

Dyslexia Demystified: Definitions and Hope for Homeschoolers

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What is Reading?

- How do we read?
- What skills are needed to read?
- Anyone with a history or reading problems in their family?

Many ways to read:

- Read with ears
- Read with eyes
- Read with fingers/feeling—Braille



Dyslexia

- Specific reading disability
 - International Dyslexia Association's definition:
- Specific language-based, neurological, often familial disorder/learning disability
- 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. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.
 - Adopted by the IDA Board of Directors, Nov. 12, 2002. This Definition is also used by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).
 - Studies show that individuals with dyslexia process information in a different area of the brain than do non-dyslexics.
 - Most people who are dyslexic are of average to above average intelligence.

Secondary Consequences:

- Reduced reading experience
- Feelings of inadequacy, learned helplessness, and/or anxiety



Homeschooling is a great learning environment: A true IEP!

- *Help them find the smart parts of themselves
- *Inspire them
- *Encourage them
- *Love them unconditionally
- You the parent are your child's biggest cheerleader and you are their TEAM Captain!

Support Your Child

- Educate
- Motivate (Inspire)
- Remediate/Strengthen
- Accommodate/Compensate



Ways to Motivate:

- Inspire them; tap into their strengths
- Don't hide it—talk to them—teach them about dyslexia
- Educate/Don't excuse
- Focus on your child—their abilities not the disability
- Love and encourage their interests
- Provide feedback; Praise progress and effort
- Provide corrective and constructive criticism
- Teach self-advocacy skills

Multiple Intelligences



Educate: Orton-Gillingham Based Programs

- Wilson
- Language!
- Spire
- Barton System for Reading and Spelling
- *Others—The Logic of English (Denise Eide), All About Reading/All About Spelling, Reading Horizons, Lexercise, Tracey Tutor, Verticy Learning
- Texas Scottish Rites clinics

Orton-Gillingham Method

- Language-based
- Multi-sensory (auditory, visual, kinesthetic, tactile)
- Structured and Systematic
- Diagnostic and prescriptive in nature
- Flexible
- Explicit, direct, personalized instruction
- Cumulative
- Brings cognitive understanding and builds student's confidence

7 Syllable Types:

The image contains three educational charts related to syllables:

- SYLLABLES:** A diagram showing the structure of a syllable with examples like 'am', 'chicken', and 'milk'. It identifies the onset and rime.
- SYLLABLE PATTERNS:** A chart listing various syllable patterns with examples: VC/CV (Rab'bit), VC/V (Ti'ger), VC/V & CVC/CVC = Closed (Cam'e'l), CV/VC (Li'on), VC/CCV (Ham's'ter), c + le (Tur'tle), Compound Words (Ant'eater), Phonograms & Vowel Teams (Wea's'el).
- Types Of Syllables:** A chart listing syllable types: CLOSED (CAM'EL), Open (TI'ger), Vowel TEAM (Wea's'el), vowel - silent (Tur'tle), and consonant - le (Tur'tle).

Strengthen Cognitive Functioning

Reuven Feuerstein, of the Feuerstein Institute in Israel, defines cognitive functioning as "thinking abilities" that can be taught, learned and developed.

3 major phases of the mental act—

- Input-the ability to take in new information
- Elaboration-The ability to take the information and organize it and determine what is relevant
- Output-The ability to express his thoughts about the information in an organized way

Strengthen/Remediation of Cognitive Functioning

- Resources:
- Instrumental Enrichment: An Intervention Program for Cognitive Modifiability What Learning Looks Like: Mediated Learning in Theory and Practice, K-6 by Dr. Reuven Feuerstein
- Equipping Minds Workbook by Carol Brown, www.equippingminds.com
- Brain Highways, www.brainhighways.com
- www.pyramidofpotential.com, Maintaining Brains Everyday DVD
- Reflexes, Learning, and Behavior by Sally Goddard
- Sound therapy, www.soundtherapysynergy.com, and book Why Aren't I Learning?
- EyeQAdvantage, www.eyeqadvantage.com

Working Memory

Working Memory is the ability to hold information in immediate awareness in your mind while performing a mental operation on it or manipulating the information.

- Ages 5-6: two steps/items
- Ages 7-9: three steps/items
- Ages 10-12: four steps/items
- Ages 13-15: five steps/items
- Ages 16-30: six steps/items
- Age 40: five steps/items

*A sub-test of the Woodcock Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability that assesses working memory is Digit Span.

Processing Speed

Processing speed is the ability to perform cognitive tasks, particularly when measured under pressure to maintain focused attention. It involves the ability to automatically and fluently perform relatively easy cognitive tasks when high mental efficiency is required. That is for simple tasks requiring attention and focused concentration. It relates to the ability to process information automatically and speedily without intentionally thinking it through.

Tracy and Ross Alloway, "The Working Memory Advantage: Train Your Brain..."

"With nothing more than a few clicks we can pull up just about any information we need. But the key to intelligence today is being able to put those facts together, prioritize the information, and do something constructive with it. There is one skill that gives you the advantage of managing all this information: working memory. IQ is what you know. Working memory is what you can do with what you know."

Accommodate:

- Accommodations—are "work-arounds"
- Do not alter the content
- Do not give students an unfair advantage
- Gives students an opportunity to show what they know

Common Accommodations:

- Allow for more wait time/response time for student to respond/recall
- Allow for extra time on tests
- Reduce the amount of work/number of problems
- Shorten assignments/chunk assignments into smaller, manageable parts
- Focus on quality of a production rather than the quantity
- Provide copies of notes/handouts rather than requiring student to copy or take notes while listening

Accommodate Reading:

Audio books

- Provides equal access to content
- Access to sophisticated literature—we want our students to be challenged
- Fosters independence
- Builds and enriches vocabulary
- May be the “hook” or motivator

Accommodate Writing:

- Organizing difficulties
- Mind mapping—using Inspiration or other mapping software
- Language—speech prediction software, Co-Writer
- Putting thoughts on paper—Dragon Naturally Speaking
- Spelling difficulties—Ginger Spell or Franklin Speller
- Listening and then writing (auditory processing and/or visual-motor problems)—may want to use Smart Pulse pen for note taking

Solid Reading Programs Should Address...

The 5 Pillars of Reading Instruction

- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics/Decoding
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension
- Also--* Spelling/writing—is an important piece

RESOURCES:

- Overcoming Dyslexia, by Dr. Sally Shaywitz
- Book I Have Dyslexia
- Dr. Ben Foss The Dyslexia Empowerment Program
- Dyslexia, the movie
- L.D. 101 book by Mary Cathryn Haller
- "Eye to Eye" Mentoring program
- Decoding Dyslexia, parent led organization
- International Dyslexia Association, www.interdys.org
- National Center for Learning Disabilities
- Yale Center for Creativity and Dyslexia
- Bright Solutions for Dyslexia
- To Read or Not to Read by Daphne M. Hurford

Questions?


