyslexia can learn successfully.

#### **How widespread is dyslexia?**

About 13–14% of the school population nationwide has a handicapping condition that qualifies them for special education. Current studies indicate that one half of all the students who qualify for special education are classified as having a learning disability (LD) (6–7%). About 85% of those students have a primary learning disability in reading and language processing. Nevertheless, many more people—perhaps as many as 15–20% of the population as a whole—have some of the symptoms of dyslexia, including slow or inaccurate reading, poor spelling, poor writing, or mixing up similar words. Not all of these will qualify for special education, but they are likely to struggle with many aspects of academic learning and are likely to benefit from systematic, explicit, instruction in reading, writing, and language.

Dyslexia occurs in people of all backgrounds and intellectual levels. People with dyslexia can be very bright. They are often capable or even gifted in areas such as art, computer science, design, drama, electronics, math, mechanics, music, physics, sales, and sports.

In addition, dyslexia runs in families; parents with dyslexia are very likely to have children with dyslexia. For some people, their dyslexia is identified early in their lives, but for others, their dyslexia goes unidentified until they get older.

### **What are the effects of dyslexia?**

The impact that dyslexia has is different for each person and depends on the severity of the condition and the effectiveness of instruction or remediation. The core difficulty is with word recognition and reading fluency, spelling, and writing. Some individuals with dyslexia manage to learn early reading and spelling tasks, especially with excellent instruction, but later experience their most debilitating problems when more complex language skills are required, such as grammar, understanding textbook material, and writing essays.

People with dyslexia can also have problems with spoken language, even after they have been exposed to good language models in their homes and good language instruction in school. They may find it difficult to express themselves clearly, or to fully comprehend what others mean when they speak. Such language problems are often difficult to recognize, but they can lead to major problems in school, in the workplace, and in relating to other people. The effects of dyslexia reach well beyond the classroom.

Dyslexia can also affect a person's self-image. Students with dyslexia often end up feeling "dumb" and less capable than they actually are. After experiencing a great deal of stress due to academic problems, a student may become discouraged about continuing in school.

### **How is dyslexia diagnosed?**

Before referring a student for a comprehensive evaluation, a school or district may choose to track a student's progress with a brief screening test and identify whether the student is progressing at a "benchmark" level that predicts success in reading. If a student is below that benchmark (which is equivalent to about the 40th percentile nationally), the school may immediately deliver intensive and individualized supplemental reading instruction before determining whether the student needs a comprehensive evaluation that would lead to a designation of special education eligibility. Some students simply need more structured and systematic instruction to get back on track; they do not have learning disabilities. For those students and even for those with dyslexia, putting the emphasis on preventive or early intervention makes sense. There is no benefit to the child if special instruction is delayed for months while waiting for an involved testing process to occur. These practices of teaching first, and then determining who needs diagnostic testing based on response to instruction, are encouraged by federal policies known as Response to Intervention (RTI). Parents should know, however, that at any point they have the right to request a comprehensive evaluation under the IDEA law, whether or not the student is receiving instruction under an RTI model.

A comprehensive evaluation typically includes intellectual and academic achievement testing, as well as an assessment of the critical underlying language skills that are closely linked to dyslexia. These include receptive (listening) and expressive language skills, phonological skills including phonemic awareness, and also a student's ability to rapidly name letters and numbers. A student's ability to read lists of words in isolation, as well as words in context, should also be assessed. If a profile emerges that is characteristic of readers with dyslexia, an individualized intervention plan should be developed, which should include appropriate accommodations, such as extended time. The testing can be conducted by trained school or outside specialists. (See the [Dyslexia Assessment Fact Sheet](https://dyslexiaida.org/dyslexia-assessment-what-is-it-and-how-can-it-help/) (<https://dyslexiaida.org/dyslexia-assessment-what-is-it-and-how-can-it-help/>) for more information.)

### **What are the signs of dyslexia?**

The problems displayed by individuals with dyslexia involve difficulties in acquiring and using written language. It is a myth that individuals with dyslexia "read backwards," although spelling can look quite jumbled at times because students have trouble remembering letter symbols for sounds and forming memories for words. Other problems experienced by people with dyslexia include the following:

- Learning to speak
- Learning letters and their sounds
- Organizing written and spoken language
- Memorizing number facts
- Reading quickly enough to comprehend
- Persisting with and comprehending longer reading assignments
- Spelling
- Learning a foreign language
- Correctly doing math operations

Not all students who have difficulties with these skills have dyslexia. Formal testing of reading, language, and writing skills is the only way to confirm a diagnosis of suspected dyslexia.

### **How is dyslexia treated?**

Dyslexia is a lifelong condition. With proper help, many people with dyslexia can learn to read and write well. Early identification and treatment is the key to helping individuals with dyslexia achieve in school and in life. Most people with dyslexia need help from a teacher, tutor, or therapist specially trained in using a multisensory, structured language approach. It is important for these individuals to be taught by a systematic and explicit method that involves several senses (hearing, seeing, touching) at the same time. Many individuals with dyslexia need one-on-one help so that they can move forward at their own pace. In addition, students with dyslexia often need a great deal of structured practice and immediate, corrective feedback to develop automatic word recognition skills. For students with dyslexia, it is helpful if their outside academic therapists work closely with classroom teachers.





Schools can implement academic accommodations and modifications to help students with dyslexia succeed. For example, a student with dyslexia can be given extra time to complete tasks, help with taking notes, and work assignments that are modified appropriately. Teachers can give recorded tests or allow students with dyslexia to use alternative means of assessment.

Students can benefit from listening to audiobooks and using text reading and word processing computer programs. Students may also need help with emotional issues that sometimes arise as a consequence of difficulties in school. Mental health specialists can help students cope with their struggles.

### **What are the rights of a person with dyslexia?**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) define the rights of students with dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities. These individuals are legally entitled to special services to help them overcome and accommodate their learning problems. Such services include education programs designed to meet the needs of these students. The Acts also protect people with dyslexia against unfair and illegal discrimination.

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### **Suggested Readings**

Moats, L. C., & Dakin, K. E. (2008). *Basic facts about dyslexia and other reading problems*. Baltimore: The International Dyslexia Association.

Shaywitz, S. (2003). *Overcoming dyslexia: A new and complete science-based program for reading problems at any level*. New York: Knopf.

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*The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) thanks Louisa C. Moats, Ed.D., and Karen E. Dakin, M.Ed., for their assistance in the preparation of this fact sheet.*

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## Trastorno por déficit de atención/hiperactividad (TDA/H) y Dislexia

El TDA/H y la dislexia son trastornos distintos que con frecuencia coinciden, de modo que se crea cierta confusión sobre la naturaleza de estas dos condiciones. El TDA/H es uno de los problemas evolutivos más comunes, que afecta del 3-5% de la población escolar. Se caracteriza por inatención, distracción, hiperactividad e impulsividad. Se estima que el 30% de los que tienen dislexia también tienen TDA/H coexistente. Coexistente quiere decir que las dos condiciones, el TDA/H y la dislexia, pueden ocurrir juntas, pero que una no es la causa de la otra. La dislexia es una dificultad en el aprendizaje que tiene base en el lenguaje, y que se caracteriza por dificultades en el reconocimiento preciso y fluido de palabras, dificultades en el deletreo y en la decodificación. Las personas con dislexia tienen dificultad para discriminar los sonidos dentro de palabras o fonemas, un factor clave en las dificultades de lectura y deletreo que presentan. (Véase las hojas informativas de IDA “Definición de Dislexia” y “Información Básica sobre Dislexia”.)

### **¿Cómo se diagnostican el TDA/H y la dislexia?**

El TDA/H y la dislexia se diagnostican de manera distinta. La evaluación para el TDA/H la realiza un médico o un psicólogo. Esta evaluación debe incluir lo siguiente: 1) historial médico y familiar completo, 2) examen físico, 3) entrevista con ambos padres y con el niño, 4) escalas de calificación llenadas por los maestros y los padres, 5) observación del niño, 6) pruebas psicológicas para medir el potencial intelectual, el ajuste emocional y la presencia de alguna

dificultad relacionada con el aprendizaje, tal como dislexia. Aunque al TDA/H se le han dado muchos nombres desde que se identificó por primera vez en 1902, la Cuarta Edición del Manual Estadístico y Diagnóstico (DSM-IV, por sus siglas en inglés) identificó tres subtipos principales. Estos subtipos son: 1) el TDA/H del tipo predominantemente inatento, que se caracteriza por distracción, dificultad para mantener el esfuerzo mental sostenido y la atención, 2) el TDA/H del tipo predominantemente hiperactivo-impulsivo, que se caracteriza por jugar con manos y pies, moverse intranquilamente en el asiento, actuar como impulsado por un motor, interrumpir a otros y entrometerse, y 3) el TDA/H del tipo combinado, que presenta los criterios tanto de inatención como de hiperactividad/impulsividad. La dislexia se diagnostica con una evaluación psicoeducativa. (Véase la hoja informativa de IDA: “Evaluación y Pruebas”.)

### **¿El TDA/H se diagnostica más de lo debido?**

La Asociación Médica Americana y el Centro de Control y Prevención de Enfermedades han concluido que el TDA/H no se diagnostica en exceso. Sin embargo, al haber mayor concienciación ha habido un aumento en el número de personas diagnosticadas con el TDA/H. De hecho, las niñas y las personas dotadas pudieran no ser diagnosticadas, o diagnosticadas tardíamente. Las niñas frecuentemente presentan el TDA/H del tipo predominantemente inatento, en el que la característica principal es la inatención. Este subtipo de TDA/H fácilmente puede pasarse por alto, porque las características más evidentes de hiperactividad e impulsividad no están presentes. Los niños dotados pueden ser diagnosticados

## **Trastorno por déficit de atención/hiperactividad (TDA/H) y Dislexia -2**

tardíamente porque su gran capacidad intelectual les ayuda a compensar por la inatención.

### **¿Pueden las personas heredar el TDA/H y la dislexia?**

Tanto el TDA/H como la dislexia corren en familias. La genética juega un rol en cerca de la mitad de los niños diagnosticados con el TDA/H. En la otra mitad, la investigación todavía no ha identificado la causa. En cuanto a la dislexia, cerca de un tercio de los niños que nacen de padres disléxicos probablemente también serán disléxicos.

### **¿Hay características en común entre personas con el TDA/H y con dislexia?**

Los niños disléxicos y los niños con el TDA/H tienen algunas características similares. Los niños disléxicos, al igual que los niños con el TDA/H, pueden tener dificultad para prestar atención porque la lectura es un proceso tan exigente que puede causar que se fatiguen fácilmente, limitándoles la capacidad para mantener la concentración. Tanto las personas con dislexia como las personas con el TDA/H tienen dificultad con la lectura. Frecuentemente, la lectura de personas con dislexia no es fluida y poco precisa, con errores tanto en palabras grandes como pequeñas. La persona con el TDA/H también puede ser un lector con falta de fluidez, pero su lectura no se caracteriza por leer mal las palabras. Más bien, el lector con TDA/H puede omitir la puntuación, dejar finales sin leer y perder la ubicación dentro de la lectura. La falta de fluidez tanto en la persona con el TDA/H como en la persona con dislexia puede impactar negativamente la comprensión lectora. Ambos pueden evitar la lectura y derivar poco placer de ésta. Típicamente, ambos tienen dificultad con la escritura. El escritor disléxico típico tiene problemas significativos con el deletreo, la gramática, la corrección de textos y la organización. El escritor con TDA/H tiene dificultad con la organización y la corrección de textos. Tanto el escritor con dislexia como el

escritor con el TDA/H pueden tener dificultades con la escritura a mano.

Las personas con dislexia y TDA/H pueden tener poco aprovechamiento académico, aun cuando normalmente son brillantes y están motivados. La meta para ellos, al igual que para todos los niños, es que alcancen su potencial. Es crucial que los niños con estos trastornos sean evaluados cuidadosamente, porque el tratamiento para ambos trastornos es distinto. Un diagnóstico inexacto puede conducir a intervenciones inapropiadas y a un retraso en la provisión de intervención efectiva y a tiempo.

### **¿Los estudios neurológicos han demostrado diferencias funcionales o anatómicas en cerebros de personas con el TDA/H o con dislexia?**

La comunidad científica ha estado intentando definir los cambios exactos que se dan en el cerebro humano y que llevan al TDA/H y a la dislexia. Se han hecho estudios patológicos de algunos cerebros de personas con dislexia luego de morir. Aunque se han encontrado cambios entre los cerebros de personas con dislexia y los de personas que no son disléxicas, no ha surgido ningún patrón sistemático que permita determinar con exactitud el "foco disléxico". Se han desarrollado técnicas más prometedoras, que pueden practicarse en personas vivas. Éstas incluyen estudios de imágenes y estudios fisiológicos. En conclusión, se han encontrado pistas interesantes, pero ninguna nos ha dado una respuesta definitiva con respecto al mecanismo subyacente de estos trastornos. También debe mencionarse que estas pruebas son herramientas de investigación. Al presente no hay pruebas biológicas disponibles rutinariamente que permitan el diagnóstico objetivo de la dislexia o del TDA/H.

## **Trastorno por déficit de atención/hiperactividad (TDA/H) y Dislexia -3**

### **¿Cuál es el panorama de niños con dislexia y TDA/H?**

Si la dislexia y el TDA/H se identifican y se tratan tempranamente, es más probable que los niños con estos trastornos aprendan a sobreponerse a sus dificultades mientras mantienen una autoimagen positiva. Aunque los niños con dislexia no se curan de su discapacidad, pueden aprender a adaptarse y a mejorar sus áreas débiles. Con la ayuda y las modificaciones apropiadas, los alumnos con dislexia pueden ser muy exitosos a nivel universitario, así como en la vida profesional y adulta. Luego de la pubertad, entre el 40 y el 50% de los niños con el TDA/H mejorará y desarrollará suficientes destrezas como para que los síntomas ya no tengan un impacto negativo en la calidad de vida. Sin embargo, el restante 50–60% continuará presentando síntomas del TDA/H en la adolescencia y la adultez, que les impactarán negativamente. Es importante recordar que muchos alumnos con el TDA/H, si

reciben el apoyo y las modificaciones apropiadas, pueden ser muy exitosos en niveles académicos altos y en la vida profesional. Nunca es muy tarde para diagnosticar estos trastornos. Es común que personas dotadas sean diagnosticadas con dislexia o con el TDA/H en la universidad o en la escuela de postgrado. Estas personas pueden aprender a desarrollar sus fortalezas personales y pueden convertirse en estudiantes exitosos así como en adultos felices y productivos.

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- Dakin, K. E., y Erenberg, G. (2005). Questions about attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and dyslexia. Baltimore: The International Dyslexia Association.
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La Asociación Internacional de Dislexia (IDA) agradece a Karen E. Dakin, M.Ed. y a Gerald Erenberg, M.D., por su ayuda en la preparación de esta hoja informativa.

*"promoviendo la alfabetización por medio de investigación, educación y promoción"™*

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## **Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) and Dyslexia**

AD/HD and dyslexia are distinct conditions that frequently overlap, thereby causing some confusion about the nature of these two conditions. AD/HD is one of the most common developmental problems, affecting 3–5% of the school population. It is characterized by inattention, distractibility, hyperactivity and impulsivity. It is estimated that 30% of those with dyslexia have coexisting AD/HD. Coexisting means the two conditions, AD/HD and dyslexia, can occur together, but they do not cause each other. Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability characterized by difficulties with accurate and fluent word recognition, spelling, and reading decoding. People with dyslexia have problems discriminating sounds within a word or phonemes, a key factor in their reading and spelling difficulties. (See IDA fact sheets “Definition of Dyslexia” and “Dyslexia Basics.”)

### **How are AD/HD and dyslexia diagnosed?**

AD/HD and dyslexia are diagnosed differently. An evaluation for AD/HD is carried out by a physician or a psychologist. This evaluation should include the following:

1. complete medical and family history
2. physical examination
3. interviews with parents and child
4. behavior rating scales completed by parents and teachers
5. observation of the child
6. psychological tests to measure intellectual potential, social and emotional adjustment, as well as to assess for the presence of learning disabilities, such as dyslexia.

Although AD/HD has been given numerous names since it was first identified in 1902, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

(DSM-IV) describes three different subtypes. These subtypes are

1. *AD/HD predominantly inattentive type* is characterized by distractibility and difficulty sustaining mental effort and attention.
2. *AD/HD predominantly hyperactive-impulsive type* is characterized by fidgeting with hands and feet, squirming in one’s chair, acting as if driven by a motor, interrupting and intruding upon others.
3. *AD/HD combined type* meets both sets of inattention and hyperactive/impulsive criteria.

Dyslexia is diagnosed through a psycho-educational evaluation. (See IDA Dyslexia Assessment Fact Sheet.”)

### **Is AD/HD overdiagnosed?**

The American Medical Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have concluded that AD/HD is not overdiagnosed; however, increased awareness has resulted in an increase in the number of individuals diagnosed with AD/HD. Girls and gifted children are actually underdiagnosed or may be diagnosed late. Girls often have *AD/HD predominantly inattentive type* where the essential feature is inattention. This subtype of AD/HD can easily be overlooked because the more obvious characteristics of hyperactivity and impulsivity are not present. Gifted children may be identified late because their strong intellectual abilities help them to compensate for these weaknesses in attention.

### **Can individuals inherit AD/HD and dyslexia?**

Both AD/HD and dyslexia run in families. Genetics play a role in about half of the children diagnosed with AD/HD. For the other half, research has yet to identify a cause. Regarding dyslexia, about one third of the children born to a dyslexic parent will also likely be dyslexic.

### **Are there characteristics that individuals with AD/HD and dyslexia have in common?**

Dyslexic children and children with AD/HD have some similar characteristics. Dyslexic children, like children with AD/HD, may have difficulty paying attention because reading is so demanding that it causes them to fatigue easily, limiting the ability to sustain concentration. People with dyslexia and those with AD/HD both have difficulty with reading. The dyslexic person's reading is typically dysfluent, with major problems with accuracy, misreading both large and small words. The person with AD/HD may also be a dysfluent reader, but his or her reading is not characterized by misreading words. The AD/HD reader may skip over punctuation, leave off endings, and lose his or her place. The dysfluency of both the ADHD person and the dyslexic reader may negatively impact comprehension. Both may avoid reading and derive little pleasure from it. Both the person with dyslexia and the person with AD/HD typically have trouble with writing. The typical dyslexic writer has significant problems with spelling, grammar, proofreading, and organization. The AD/HD writer often has difficulty with organization and proofreading. Both the dyslexic writer and the AD/HD writer may have handwriting difficulties.

Individuals with dyslexia and AD/HD may be underachieving in school even though they are often bright and motivated. The goal for them, as it is for all children, is to meet their potential. It is critical that children with these disorders be

carefully evaluated because treatment for one disorder is different from the other. Inaccurate diagnosis can lead to inappropriate intervention and a delay in timely, effective intervention.

### **Have neurological studies shown functional and/or anatomical differences in the brains of people with AD/HD as compared to dyslexia?**

The scientific community has been attempting to define the exact changes in the human brain that lead to AD/HD and dyslexia. There have been pathologic studies of a few brains from people with dyslexia after they died. While some changes in the brain have been found between the brains of people with dyslexia and people who do not have dyslexia, no consistent pattern has emerged that allows the exact “dyslexic center” to be determined. More promising techniques have been developed, which can be performed in living persons. These include imaging studies, as well as physiologic studies. Once again, interesting leads have been found, but none has given us a definitive answer regarding the underlying mechanisms of these disorders. It should also be mentioned that these tests are research tools. There are currently no biologic tests routinely available that allow an objective diagnosis of dyslexia or AD/HD.

### **What is the outlook for children with dyslexia and AD/HD?**

If dyslexia and AD/HD are identified and treated early, children with these disorders are more likely to learn to overcome their difficulties while maintaining a positive self-image. Even though children with dyslexia do not outgrow their disability, they can learn to adapt and improve their weak skills. With proper remediation and needed accommodations, students with dyslexia can go on to be very successful students in colleges and universities, as well as in professional and adult life. After puberty, about 40–50% of children with AD/HD will improve

## AD/HD and Dyslexia – Page 3

and develop enough coping skills so that their symptoms no longer have a negative impact on their quality of life; however, the other 50–60% will continue to exhibit symptoms of AD/HD through adolescence and adulthood that will negatively affect their lives. It is important to remember that many students with AD/HD with appropriate support and accommodations can be very successful with higher level academic work and in their professional lives. It is never too late to diagnose these disorders. It is not uncommon for a gifted person in college or graduate school to be diagnosed with dyslexia or AD/HD. Such individuals can learn to develop their personal strengths and become not only successful students, but happy and productive adults, as well.

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*The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) thanks Karen E. Dakin, M.Ed., and Gerald Erenberg, M.D., for their assistance in the preparation of this fact sheet.*

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## Señales de advertencia de la Dislexia

Si un niño demuestra 3 o más de las señales de advertencia, incentive a los padres y maestros de ese niño a aprender más acerca de la dislexia.

### Preescolares

- Vocalización tardía
- Mezclar los sonidos y las sílabas en largas palabras
- Infecciones crónicas en los oídos
- Tartamudean las palabras
- Confunden frecuentemente la izquierda y la derecha
- Toman hasta una edad tardía para establecer su mano dominante
- Dificultad para aprender a atarse los zapatos
- Problemas para memorizar su dirección, número de teléfono, o el alfabeto
- Inhabilidad de crear palabras que riman con otras palabras
- Un familiar cercano que posea dislexia

### En la escuela elemental

- Disgrafía (el manuscrito que es lento, difícil de realizar y que es difícil de leer)
- Mezclan las letras y los números pasado del primer grado
- Dificultad extrema en aprender el cursivo
- Habilidad lenta, cortada e incorrecta de leer:
  - Adivinar palabras basado en la forma o el contexto
  - Omite o lee incorrectamente preposiciones (a, del, en)
  - Ignora sufijos
  - Inhabilidad de vocalizar palabras desconocidas
- Deletrear palabras incorrectamente
- Frecuentemente no pueden recordar palabras visuales (ellos, fueron, hacen) o homónimos (palabras que suenan iguales)
- Dificultad a poder leer relojes de manos
- Problemas con las matemáticas
  - Problema para memorizar tablas de multiplicación
  - Problema para memorizar secuencias de pasos
  - No entienden la dirección de resolver problemas
- Al hablar, dificultad para encontrar la palabra correcta
  - Uso frecuente de palabras vacías como “cosas” o “eso”
  - Refranes populares usualmente no son vocalizados correctamente
- Dormitorio, mochila y escritorio muy desordenados.



- Odian ir a la escuela
  - Siempre se quejan de dolores del estómago o dolores de cabeza
  - Tienen pesadillas acerca de la escuela

### **En la High School**

Tienen todos los síntomas arriba más:

- Vocabulario limitado
- Habilidad muy pobre de expresarse cuando escribe
  - Drástica diferencia de su habilidad de comunicarse verbalmente y al escribir
- Inhabilidad de aprender un nuevo lenguaje
- Dificultad de poder leer música
- Bajos grados en muchas clases
- Riesgo a abandonar su educación

### **En Adultos**

La educación educativa arriba, más:

- Lee lentamente
- Necesita leer una página 2 o 3 veces para entenderla
- Habilidad de deletrear es mediocre
- Dificultad a poder poner sus pensamientos al papel
  - Horror a escribir letras o memorandos
- Todavía tienen dificultad para diferenciar de izquierda o a la derecha
- Frecuentemente se pierde, inclusivamente en ciudades familiares
- A veces se mezclan las “b” y la “d”, especialmente cuando están cansados o enfermos

From: [www.BrightSolutions.US](http://www.BrightSolutions.US)

# Warning Signs of Dyslexia

If a child has 3 or more of the following warning signs, encourage that child's parents and teachers to learn more about dyslexia.

## In Preschool

- delayed speech
- mixing up the sounds and syllables in long words
- chronic ear infections
- stuttering
- constant confusion of left versus right
- late establishing a dominant hand
- difficulty learning to tie shoes
- trouble memorizing their address, phone number, or the alphabet
- can't create words that rhyme
- a close relative with dyslexia

## In Elementary School

- dysgraphia (slow, non-automatic handwriting that is difficult to read)
- letter or number reversals continuing past the end of first grade
- extreme difficulty learning cursive
- slow, choppy, inaccurate reading:
  - guesses based on shape or context
  - skips or misreads prepositions (at, to, of)
  - ignores suffixes
  - can't sound out unknown words
- terrible spelling
- often can't remember sight words (they, were, does) or homonyms (their, they're, and there)
- difficulty telling time with a clock with hands
- trouble with math
  - memorizing multiplication tables
  - memorizing a sequence of steps
  - directionality
- when speaking, difficulty finding the correct word
  - lots of "whatyamacallits" and "thingies"
  - common sayings come out slightly twisted
- extremely messy bedroom, backpack, and desk
- dreads going to school
  - complains of stomach aches or headaches
  - may have nightmares about school

## In High School

All of the above symptoms plus:

- limited vocabulary
- extremely poor written expression
  - large discrepancy between verbal skills and written compositions
- unable to master a foreign language
- difficulty reading printed music
- poor grades in many classes
- may drop out of high school

## In Adults

Education history similar to above, plus:

- slow reader
- may have to read a page 2 or 3 times to understand it
- terrible speller
- difficulty putting thoughts onto paper
  - dreads writing memos or letters
- still has difficulty with right versus left
- often gets lost, even in a familiar city
- sometimes confuses b and d, especially when tired or sick

## To Learn More:

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## Dyslexia Definition and What to Do If You Suspect You Are Dyslexic

### Dyslexia Definition

*Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin.*

*It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.*

*These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction.*

(International Dyslexia Association)

Author Cheri Rae adds these important facts to that definition: “Dyslexia is typically characterized by strengths in big-picture concepts, thinking outside the box, making unexpected connections, and demonstrating an intuitive understanding of people and navigating the natural world . . .” Many of our most successful entrepreneurs, inventors, business leaders, scholars, athletes, and artists have been/are dyslexic.

### What to do if you suspect you are dyslexic

[Get a formal identification if possible.](#) This means having a qualified tester complete an assessment and state that you are dyslexic and/or have a specific learning disability. The tester should be someone who can assign the correct code from the DSM-V.

[Get specialized tutoring.](#) People with dyslexia need “structured literacy instruction” (previously known as the Orton-Gillingham method). Many students with dyslexia will also need to work on their comprehension and vocabulary skills. Audiobooks can be very helpful.

[Get appropriate accommodations for school, important tests, and work.](#) Accommodations might include extended time, audiobooks, speech-to-text software, text-to-speech software, etc.

[Learn about Dyslexia](#) (see suggestions on next page)

[Build your social/emotional strength.](#) [Learn to advocate for yourself.](#) Most people do not understand dyslexia and how it can make school and work more difficult.

- People with dyslexia should strengthen their self-awareness, proactivity, perseverance, problem-solving, adaptability, and growth mindset.
- People with dyslexia should learn about the common strengths that people with dyslexia have and learn about the many successful people (like Steven Spielberg) who have dyslexia.
- People with dyslexia will be more successful at navigating school and work if they have a thorough understanding of dyslexia and their own needs and strengths and learn to use their voice to advocate for themselves.

## Learning More about Dyslexia

Video for understanding dyslexia: <https://www.dys-add.com/> Watch “Dyslexia: Symptoms and Solutions.” (4 sessions, total of 3+ hours)

Video, “Embracing Dyslexia” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBIK0XVPbXo> (50 minutes)

Book for understanding dyslexia: *Overcoming Dyslexia* by Sally Shaywitz, M.D.

Websites for more information:

- Bright Solutions for Dyslexia: <https://www.dys-add.com/>
- The Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity: <https://dyslexia.yale.edu/>
- Understood <https://www.understood.org/>
- The International Dyslexia Association <https://dyslexiaida.org/>



## Dyslexia Action Plan for Parents

Adapted from Susan Barton's Advice to Parents

1. Explain dyslexia to your child. Key points to cover:

- *You are smart and will do well in school.*
- *We learned from the screening that you do not hear sounds clearly and that makes spelling and sounding out words difficult.*
- *You are going to get special tutoring that will help you hear the sounds and this will make spelling, reading, and school much easier for you.*
- *You have strengths that other students don't have. We need to learn about your strengths and then help you use them—like special powers. (Have a list of strengths that are associated with dyslexia ready to share.)*
- *A lot of people have the same trouble hearing sounds. You are not alone. (Have a list of famous dyslexic people ready to share.)*

2. Help your child figure out how to talk about dyslexia with his/her friends. Possible explanation: I don't hear sounds as easily as you do; that's why spelling and reading are hard for me. But I'm working on it and I'm getting better.

3. Begin the right type of tutoring right away. (PASP, Foundations in Sound, LiPS, Orton-Gillingham, Structured Word Inquiry). Your child should receive tutoring for a minimum of 2 hours per week, for 2 – 4 years. Do not stop the tutoring before the entire program is complete. Your student should complete an entire program to make sure that he/she is prepared for high school and college work. Recommended Learning Systems for Dyslexics (all Orton-Gillingham-based)

- Barton Reading and Spelling System
- Orton-Gillingham
- Slingerland
- MTA (Multi-sensory Teaching Approach)
- Alphabetic Phonics or Take Flight
- Wilson Reading System
- Language!
- Project Read
- Recipe for Reading
- Preventing Academic Failure (PAF)
- S.P.I.R.E.

For your child to get the most out of any of these programs, he/she should stick to just one program. Teachers/tutors should not mix and match; they should use the programs with “fidelity” which means they should be used as intended by the program creators.

4. Strongly encourage your student to listen to audio books. (Learning Ally, You Tube, Audible, Kindle, Books on CD)
5. Talk to the teacher (and principal). Start classroom and homework accommodations immediately. Get additional “formal” testing if desired.
6. Continue to learn about dyslexia.



## **Famous, Successful Dyslexics**

- Edward James Olmos, actor
- Salma Hayek, actress
- Charles Schwab, businessman and investor
- Dr. Carol Greider, Nobel Prize winner in medicine
- Gavin Newsom, governor of California
- Jamie Oliver, chef
- Jim Carrey, actor
- Octavia Spencer, actress
- Paul Orfalea, founder of Kinko's
- Professor Elizabeth Blackburn, Nobel Prize winner in medicine
- Richard Branson, entrepreneur and billionaire
- Richard Engel, journalist and author
- Steven Spielberg, movie director and producer
- Tim Tebow, football
- Tommy Hilfiger, clothing designer and businessman

### **Famous people in history who probably had dyslexia:**

- Albert Einstein, theoretical physicist
- George Washington, president
- Henry Ford, industrial revolutionary, founder of Ford Motor Company
- Leonardo da Vinci, artist, inventor, scientist, engineer, writer
- Pablo Picasso, artist
- Thomas Edison, inventor of the lightbulb, phonograph, and motion picture camera
- Winston Churchill, prime minister of the United Kingdom (1940 – 1945)

### **More famous people with other types of learning disabilities:**

- Simone Biles, ADHD, Olympic gymnast
- Daniel Radcliffe, Dyspraxia, actor
- David Neeleman, ADHD, JetBlue CEO
- Justin Timberlake, ADHD, musician and songwriter
- Michael Phelps, ADHD, Olympic swimmer
- will.i.am, ADHD, rapper
- Adam Levine, ADHD, musician (Maroon 5)
- Katherine Ellison, ADHD, Pulitzer prize-winning journalist/writer
- Ed Hollowell, ADHD, Harvard Psychiatrist and bestselling author

## **La Lectura Independiente y el Alumno que presenta Dificultad en la Lectura**

De acuerdo al Informe del Panel Nacional de Lectura (2000), los Institutos Nacionales de Salud, las guías para la Dislexia de CA (2017) y otros expertos, los estudiantes que luchan con la decodificación y codificación necesitan explícitos, sistemáticos, multisensoriales, instrucción de lectura integral por parte de un maestro calificado.

Un número creciente de investigaciones indica que la lectura independiente al mismo nivel de destreza no ayuda a mejorar las destrezas de codificación y decodificación en alumnos que presentan dificultad en la lectura. (Y la lectura por debajo del nivel de su grado escolar no ayuda al desarrollo de conocimiento de contenidos, sintaxis, necesarios para alcanzar el nivel de su grado escolar).

Imponer a alumnos que presentan dificultad una lectura de libros por debajo de su nivel de grado escolar puede dañar su desarrollo social/emocional y provocar una mayor retracción en el desarrollo de destrezas lingüísticas.

Para ayudar a los alumnos que presentan dificultad en la lectura a desarrollar y mantener una actitud positiva en cuanto a la lectura y a sus propias habilidades, la lectura independiente ha de estar a su mismo nivel de grado escolar y conseguirse a través de libros de audio.

- Se les permitirá a los alumnos que presentan dificultad en la lectura completar sus tareas de lectura independiente utilizando libros de audio que estén a su mismo nivel o a un nivel superior a su grado escolar.
- Las pruebas que hagan han de utilizar un software que convierte texto a voz (presentación auditiva) y no tendrán una duración determinada.
- Estos pasos ayudarán al alumno con dificultad en la lectura a desarrollar conocimientos de contenido, conocimiento sintácticos, etc. De acuerdo a su grado escolar. El alumno deberá recibir de forma simultánea una enseñanza explícita en las destrezas de codificación y decodificación, lo que hará posible que sus destrezas de lectura independiente alcancen el nivel de su grado escolar.

### **Fuentes de Investigación**

California Dyslexia Guidelines (*Directrices sobre la Dislexia, California*)- California Department of ... (s.f.). Disponible en <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ac/documents/cadyslexiaguidelines.pdf> (Fuente en inglés)

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## Independent Reading and the Struggling Reader

According to the National Reading Panel Report (2000), the National Institutes of Health, the CA Dyslexia Guidelines (2017), and other experts, students who struggle with decoding and encoding need structured literacy instruction. Structured literacy instruction (SLI) is explicit, systematic, multisensory, cumulative, intensive, and comprehensive. SLI teaches students to decode (sound out) and encode (spell).

A growing body of research also suggests that independent reading at their skill level **does not help** struggling readers to improve their decoding and encoding skills. For example, asking a 4<sup>th</sup> grade student who is two years behind in his/her reading to independently read a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade book does not help the student learn to read. Structured literacy instruction is the key to teaching independent reading skills. In addition, reading books below their grade level will not help struggling readers develop the vocabulary, syntax, or content knowledge they need for their grade level.

Furthermore, forcing struggling readers to read books beneath their grade level may harm their social/emotional development and cause them to further retreat from working on language skills.

To help struggling readers develop and maintain a positive outlook about reading and their own abilities, independent reading should be at their grade level and achieved through audiobooks.

Current research suggests that

- struggling readers should be allowed to complete their independent reading assignments by using audiobooks at or above their grade level.
- the quizzes they take should utilize text-to-speech software (auditory delivery) and speech-to-text software and be untimed.
- these steps will allow the struggling reader to develop grade-appropriate content knowledge, syntactical knowledge, vocabulary, etc. The student should simultaneously receive structured literacy instruction that will bring his/her independent reading skills to grade level.

### Research Sources

California Dyslexia Guidelines - California Department of ... (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ac/documents/cadyslexiaguidelines.pdf>

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Haft, S. L., Myers, C. A., & Hoeft, F. (2016). Socio-emotional and cognitive resilience in children with reading disabilities. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 10, 133–141. doi: 10.1016/j.cobeha.2016.06.005

Additional research sources available upon request.



Handout for our video

## Classroom Accommodations for Dyslexic Students

### What is an Accommodation?

A change in the way a teacher:

- presents information
- tests students
- has students practice new skills

so that every student has a chance to succeed.

### Accommodations Are Fair

Fair does *not* mean treating every student exactly the same.

Fair means providing each student with what that student needs to have a *chance* to succeed.

### Dyslexic Students Need:

A teacher who:

- understands their frustration
- understands that their difficulties are due to an inherited brain difference
- will not give up on them
- will not make them look stupid in front of their friends

### To reduce Fear & Anxiety:

- Never force them to participate in a spelling bee
- Never force them to read out loud in class
- Never have them write on the board
- Don't pass papers down the row
- Don't allow other students to grade papers or tests
- Never call on them unless they volunteer
- Make sure your classroom is a safe place to make mistakes

### Accommodations for Reading

- Provide all books on audio tape  
see Books on Tape section below
- During silent sustained reading, allow students to either just read or to listen and read

### Books on Tape:

#### Learning Ally

for textbooks

800-221-4792

[www.LearningAlly.org](http://www.LearningAlly.org)

#### Recorded Books Rentals

for best sellers, leisure books, and classics

800-638-1304

[www.recordedbooks.com](http://www.recordedbooks.com)

#### Books on Tape Rentals

for best sellers, leisure books, and classics)

800-88-BOOKS

[www.booksontape.com](http://www.booksontape.com)

#### Your local library

can obtain many recorded books for you

### Accommodations for Spelling

Our students can't learn to spell by memorizing, nor can they learn to spell by writing a word 50 times. So:

- Don't grade their spelling tests
- Don't put a spelling grade on their report card  
Leave that area blank
- Ignore spelling mistakes on written assignments  
Grade on content, not mechanics
- Don't force them to use a traditional dictionary  
Allow electronic spell checkers instead

[www.BrightSolutions.US](http://www.BrightSolutions.US)

## **Accommodations for Handwriting**

No notetaking:

- Provide a peer notetaker with Carbonless Notebook paper  
(Suppliers are listed below)
- Or teacher provides photocopies of her notes and whatever was on the board
- Or tape record the class

No copying out of the book:

- Someone else copies problems out of the book
- Or photocopy the page of problems  
Student writes answers on the photocopy

No handwritten assignments:

- Have student dictate written assignments:  
to a classroom aide  
to a parent or volunteer  
into a tape recorder  
into a PC using voice recognition software  
Suppliers are listed below
- Accept typed assignments created on a:  
portable keyboard (AlphaSmart Pro)  
laptop computer  
classroom computer

### **Carbonless Notebook paper:**

#### **Mayer Educational Products**

734-207-7600

[www.mayerproducts.com](http://www.mayerproducts.com)

#### **Star Forms**

800-859-7150

Ask for Peer Scripting forms, also called carbonless notebook paper

#### **LDR Catalog**

800-869-8336

[www.learningdifferences.com](http://www.learningdifferences.com)

Click on LDR Catalog

Click on DoubleTake Supplies

Look at DoubleTake Notebook Paper

## **Voice Recognition Software**

### **NaturallySpeaking**

by Nuance.

781-565-5000

[www.dragonsys.com](http://www.dragonsys.com)

### **Portable Keyboards**

#### **Neo2**

by Renaissance Learning

888-338-4204

[www.renlearn.com/neo/neo2/](http://www.renlearn.com/neo/neo2/)

## **Accommodations for Written Expression**

- Provide alternatives to written reports  
create a video or mural, do a class presentation, etc.
- Make writing reports a team project

## **Accommodations for Homework**

- Shorten homework assignments  
Parent can act as timekeeper
- Avoid sending home unfinished classroom work  
Shorten classroom assignments instead
- Be consistent when assigning homework
- Provide a way for parents to determine the homework assignment:  
homework buddies  
mail home the assignment sheet  
answering machine
- Be consistent when collecting homework
- Notify parent immediately if assignment was not turned in.  
don't count it late if parent can find it

## **Accommodations for Memory**

- A calculator  
or printed copy of multiplication tables
- Ask two-choice questions  
instead of open-ended questions

## **Accommodations for Test Anxiety**

- Conduct oral review session during class
- Provide a sample test

- Allow open-book and open-notes tests  
or allow students to bring one page of notes to the test
- Oral testing  
or teacher tape records the test  
student listens to each question  
then student dictates each answer into a second tape recorder
- If no oral testing:  
Give extended time  
student can complete test at home under parental supervision  
Or shorten the test
- If ADD/ADHD, allow test to be taken in a distraction-free room

### Test Formats:

**Easiest:** draw a line from question to answer

**Easy:** fill in the blank IF  
a list of possible answers is printed on the test

**Hard:** Multiple-choice (too much reading)

**Harder:** fill-in-the-blank

**Hardest:** Essay test

### Grading:

- Grade shortened assignments or tests as:  
number of correct answers  
divided by number of problems answered
- If any student gets a poor grade on a test:  
allow student to retake the test  
or allow student to earn extra credit
- Offer many small quizzes  
rather than one or two big exams
- Don't ever flunk a student who participates and tries

### To Get These Accommodations:

- Pick the 3 or 4 most important ones
- Discuss them with the student  
to make sure you've got the important ones
- If your child has an I.E.P. or 504 Plan:  
write a letter asking for a meeting to modify the plan  
add the accommodations to the plan  
also add your child's strengths and interests  
list ways they will be used in the classroom
- If your child does NOT have an I.E.P. or 504 Plan  
ask for a parent-teacher meeting  
in a friendly manner, explain your child's strengths and weaknesses  
ask all of his teachers to try  
the 3-4 accommodations you're requesting for one month  
hold a follow-up meeting  
to check on results  
once those accommodations are working,  
ask for a few more

### Be Proactive

- Each year, meet with your child's new teachers as early in the year as possible
- Explain your child's strengths and weaknesses
- Share the accommodations that worked well the prior year
- Ask the new teachers to continue those accommodations



# What Are Some Common Accommodations for Kids with Dyslexia?

Each individual with dyslexia is different and their needs will have to be supported in different ways.

Review this accommodation list at a parent/teacher meeting and discuss what might be helpful to the student in the classroom. Some students may only require minimal accommodations while others may require more intense interventions, support and assistance. This list contains some common accommodations but it is not exhaustive.

## READING

- Provide access to audiobooks
- Provide access to text-to-speech software
- Provide a set of textbooks for home use
- Only ask the student to read aloud if he volunteers
- Provide extra time for reading assignments
- Provide a quiet environment for reading
- Allow student to preview reading materials

## SPELLING

- Reduce spelling lists
- Design spelling tests with a common phonetic skill
- Do not take off points for spelling errors on written work
- Allow access to a spellcheck
- Provide access to word prediction software

## WRITING

- Provide a scribe
- Provide access to speech-to-text software
- Offer alternative projects instead of written reports
- Provide written copies of notes
- Minimize the amount of copying from the board
- Allow student to use a keyboard to take notes
- Allow student to tape record lectures
- Reduce written work
- Provide a letter formation strip
- Provide graphic organizers
- Grade assignments on content rather than form

## MATH

- Allow use of calculator
- Allow use of math tables
- Allow use of manipulatives
- Allow finger counting or sub-vocalizing
- Provide graph paper
- Provide scrap paper
- Provide frequent checks for accuracy
- Highlight the operation to be performed

## HOMEWORK

- Reduce homework
- Allow student to dictate answers
- Allow typewritten homework
- Limit time spent on homework
- Email list of assignments to student or parent
- Provide written list of assignments

## TESTING

- Allow student to take tests orally
- Provide for extra time
- Read directions aloud
- Read test questions aloud
- Provide alternatives to testing (oral projects or videos)
- Provide a quiet testing area with minimal distractions
- Grade in collaboration with special educator
- Clarify or simplify written directions

To bring Learning Ally to your school,  
call 800.221.1098 or email [programs@LearningAlly.org](mailto:programs@LearningAlly.org).

[LearningAlly.org/Educators](http://LearningAlly.org/Educators)

# **Typical Classroom Accommodations** **for Dyslexic Students**

*Accommodations are FAIR! Fair does not mean treating every student exactly the same. Fair means providing each student with what they need in order to have a chance to succeed.*

*I strongly encourage parents to request a 504 plan that includes these accommodations.*

- **Oral testing**

Tests are read to the student (or provided pre-recorded on audio), and student is allowed to give answers orally (or record their answers).

- **Untimed tests**

Dyslexic students do not perform well under time pressure. It also takes them longer to read the questions, compose the answer in their head, and get it down on paper.

- **Eliminate spelling tests**

Classroom teachers rarely teach spelling rules in the same way or same order as a dyslexia tutor. Many teachers will accept a spelling test given in a tutoring session as a replacement for the classroom test.

- **Reading at home**

Allow the student to listen to audio books instead of reading silently/aloud at home. This way the student can “read” at their intellect level and gain much needed vocabulary as well as experience complex storylines and plots.

- **Don't force oral reading**

Teachers should never force students with dyslexia to read aloud in front of the class. If, for some reason, this is absolutely necessary, warn the student in advance and show them exactly which passage they will have to read so that they can practice ahead of time.

- **Provide math helps**

Allow the use of addition/subtraction/multiplication fact sheets and process reminders. For example, when doing long division, allow the steps to be written down so he can quickly reference which step is next.

- **Accept dictated homework**

Dyslexic students can dictate answers much more easily and quickly than they can write them down. Allow parents to act as a scribe.

- **Reduce homework load**

Many teachers create homework assignments by estimating how long it would take a "typical" student to complete it. They may not realize it takes a dyslexic student 3 to 4 times longer to complete the same assignment. Teachers should agree to a maximum time to spend on homework (perhaps 1 ½ times as long as a "typical" student would spend). Parents should sign the end of the homework page showing the amount of time spent on the assignment.

- **Grade on content, not spelling nor handwriting**

Some teachers take spelling and handwriting into consideration when assigning a grade. For dyslexic children, this is not appropriate. Teachers should be asked to grade only on the content of an assignment.

- **Reduce copying tasks**

It takes dyslexic students longer to copy information from the board, and if they have dysgraphia, they may not be able to read their notes. A dyslexic spends much energy focusing on what he is copying down, rather than listening to the lecture. So provide lecture notes by making a copy for the student to follow along with, or discretely assign a fellow student to act as a scribe using NCR paper.

- **Never require use of a printed dictionary/thesaurus**

- A printed dictionary is sensory overload for a dyslexic. Allow an electronic dictionary as well as utilizing spell check on electronic devices.

- **Alternate assignments**

Teachers should offer alternative ways to show mastery of material other than a long written paper. Alternatives could include oral or video presentations, dioramas, collages, or debates.

- **Avoid or reduce essay tests**

Use match up, fill-in-the-blank, or short answer formats for tests. Utilize a word box to list vocabulary words for fill-in-the-blank sections at the top of the exam.

- Multiple-choice questions are also difficult for dyslexic students due to the volume of reading required to answer them correctly. So, all multiple choice questions should be read aloud.

- **Conduct a class review session before the test**

Also, provide a study guide with key terms and concepts to the students.

*Assistive technology makes the lives of dyslexic students much less difficult. Here are some of the most useful technology tools I've found:*

*Because technology changes in an instant, please look at [www.understood.org](http://www.understood.org) or [www.BrightSolutions.us](http://www.BrightSolutions.us) or [www.atdyslexia.com](http://www.atdyslexia.com) for a more comprehensive list.*

- **iPad/Chromebook/AlphaSmart Pro**

The iPad/Chromebook is a great tool to use in the classroom. However, the AlphaSmart Pro is a less expensive alternative.

- **Audio Books**

Virtually every textbook used in the United States is available through [Learning Ally](http://LearningAlly.com). Bookshare is another FREE resource. Books for pleasure and books for literature classes, read by professional actors, can be bought/rented through Audible, [Recorded Books Rentals](http://RecordedBooksRentals.com). And most states also sponsor a state-funded Books Aloud program through their public libraries. Contact your closest library for details.

Even after a dyslexic person has learned to read, recorded books are useful, especially in high school and college, where it may prove impossible to read fast enough to keep up with the demands of many different teachers.

- **Keyboarding Without Tears**

This is an excellent program that teaches both children and adults how to type by touch. It is available from <http://www.hwtears.com/kwt>

- **Co:Writer**

This is a word prediction software that will help make writing much easier. <http://donjohnston.com/cowriter/#.Vb5BDvIVhBc>

- **Texthelp Read & Write Gold**

This program is fabulous! It will work on Windows and Mac desktop or laptop computers. It also works with Chromebooks, iPads, and Android tablets. Here is the link to watch what this app can do <https://www.texthelp.com/en-us/products/read-and-write-family>

- **Any Word Processor**

It goes without saying that once you can type, your most important technology tool will be any word processor that has a good spell checker.



There is no magic bullet to quickly fix or cure dyslexia. The child was born with dyslexia and will die with dyslexia. [Orton-Gillingham-based training methods](#) can avoid the reading, writing, and spelling failure so often associated with dyslexia. But these methods take time; anywhere from three to six years.

***Adapted from Bright Solutions for Dyslexia, Susan Barton  
Used with permission from Susan Barton  
[www.BrightSolutions.US](http://www.BrightSolutions.US)***





## Supporting a Dyslexic Learner at Home

### Audiobooks

- Your student should use audiobooks. Audiobooks are a great way for students to build their vocabulary, comprehension, world knowledge, and even writing skills! Readers (including audiobook listeners) make better writers. Here are a few ways to get audiobooks.
  - Go to [lacountylibrary.org](http://lacountylibrary.org). Click on audio and ebooks. There are many options on this site.
  - Your public school may give your student access to audio books through TumbleBooks or something similar. Ask your child's teacher.
  - If your student must read information online, let the computer read to your student. You will need a particular app: on the computer, go to Google Chrome, click on Apps, click on web store, under extensions search for "Read Aloud: A Text to Speech Voice Reader," click add to Chrome. Then your student can highlight words on any website and the computer will read the information to your student.
  - Get a subscription to Learning Ally. It costs \$135/year, but they offer fee waivers that you can apply for. Learning Ally offers audio versions of many textbooks—very important. <https://learningally.org/> (You will need a dyslexia specialist or school psychologist or other expert to sign off on the application.)
  - YouTube offers free audio versions of many books, poems, and plays: "Full Audio Books for Everyone." <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA8Bg-tQShZRZhe610SC-Q> and [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=books+for+kids](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=books+for+kids)
  - Consider a subscription to Audible.com. This will give your student access to even more books. <https://www.audible.com/>
- Do not require your student to read the paper version while listening to the audio version. If he/she wants to, that's fine. But reading the paper version has not proven to help dyslexic students and may cause the dyslexic student to dislike reading.

## Written Homework Assignments

- Get an agreement with the classroom teacher about which pieces of homework your student can dictate to you, a tutor, or a computer. If your child wants to do homework on the computer, he/she will need headphones that have a microphone. Then he/she can go to Google Docs, start a new document, click on tools, click on voice typing. This is not cheating. This allows your student to enjoy learning, express his/her knowledge, and this tool makes homework far less exhausting.

## Writing Paragraphs and Essays: Your student should use the writing process described below.

- Pre-drafting: Your student should talk about the assignment and what he/she plans to say. It may be helpful to make a list of main points and examples or to draw a map or some kind of visual plan. Doing research, reading, and talking are very important preparation steps.
- Drafting: Your student should write a rough draft or dictate a rough draft. He/she can dictate to you, or to the computer (using voice typing). This draft should be complete—but rough (imperfect).
- Revising: Your student should improve the piece of writing by focusing on content. Should information be added, subtracted, or moved?
- Editing: Make an agreement with the teacher that your student will type (or dictate through voice typing) his/her writing assignment. Then your student should use spell check, correct any punctuation errors, think about his/her word choice, and see if there are any grammar errors. If it is a particularly important assignment, your student may want to have someone read it aloud so that your student can more effectively identify sentences that need clarifying. Your student may want to work with you or a tutor to make additional editing corrections.

Learning to type is an important skill for dyslexics, but it can be difficult for some dyslexic students.

## Math Homework

Allow your student to use a multiplication table/chart and/or a calculator. Allow your student to do fewer problems if he/she can demonstrate that he/she understands the assignment/concept.

## Studying for Tests

Help your student identify what helps him/her learn. Some students need to record information and play it back multiple times. Some students like to use flash cards. Some students like to talk about information. Some need to move while they are studying (walking while reviewing study guides, etc.). Some need to use color—highlighters, ink pens, etc.

**Recognize that your student will get physically tired from text-based work.** Your student should get regular rest breaks while doing homework. Make an agreement with the classroom teacher about how much time should be spent on homework each day. Be careful of over-scheduling your

student, but be careful not to eliminate key activities that help your child feel successful and happy.

### **Encourage strengths! (and be understanding about challenges)**

Recognize that your student has strengths that should be celebrated. Typical strengths of dyslexic students include the following:

- Math
- Spatial reasoning/imaging
- Logic
- Creativity, music, performance
- Engineering-type activities/projects
- Compassion/Empathy
- People Skills
- Writing: Content

Make time for your student to do extracurricular activities/projects that give your student a chance to explore and develop these strengths. (This may seem to contradict the advice above to not “overschedule.” The key is find balance for your student. Your student will need rest, but he/she also needs opportunities to use his/her strengths.)

Remind your student regularly that you see his/her strengths. Help the student define himself/herself by multiple skills and characteristics. He/she might not do well on tests, but perhaps he/she is a wonderful friend, a talented photographer, a whiz at logic puzzles, etc. Be compassionate and understanding when your student forgets words, or says “yesterday” when he/she means “tomorrow,” or puts the bowls on the left side of the cupboard when they belong on the right side, etc.

#### **Facts to Remember about your Student and His/Her Dyslexia**

Your student . . .

- Is smart.
- Is not lazy or unmotivated.
- Is “wired” differently and must use different strategies to learn.
- Will show symptoms of dyslexia in many areas of life—not just school.
- Won’t grow out of it.
- Is not defined solely by his/her dyslexia. Your student has many skills and strengths and characteristics.

#### **Famous, Successful Dyslexics**

- Edward James Olmos, actor
- Salma Hayek, actress

- Charles Schwab, businessman and investor
- Dr. Carol Greider, Nobel Prize winner in medicine
- Gavin Newsom, governor of California
- Jamie Oliver, chef
- Jim Carrey, actor
- Octavia Spencer, actress
- Paul Orfalea, founder of Kinko's
- Professor Elizabeth Blackburn, Nobel Prize winner in medicine
- Richard Branson, entrepreneur and billionaire
- Richard Engel, journalist and author
- Steven Spielberg, movie director and producer
- Tim Tebow, football
- Tommy Hilfiger, clothing designer and businessman

**Famous people in history who probably had dyslexia:**

- Albert Einstein, theoretical physicist
- George Washington, president
- Henry Ford, industrial revolutionary, founder of Ford Motor Company
- Leonardo da Vinci, artist, inventor, scientist, engineer, writer
- Pablo Picasso, artist
- Thomas Edison, inventor of the lightbulb, phonograph, and motion picture camera
- Winston Churchill, prime minister

**More famous people with other types of learning disabilities:**

- Daniel Radcliffe, Dyspraxia, actor
- David Neeleman, ADD, JetBlue CEO
- Justin Timberlake, ADD, musician and songwriter
- Michael Phelps, ADHD, Olympic swimmer

### **Apoyar a un alumno disléxico en el aula de clase**

Dislexia es causada por una diferencia de procesamiento en el cerebro y se caracteriza por lo siguiente:

- Pobre conciencia fonémica (que afecta a la lectura y la ortografía de palabras)
- Dificultades con las direccionalidades
- A menudo, dificultad y pobre habilidad de memorizar información y data

Si el estudiante también tiene disgrafía, escribir a mano será lento y difícil (y desordenado).

<b>Desafíos para el aprendiz disléxico</b>	<b>Estrategias de aula para superar</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tareas programadas como pruebas de fluidez de lectura, pruebas de velocidad de tablas de multiplicación, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminar estas tareas</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grandes cantidades de lectura.</li> <li>• Lectura en clase (en silencio y en voz alta)</li> <li>• Exámenes en clase</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tiempo extra</li> <li>• Soporte de audio</li> <li>• No leer en voz alta en la clase</li> <li>• Tener un lector (al tomar exámenes)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ortografía, puntuación, gramática (escritura y toma de notas)</li> <li>• Escritura a mano (si es disgráfica)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tiempo extra</li> <li>• Eliminación de los exámenes de ortografía. O pruebas de ortografía ajustadas/acortadas (concurso de deletreo)</li> <li>• Perdón de errores para tareas en clase y tareas informales.</li> <li>• No tomar notas; Resaltar el material es más efectivo.</li> <li>• Copia de apuntes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recuperación de palabras para la expresión / comunicación oral espontánea.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparación, advertencia</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorización de hechos aleatorios (tablas de multiplicar, nombres, fechas, ubicaciones, fórmulas)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bancos de la palabras</li> <li>• Calculadoras, tablas de multiplicar</li> <li>• Métodos alternativos de demostración de conocimiento (exámenes orales, proyectos)</li> <li>• Reducción del alcance del material para memorizar (estudio enfocado)</li> </ul>

Los estudiantes disléxicos necesitan instrucción especializada en ortografía y lectura utilizando un sistema que sea explícito, sistemático, multisensorial e intensivo. Los sistemas Orton-Gillingham y Structured Word Inquiry son ampliamente reconocidos como muy efectivos.

Las personas con dislexia pueden tener cualquier nivel de CI. Normalmente se desempeñan mejor cuando pueden profundizar en un tema. No se desempeñan bien, según lo medido por medios tradicionales, cuando se les pide que hojeen la superficie de una gran cantidad de material. Hay un costo físico que pagan los disléxicos debido a su dislexia. Sus cerebros deben trabajar mucho más que los no disléxicos cuando interactúan con texto e impresión. Como resultado, ellos se agotarán físicamente por el día de escuela "normal" y una cantidad "promedia" de trabajo estudiantil.

### **Fortalezas**

- Matemáticas
- Creatividad
- Empatía/compasión
- Habilidades con la gente
- Razonamiento espacial/Imágenes
- Actividades y proyectos de tipo de ingeniería
- Lógica de pensamiento crítico
- Escritura: contenidos

Si el estudiante no tiene un padre que habla inglés en casa, toda la tarea, los ensayos y los proyectos serán más difíciles.

\*\* Para información adicional, por favor vea estos recursos:

Asociación Internacional de dislexia, Oficina de Tri-Counties de California: <https://social.dyslexiaida.org>

Brillantes soluciones para la dislexia: <https://www.dys-add.com/index.html>

Aliado (audio libros) de aprendizaje: <https://learningally.org>

Audible (audio libros): <https://www.audible.com>

Librerías públicas también ofrecen libros de audio gratis en persona o por apps.

## Supporting a Dyslexic Learner in the Classroom

Dyslexia is caused by a processing difference in the brain and is characterized by the following:

- Poor phonemic awareness (which affects reading and spelling)
- Difficulties with directionality
- And often, weak memorization skills of random facts/data

If the student also has dysgraphia, writing by hand will be slow and difficult (and messy).

Challenges for the Dyslexic Learner	Classroom Strategies for Overcoming
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timed tasks like reading fluency tests, multiplication table speed tests, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate these tasks</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large quantities of reading</li> <li>• Reading in class (silently and aloud)</li> <li>• Testing in class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow student to use audiobooks</li> <li>• Don't ask student to read aloud in class</li> <li>• Provide a reader (when taking exams)</li> <li>• Extra time on tests; quiet space for test taking</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spelling, punctuation, grammar (writing and note taking)</li> <li>• Handwriting (if dysgraphic)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extra time</li> <li>• Elimination of spelling tests. Or adjusted/shortened spelling tests or tests using words from specialized tutoring (No spelling bees)</li> <li>• Forgiveness of errors for in-class assignments and informal homework.</li> <li>• No note-taking; highlighting material is more effective</li> <li>• Copy of lecture notes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word retrieval for spontaneous oral expression/communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation, warning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorization of random facts (multiplication tables, names, dates, locations, formulas)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word banks</li> <li>• Calculator, multiplication charts</li> <li>• Alternative methods of demonstrating knowledge (oral tests, projects)</li> <li>• Shrinking scope of material to memorize (focused studying)</li> </ul>

Dyslexic students need specialized instruction in spelling and reading using a system that is explicit, systematic, multi-sensory, intensive, and cumulative. Structured Literacy is recognized by the International Dyslexia Association, the California Department of Education, and Reading Rockets as the most effective approach to teaching dyslexic children (and all children) how to read.

People with dyslexia can have any level of IQ. They typically perform better when they can dig deeply into a subject. They don't perform as well when they are asked to skim the surface of a lot of material. There is a physical toll that dyslexics pay due to their dyslexia. Their brains must work much harder than non-dyslexic brains when they are interacting with text and print. As a result, they will be physically exhausted by the "average" school day and "average" amounts of schoolwork.



(continued)

### Strengths

- Math
- Spatial reasoning/imaging
- Creativity
- Engineering-type activities/projects
- Compassion/empathy
- Critical thinking/logic
- People skills
- Writing: content

If the dyslexic student does not have an English-speaking parent at home, all homework, essays, and projects will be more difficult.

Evidence-based structured literacy instruction will help dyslexic students learn to spell and read. Such instruction must be simultaneously multisensory, systematic, explicit, intensive, and cumulative, with direct and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, followed by synthetic and analytic phonics with intense practice. Structured literacy can be used in general education classrooms to teach reading and writing skills to all students. Structured literacy works well with non-dyslexic students, but it is **a necessity** for dyslexic students to learn to read and write. (Most researchers state that 1 in 5 students are dyslexic, so a full 20% of students in any classroom need this type of instruction.)

If structured literacy is not used in the classroom, dyslexic students will need a structured literacy tutoring program. In a one-to-one tutoring setting, students will need a minimum of 2 hours per week of tutoring for 2 – 4 years. At the end of such a program, the student will be able to read and spell at the mid-9<sup>th</sup> grade level. However, a dyslexic student will always be dyslexic and will continue to show symptoms of dyslexia for his/her entire life. This may include a slower-than-average rate of reading, difficulty memorizing rote facts, problems with directionality, etc.

### For additional information, please see these resources:

International Dyslexia Association, Southern California Tri-Counties Branch: <https://social.dyslexiaida.org>

Reading Rockets: <https://www.readingrockets.org>

Bright Solutions for Dyslexia: <https://www.dys-add.com/index.html>

The Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity: <http://dyslexia.yale.edu/>

CA Dyslexia Guidelines: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ac/documents/cadyslexiaguidelines.pdf>

Learning Ally (audio books): <https://learningally.org>

Decoding Dyslexia California: <https://decodingdyslexiaca.org>

*Overcoming Dyslexia* by Sally Shaywitz

*Essentials of Dyslexia Assessment and Intervention* by Alan S. Kaufman and Nadeen L. Kaufman

*The Dyslexia Empowerment Plan* by Ben Foss

*I Have Dyslexia. What Does That Mean?* By Shelley Ball-Dannenberg

## Supporting a Dyslexic Learner in After School/Tutoring Settings

Dyslexia is caused by a processing difference in the brain and is characterized by the following:

- Poor phonemic awareness (which affects reading and spelling)
- Difficulties with directionality
- And often, weak memorization skills of random facts/data

If the student also has dysgraphia, writing by hand will be slow and difficult (and messy).

If the student is getting tutoring that is specifically designed for dyslexics (called “structured literacy”), then other tutors should not attempt to teach the student any spelling rules/reading skills. The student will already be working very hard to memorize and understand the spelling rules and reading skills taught by his/her dyslexia tutor.

Actions the tutor can take:

- First, remember: the student spends all day in the classroom feeling like the slowest student. The student may feel that he/she is dumb.
- Do not ask the student to read aloud or to “sound out” words. Unless the student has already had extensive specialized tutoring for dyslexia, the student is not prepared to “sound out” words.
- Give the student a word bank when appropriate.
- Read to the student. This is not “cheating.” This is a tremendously valuable service that allows the student to stay up to speed on content. Encourage audio books and talk to the student about his/her audio books.
- Let the student use multiplication tables and calculators. Most dyslexics have a difficult time memorizing any math facts, but they can be quite gifted in math when given the chance to focus on the concepts.
- With all homework assignments, focus on content, steps, processes, not memorization.
- Help the student create reference sheets of facts that they want to be able to access easily. The classroom teacher may let the student use these sheets during classroom work and even during tests.
- Help the student figure out how he/she can effectively study and memorize.
- Praise the student for his/her hard work and accomplishments. Periodically, share information about a successful dyslexic person.

**Additional Information:** People with dyslexia can have any level of IQ. They typically perform better when they can dig deeply into a subject. They don’t perform as well—as measured by traditional means—when they are asked to skim the surface of a lot of material. There is a physical toll that dyslexics pay due to their dyslexia. Their brains must work much harder than non-dyslexic brains when they are interacting with text and print. As a result, they will be physically exhausted by the “average” school day and “average” amounts of schoolwork.

### Strengths

- Math
- Spatial reasoning/imaging
- Creativity
- Engineering-type activities/projects
- Compassion/empathy
- Critical thinking/logic
- People skills
- Writing: content

\*\*For additional information, please see these resources:

International Dyslexia Association, Southern California Tri-Counties Branch: <https://social.dyslexiaida.org>

Bright Solutions for Dyslexia: <https://www.dys-add.com/index.html>

Decoding Dyslexia, CA: <https://decodingdyslexiaca.org/>



### Structured Literacy Programs

To effectively teach dyslexic children to read and spell, look for structured literacy programs that are

- **Evidence-based**
- **Systematic/Structured/Sequential**
- **Direct and Explicit**
- **Multisensory**
- **Cumulative**
- **Comprehensive**
- **Intensive**
- **Analytical/diagnostic**

There are a number of good structured literacy (Orton-Gillingham-based) programs. The following is not an exhaustive list, but it does include some of the most well-known programs. Any program that is chosen should be used exclusively. This means that the teacher/school/district should use only one program—not a patchwork of 2 or more. Each program must be used with fidelity—meaning that the programs must be used as intended by the authors (and in its entirety) or you won't get the results you are seeking. It will take 3 – 7 years to teach a dyslexic student to read and spell proficiently.

Some of these programs are designed for one-to-one instruction; others work in small-group and whole-class settings.

1. Barton Reading and Spelling System. [www.bartonreading.com](http://www.bartonreading.com)
2. Language! (4<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade). <https://www.voyagersopris.com/literacy/language/overview>
3. MTA (Multi-sensory Teaching Approach). [www.mtspublications.com](http://www.mtspublications.com)
4. Orton-Gillingham. The original structured literacy method.
5. Preventing Academic Failure. [www.PAFProgram.com](http://www.PAFProgram.com)
6. Project Read [www.ProjectRead.com](http://www.ProjectRead.com)
7. Recipe for Reading. <https://eps.schoolspecialty.com/products/literacy/reading-intervention/recipe-for-reading/about-the-program>
8. S.P.I.R.E [www.spire.org](http://www.spire.org)
9. Slingerland. Designed for classroom settings. [www.slingerland.org](http://www.slingerland.org)
10. Take Flight. <https://scottishriteforchildren.org/research-and-education/education/dyslexia-educator-center>
11. Wilson Reading System. [www.wilsonlanguage.com](http://www.wilsonlanguage.com)

These 11 programs have been proven effective over decades of use. They have all the characteristics listed at the top of this document. And they interweave the crucial pieces of instruction noted in the California Dyslexia Guidelines: phonology, sound-symbol association, syllables, morphology, syntax, and semantics. These programs will improve the readings skills of ALL students—and they are crucial to

teaching dyslexic students to read. Programs that focus on the 3-cueing system and that offer less systematic/comprehensive attention to phonemic awareness and phonics are far less effective. Some of the 11 programs require instructor certification before they can be purchased.

The International Dyslexia Association offers this matrix for understanding structured literacy Programs: <http://social.dyslexiaida.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2016/08/matrixForMultisensoryPrograms.pdf>.

Note that the Barton Reading and Spelling System is not in the IDA matrix, perhaps because Barton does not require a supervised practicum. This is both a strength and a weakness of the Barton program. It is a strength because Barton is designed to be accessible to nearly every interested teacher/tutor through a video training system, scripted lessons, and low cost. It is a disadvantage because the absence of supervised training can lead to lower quality instruction. However, the Barton system does offer tutor certification opportunities, and there are significant online supports and master tutors available who can guide new teachers/tutors. Barton lessons can also be delivered via online instruction/tutoring. (And note that Barton Levels 1 – 3 are approved by the California Department of Education.)

**Be wary** of any programs that claim a dyslexic student will gain reading skills very quickly. The California State Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Education, the International Dyslexia Association, Decoding Dyslexia, the Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity, and many additional reputable organizations that are well-versed in the science of reading recognize that structured literacy instruction takes time. There is no “quick fix.”

### **Ideas for Bringing Structured Literacy Into Public Schools**

- A team of literacy coaches well-trained in Orton-Gillingham could guide a large number of resource teachers who use the video-training system and materials provided by the Barton Reading and Spelling System. Such an approach would minimize the disadvantages of the Barton system while capitalizing on the strengths of the system.
- Investigate Arkansas’ use of *Reading Horizons*. Arkansas appears to have made great improvements in reading proficiency.
- Investigate LETRS, Literacy Professional Development [voyagersopris.com/letrs](http://voyagersopris.com/letrs).

### **The Full Picture for Reading Comprehension**

Although learning to decode (through structured literacy) is the crucial first step for all readers, the Simple View of Reading explains that students also need instruction in content knowledge, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies to become proficient readers who understand text.

<https://www.readingrockets.org/article/simple-view-reading>

### **Reference Sources and Additional Information**

*California Dyslexia Guidelines*, 2017.

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/ac/documents/cadyslexiaguidelines.pdf>

The International Dyslexia Association

<https://www.readingrockets.org/>

Bright Solutions for Dyslexia. <https://www.dys-add.com/index.html>

Ed Week: Sarah Schwartz: <https://video.edweek.org/detail/videos/edweek-explainers/video/6116251126001/what-the-science-says-about-how-kids-learn-to-read?autoStart=true&cmp=eml-enl-vid-p7>

8-minute video, “Parents of Students with Dyslexia Have Transformed Reading Instruction” (features teachers and administrators in Arkansas): <https://video.edweek.org/detail/videos/teaching-and-learning/video/6031912207001/parents-of-students-with-dyslexia-have-transformed-reading-instruction?autoStart=true>