

Supporting dyslexic children in their learning

Between 10 and 20% of the population is thought to be dyslexic to some degree. Being aware of how it affects people – which will be different for each person - will help them to 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:

- 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 more practice than would normally be expected
- 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 the whiteboard, especially new, complex words
- give plenty of time if copying from the whiteboard is required
- don't make them write out work again – allow word-processed work
- ensure text and images 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
- teach and demonstrate how to organise written work
- teach to the intellectual ability, not the literacy level
- explain technical vocabulary or new words





Assessment of work:

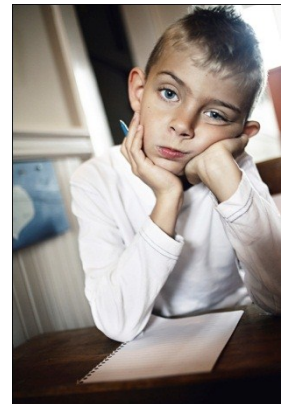
- mark work for content and not for spelling errors
- test orally using recorders or by dictated written answers
- include positive comments on work
- when correcting, give specific ideas as to how to improve

Homework or independent assignments:

- ensure tasks are written down correctly, or give typed/emailed instructions
- remember that work may take much longer to complete than expected
- give modified tasks if possible e.g. shorter essays, or underline main points to learn
- don't give long lists of spelling words to learn - try to group them in patterns
- don't correct all mistakes in written work - it is too discouraging
- check that the task is understood

A dyslexic person may:

- 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
- suffer from a constant nagging uncertainty
- work slowly because of their difficulties
- have difficulty taking notes because they cannot listen and write at the same time



- not know how to start a piece of work, or how to plan
- have persistent spelling difficulties in spite of intelligence
- have difficulty learning foreign languages
- tire quickly because of the great concentration required
- have poor personal organisation of equipment, or calendar/timing
- be confused about directions: left/right or north, south, east, west
- find remembering sequences difficult: alphabet, months, times tables
- be unusually weak in certain areas of mathematics
- have difficulty telling the time, analogue/digital confusion, or poor awareness of time duration
- have difficulty with figures, reading music, interpreting symbols e.g. \div $+$ $-$ \times 2 5 6 9 ♪ ♪
- **HAVE GREAT STRENGTHS, SKILLS, QUALITIES and ABILITIES!**

