



DYSLEXIA

Dyslexia is a learning difference that primarily affects a person's ability to read, spell, and write.

It's not a result of low intelligence or lack of motivation but rather stems from how the brain processes language differently. Individuals with dyslexia may struggle with accurate and fluent word recognition, decoding, and understanding what they read. They often face challenges such as decoding words, spelling accurately, and understanding the meaning of what is read. They may struggle with connecting letters with their sounds (e.g. letter b makes the sound /b/). While each person with dyslexia is unique, there are some common signs and challenges:

Reading skills

- Makes frequent errors when reading words that should be familiar
- Reads at a level significantly below what is expected for their age, intelligence, and education

Decoding words

- Difficulty sounding out unfamiliar words
- Struggles with matching letters to sounds (phonics)
- May guess at words based on context or the first letter

Spelling accuracy

- Persistent spelling errors in words that are commonly used or have been practiced many times
- Difficulty remembering spelling rules or patterns

Reading comprehension

- Trouble understanding what has been read, particularly if so much effort is spent decoding words that little mental energy remains for comprehension

Slow reading or writing speed

- Takes longer than peers to complete reading or writing tasks
- May avoid reading or writing whenever possible due to frustration or fatigue

Phonological awareness

- Difficulty identifying or manipulating sounds within words (e.g., rhyming, blending sounds, breaking words into syllables)
- Struggles with phonological awareness – recognizing and manipulating sounds in words

Despite these challenges, many individuals with dyslexia also demonstrate strengths in areas such as creative thinking and problem-solving, spatial reasoning and visual processing, entrepreneurship and big-picture thinking, strong narrative reasoning – telling and understanding stories.

With understanding, support, and appropriate strategies, individuals with dyslexia can thrive.



SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH DYSLLEXIA

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to supporting someone with dyslexia. Each individual has unique needs, strengths, difficulties, and learning styles. However, the following strategies can be used as guiding principles when working with a dyslexic student:

Use structured, multisensory instruction

Teach reading using methods that engage multiple senses (visual, auditory, tactile). Emphasize phonics, phonemic awareness, and structured literacy techniques.

Offer accommodations and assistive technology

Provide extra time for reading or written tasks. Use audiobooks, speech-to-text software, or other assistive tools to support learning to focus on comprehension and enjoyment rather than just accuracy.

Integrate movement and breaks

Use kinesthetic activities like tracing letters in sand or air-writing. Allow frequent, short breaks to reset focus and reduce frustration.

Develop phonological and morphological awareness

Focus on breaking down and manipulating sounds and word parts (prefixes, suffixes). Teach common spelling patterns and root words to support decoding and spelling.

Foster a supportive learning environment

Create a space where mistakes are seen as part of learning. Encourage self-advocacy and confidence-building.

Promote self-esteem and emotional well-being

Celebrate progress, not just perfection. Help individuals understand their learning style and how to advocate for themselves.

Leverage strengths

Identify strengths such as strong visual memory, pattern recognition, or storytelling skills. Reinforce word recognition, spelling patterns, and memory strategies by creating visual mnemonics or associating words with stories or images.

Work collaboratively with families and educators

Share strategies between home and school. Keep open lines of communication to ensure consistency and support.

Dyslexia is not a flaw or something to be "fixed." It is a different way of processing information — one that comes with both challenges and remarkable strengths. By embracing diversity in learning, we create a world where everyone has the chance to succeed.