



# There is no way to diagnose Dyslexia

**SUPPORTING  
STAFF:  
  
UNDERSTANDING  
DYSLEXIA**



# What is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability. Dyslexia refers to a cluster of symptoms, which result in people having difficulties with specific language skills, particularly reading. Students with dyslexia usually experience difficulties with other language skills such as spelling, writing, and pronouncing words.

Dyslexia affects individuals throughout their lives; however, its impact can change at different stages in a person's life. It is referred to as a learning disability because dyslexia can make it very difficult for a student to succeed academically in the typical instructional environment, and in its more severe forms, will qualify a student for special education, special accommodations, or extra support services.

## General Traits

- Highly intuitive - often accurate in judging personalities of others.
- May be able to sense emotions and energy of others.
- Remembers struggling in school.
- Frequently have dyslexic children and experience guilt when seeing own child struggle.
- Insecurities arise while reading to own children or helping them with homework.
- Easily distracted/annoyed by noises and other things in environment.
- May appear to 'zone out' and be unaware that it is happening.
- Misspeaks, misuses, or mispronounces words without realising it.
- May have poor balance or is/was very athletic.
- May have excellent recall of events that were experienced or not remember at all.
- May confuse past conversations or be accused of 'not listening'.
- Difficulty remembering names of people without tricks, but remembers faces.
- Difficulty remembering verbal instructions or directions.
- Poor recall of conversations or sequence of events.

# Reading, Writing and Spelling

- Difficulty reading unfamiliar fonts.
- Avoids reading out loud - may dislike public speaking. Will commonly perceive that they 'read better silently'.
- Has adopted compensatory tricks to remember spelling (their, there, they're), or has poor or inconsistent/phonetic spelling.
- Frequently has to re-read sentences in order to comprehend.
- Fatigues or becomes bored quickly while reading.
- Reliance on others (assistants, spouses, significant others) for written correspondence
- Uncertainty with words, punctuation and spelling when writing.
- Words out of context look 'wrong'.
- Poor handwriting - masks spelling mistakes.
- Writes with all capital letters, or mixes capital letters within words.
- Abbreviates words often.



# Maths, Time Management and Directions

- May understand higher maths but can't show it on paper.
- May excel at maths or may still rely on tricks for remembering math facts.
- Relies on calculators or finger counting. May have difficulty with making change.
- Difficulty with left/right and/or North, South, East and West.
- Gets lost easily or never forgets a place they've been.
- Difficulty reading maps.
- May have anxiety or stress when driving in unfamiliar places. Relies on others to drive when possible.
- May lose track of time and is frequently late- or is highly aware of it and it very rarely late.
- Finds it difficult to estimate how long a task will take to complete.

# Behaviour, Health and Personality

- May have a short fuse or is easily frustrated, angered, or annoyed.
- Easily stressed and overwhelmed in certain situations.
- Low self-esteem.
- Self-conscious when speaking in a group. May have difficulty getting thoughts out: pause frequently, speak in halting phrases, or leave sentences incomplete. This may worsen with stress or distraction.
- Sticks to what they know - fear of new tasks or any situation where they are out of their comfort zone.
- Extremely disorderly or compulsively orderly.
- Confusion, stress, physical health issues, time pressure, and fatigue will significantly increase symptoms.

## Career Support

- May hide difficulties from co-workers, friendly and even family. Can be frustrated at 'planning meetings' and sequential tasks.
- May pass on promotions or advancement opportunities that would require more administrative work.
- Has difficulty focusing and staying on task - may feel more comfortable managing many different tasks simultaneously.
- Difficulty with tests - passing standardised tests can be a barrier to career advancement.
- Highly successful/over achiever, or considered 'not working up to potential'. Either way, displays extreme work ethic.
- May be a perfectionist and overreact when they make a mistake.
- Out-of-the-box thinker or operates with very strict rules for themselves.
- Learns best through hands-on experience, demonstrations, experimentation, observation and visual aids.

**For information, advice and support at ELHT contact:**

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