

Supporting dyslexic people in their learning

Between 10 and 20% of the population is thought to be dyslexic to some degree. Being aware of how dyslexia affects people – which may be different for each person – will make it more likely that they will be taught in the most appropriate way.



Self esteem:

- let learners know you are interested in their difficulties
- accept that error-free learning is unlikely to be possible
- work on one area of improvement at a time
- give individual attention when you can
- encourage learners to ask for help if they get stuck
- give opportunities to show their strengths
- never ridicule them or their errors
- don't compare them negatively with others
- praise effort as well as achievement
- be patient, encouraging and supportive

In the learning environment:

- teach to the learner's intellectual ability, not their literacy level
- give new information more than once, perhaps in different forms
- check that the task being tackled is understood
- use multiple senses: words, diagrams, demonstration, images, sound, colour, objects
- give extra time for organising thoughts and completing work
- check that the reading level of texts is appropriate
- allow the use of a reader if necessary, or text to speech technology
- avoid asking learners to read aloud if this is an area of difficulty
- allow the use of assistive technology: mp3 recorders, calculators, word-processors
- teach specific skills such as note-taking, skim-reading, scanning
- accept some work in key word or note form rather than full sentences
- seat suitably, so that person speaking and the whiteboard/screen are clearly visible
- write important words clearly on whiteboard, especially new, complex words
- give plenty of time if copying from whiteboard is required
- don't make learners write out work again: allow word-processed work
- ensure hand-outs are clear: plain font, well- spaced, relevant and labelled images
- use, but don't overdo, emphasis (bold, colour, underlining, grouping, bullet points)
- have sensible line breaks in text, not splitting important concepts
- explain technical vocabulary or new words
- give more practice than would normally be expected
- teach and demonstrate how to organise written work





Assessment of work:

- mark work for content and not for spelling errors
- test orally using recorders or by dictated written answers
- don't correct all mistakes in written work
- include positive comments on work
- when correcting, give specific ideas as to how to improve
- measure individual progress, don't compare with others

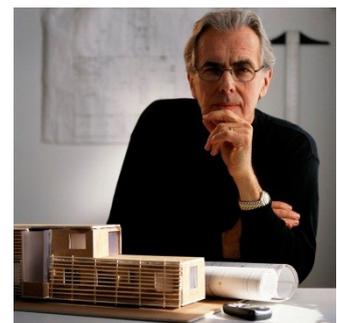
Independent assignments:

- ensure tasks are written down correctly, or give typed/emailed instructions
- check that the task is understood
- extend deadlines - work may take much longer to complete than expected
- give modified tasks if possible e.g. shorter essays, fewer questions
- offer plenty of support, feedback, modelling of answers



A dyslexic person may:

- find note-taking difficult because they cannot listen and write at the same time
- have difficulty with figures, reading music, interpreting symbols e.g. $\div + - \times$
- have poor awareness of time duration, analogue/digital confusion
- have poor personal organisation of equipment, or calendar/timing
- find remembering sequences difficult: alphabet, months, times tables
- be confused about directions: left/right or north, south, east, west
- read a passage correctly yet not get the sense of it
- may need to re-read text several times
- easily lose their place when reading or copying
- have a poor short-term and/or working memory
- be inconsistent in performance
- have difficulty learning foreign languages
- suffer from a constant nagging uncertainty
- not know how to start a piece of work, or how to plan
- have persistent spelling difficulties in spite of intelligence
- tire quickly because of the great concentration required
- work slowly because of their difficulties



...also HAVE GREAT STRENGTHS, SKILLS, QUALITIES and ABILITIES!