



Parent Workshop:  
understanding and  
supporting children with  
literacy difficulties or  
dyslexia

**DYSLEXIA**

“  
I don't 'suffer'  
from dyslexia,  
I live with it and  
work with it. I  
suffer from the  
ignorance of people  
who think they  
know what I can  
and cannot do.”

-Erica Cook, Learning Ally member



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

# WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

- Dyslexia is one of a family of **Specific Learning Difficulties**.
- Many people who have dyslexia have strong visual, creative and problem solving skills.
- Dyslexia is not linked to intelligence but can make learning difficult.
- Dyslexia is a life-long condition which can have a substantial effect on an individual's day to day activities and is classed as a disability under the **Equality Act 2010**.
- Dyslexia varies from person to person and no two people will have the same set of strengths and weaknesses.
- It often co-occurs with related conditions, such as dyspraxia, dyscalculia and attention deficit disorder.
- Dyslexic individuals often have difficulty processing and remembering information.

# SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES (SpLD'S)

Specific Learning Difficulties affect the way information is learned and processed. They are neurological (rather than psychological), usually run in families and occur independently of intelligence. They can have significant impact on education and learning and on the acquisition of literacy skills.

SpLD is an umbrella term used to cover a range of frequently co-occurring difficulties, most commonly known as:

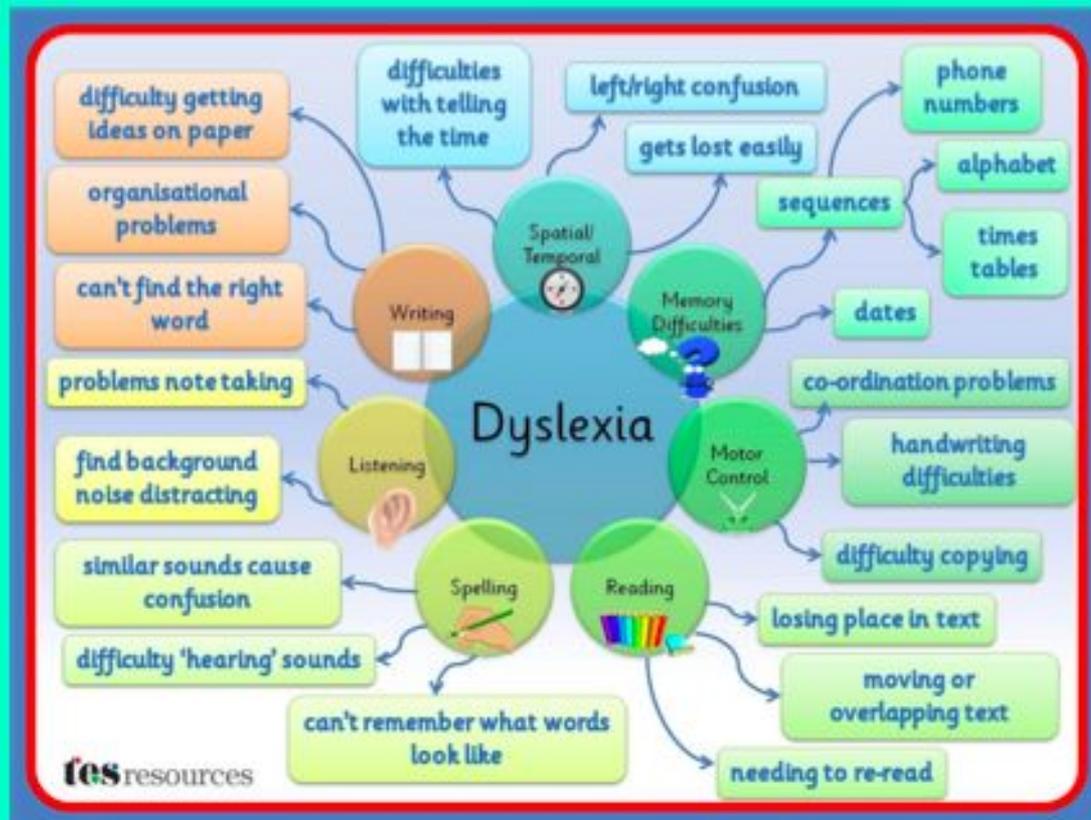
- **Dyslexia**
- **Dyspraxia or Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)**
- **Dyscalculia**
- **Dysgraphia**
- **Attention Deficit Disorder or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD or AD(H)D)**

As with any disability, no two individuals experience the same combination of difficulties and some people may exhibit signs of more than one SpLD.

# SOME COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF SPLD'S

- Memory difficulties.
- Organisational difficulties.
- Writing difficulties.
- Visual processing difficulties.
- Reading difficulties.
- Auditory processing difficulties.
- Time management difficulties.
- Sensory distraction: an inability to screen out extraneous visual or auditory stimuli.
- Sensory overload: a heightened sensitivity to visual stimuli and sound; an inability to cope with busy environments

# HERE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS SOMEONE WITH DYSLEXIA MIGHT STRUGGLE WITH...





dyslexic.com  
Provided by iansyst

## Signs of dyslexia

Difficulty with  
either reading,  
writing and  
spelling

Issues with  
working  
memory

Problems with  
short term  
memory

Issues with time  
management  
and  
organisation

Difficulty  
differentiating  
left and right

Difficulty  
expressing  
thoughts

Sequencing  
e.g. January,  
February,  
March etc.

# 10 Things Every Child With Dyslexia Wants You To Know

1. I am not stupid or lazy. I need time to get things done.

2. I may be dyslexic but I can still shine in lots of ways.

3. It might take me a long time to 'get it' but when I 'get it' it sticks!

4. When you break things down into smaller steps I find it really, really helpful.

5. Sometimes I just need to work in a different way to the others in class to get the job done.

6. I try my best but do get frustrated. I need you to be patient with me.

7. My dyslexia does not only affect my literacy skills.

8. I find visual reminders helpful as I sometimes find remembering everything a bit tricky..

9. I often like to work in a quiet room as I can find noises distracting.

10. My dyslexia is just one part of my character. It does not define who I am or want to be.



# Dyslexia and writing

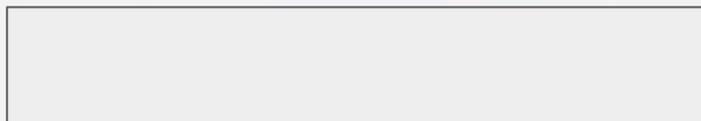
- 1) To understand what dyslexia is.
  - 2) To deepen our knowledge of problems affecting the dyslexic writer.
  - 3) To consider strategies to support the dyslexic writer.
- 



# What problems might affect the dyslexic learner / writer?

*(Sir Jim Rose, 2009)*

---



<b>Phonological Awareness</b>	<b>Sound or visual mapping</b> There are 44 sounds for 26 letters in the English Language alphabet
<b>Phonological Memory</b>	<b>Recognising whole words in sentences and remembering sounds in parts of a word</b>
<b>Rapid Processing (naming)</b>	<b>Retrieving sounds and words from the long term memory</b> Literally 'cannot get the words out'

# A Learner's Perspective...

Examples of distorted text

Examples of distorted text

Examples of distorted text

Examples of distorted text

# What problems might affect the dyslexic learner / writer?

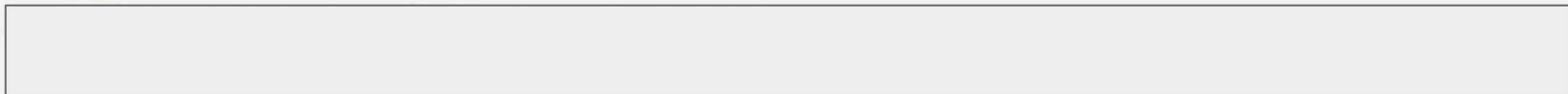
---

*“The words in my mind are not the same as the words in my hand or pen.”*

# What can we do to help?

---

- Improve handwriting but not to the detriment of the child's creativity. Cursive is better.
- Build language skills - discuss, plan, do, review
- Build vocabulary awareness - specifically tier 2 words (subject specific vocabulary) - this is a huge predictor of how far pupils from any background will succeed in life (Geoff Barton) - root words!
- Encourage learners to build on sentences to create effects.
- Use Graphic Organisers / writing frames to generate, sequence and develop initial ideas. Make everything VISUAL!



# How can you help?

Read. A lot. There are all kinds of ways to support your child's reading. Try some of these ideas:

- Listen to audio books and have your child read along with them.
- Make sure they spend some time reading alone, both quietly and aloud.
- Re-read their favorite books. It may be a little boring for you, but it help them learn.
- Take turns reading books aloud together.
- Talk about the stories you read together and ask questions like, "What do you think happens next?"
- Use schoolbooks, but you can also branch out into graphic novels and comic books, too. Reading things your child is interested in or excited about can be motivating.



# How can you help?

Make learning playful. It always helps when learning doesn't feel like work. A few ideas:

- Make up songs, poems, and even dances to help remember things.
- Play word games.
- If your child is younger, use nursery rhymes and play silly rhyming games.



# How can you help?



## Schoolwork

- Work closely with your child's school. Communication with the teacher is key, share any updates related to reading/writing or spelling that you may have noticed at home.
- Use technology. With tablets, smartphones, and computers, you'll have a lot of helpful tools as your child gets older. Online dictionaries, spell-check, and text-to-speech software can make a big difference in your child's progress, as long as the assignment allows for their use.
- Keep schoolwork organized. Staying organized is hard when you have dyslexia. Help your child break big tasks into smaller chunks. Then, work together on a system to keep track of schoolwork. For example, you might use different-coloured folders for class notes versus homework, or a giant calendar to keep track of due dates. For older children, reminders and alarms on smartphones, tablets, and computers can play a role, too.

# How can you help?

## **Emotional Support**

As with many [parenting](#) challenges, it's helpful to be firm, patient, and positive. You also want to give your child time to do things besides schoolwork. If it's all work, all the time, it'll wear both of you down. Plus, you want your child to see that they're not defined by dyslexia, that they're skilled and smart in many ways.



# Emotional support

- Celebrate successes. Take a day at the end of a project or after a big test to have fun together.
- Don't expect perfection. A lot of times, close enough is a huge success.
- Help your child understand what dyslexia is. They should know that it's not their fault and you'll work through it together.
- Let your child do activities they're good at and enjoys. This can balance the struggles with schoolwork.
- Praise your child's strength and skills. Don't let learning struggles be the main focus
- Remind your child that lots of wildly talented people have (or had) dyslexia, from Albert Einstein to Whoopi Goldberg.

# Set the tone

Also, remember that you set the tone. Your child's dyslexia may be challenging for you, but your own positive attitude will catch on. You can show that you make mistakes and struggle, but you also push through.





## How can we better prepare these learners for exams?

---

- ❖ Teach directives throughout the course: explain, describe, analyse, compare, summarise, trace etc.
- ❖ Teach how to decode the question & highlight key directive & subject specific words.
- ❖ Remember to TAP a text - text type, audience, purpose.
- ❖ Practice timings carefully and break it down visually

# Assistive Technologies & resources that support learning

Twinkl

BBC Dance Mat

Grammarly

Bibme.org

Visual Thesaurus

Edhelper.com

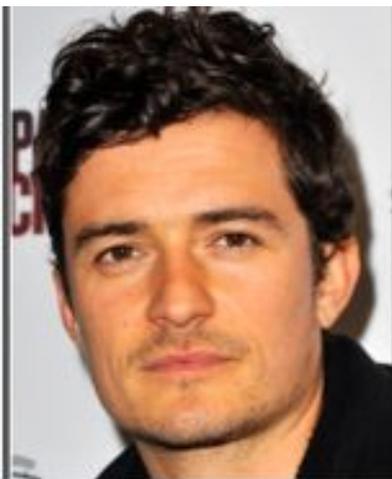
Modellearning.com

Smart Kids & Black Sheep resources

## Future Exams for children with Dyslexia:

- ❖ According to the BDA, JCQ allows the use of a computerised reader for examinations, including English Language if proven that it is a normal way of working.
- ❖ Pupils who are struggling to access the content of the lesson should get additional support including the use of a scribe, laptop (if they can use it) or assistive technologies (recording software / devices).

JCQ = Joint Council  
for Qualifications



Creativity is the key for any child with dyslexia, or for anyone for that matter. Then you can think outside of the box. Teach them anything is attainable. Let them run with what you see is whatever they need to run with.

— Orlando Bloom —

AZ QUOTES

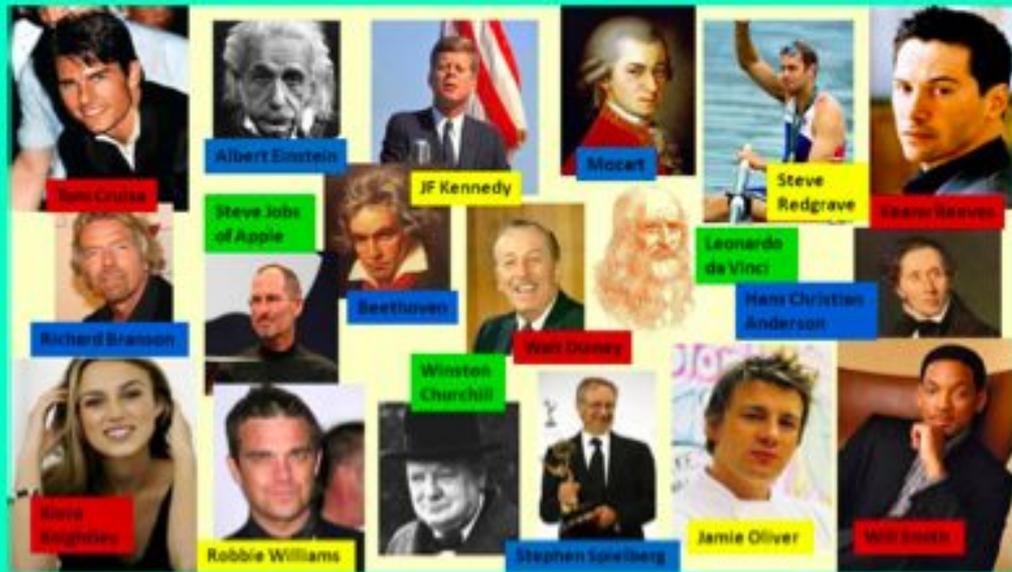


You can be extremely bright and still have dyslexia. You just have to understand how you learn and how you process information. When you know that, you can overcome a lot of the obstacles that come with dyslexia. When you figure out how you learn, you can accomplish whatever you want.

— Tim Tebow —

AZ QUOTES

## Famous people with Dyslexia



## Myths and Truths About Dyslexia?

MYTH

People with dyslexia are not smart.

TRUTH

Many dyslexic individuals are extremely bright and creative. In fact, many kids with dyslexia are gifted.

MYTH

People with dyslexia cannot learn to read or write.

TRUTH

Individuals with dyslexia can become terrific readers and writers with the right intervention and instruction.

MYTH

People with dyslexia see things backwards.

TRUTH

Dyslexia is not a vision problem. It has to do with how the brain makes sense of what is seen.

MYTH

People with dyslexia are lazy & should try harder.

TRUTH

Kids with dyslexia learn differently. When they are asked to learn in a way that does not work well for them, it can take more time.

They laugh at me  
because I'm different;  
I laugh at them  
because they're all the same.

"It never occurs  
to me that there  
are things that  
I cannot do."  
-Whoopi Goldberg

Dyslexia:

You can view it  
as an anchor,



or you can  
embrace the gifts  
that accompany  
dyslexia and  
choose to soar!

*~DyslexicKids.net*

**I HAVE DYSLEXIA!**



WHAT'S YOUR  
SUPER POWER?

©2010

EVERYBODY IS A GENIUS....  
BUT, IF YOU JUDGE A  
FISH BY ITS ABILITY  
TO CLIMB A TREE,  
IT WILL  
LIVE ITS  
WHOLE  
LIFE BELEIVING  
IT IS STUPID.

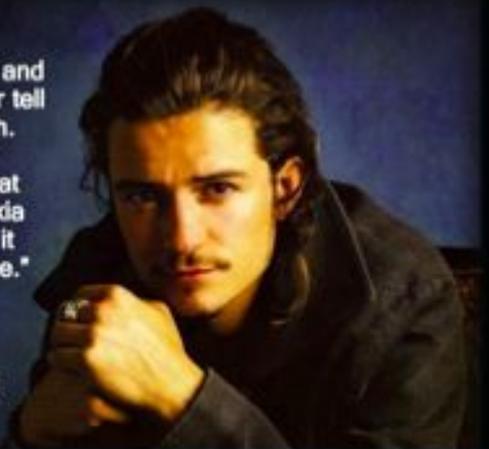
HUGONANDEMY.COM

-ALBERT EINSTEIN

"You're part of a very special club and  
it's a gift and don't let anyone ever tell  
you that you're not good enough.

Don't ever let anyone tell you that  
because you struggle with dyslexia  
that you're never going to make it  
in life, because it's simply not true."

~Orlando Bloom  
Actor, ADHD, & Dyslexic





Thanks for listening ;)