Characteristics of Dyslexia

Students identified as having dyslexia typically experience primary difficulties in phonological awareness, including phonemic awareness and manipulation, single-word reading, reading fluency, and spelling. Consequences may include difficulties in reading comprehension and/or written expression. These difficulties in phonological awareness are unexpected for the student’s age and educational level and are not primarily the result of language difference factors. Additionally, there is often a family history of similar difficulties.

The following are the primary reading/spelling characteristics of dyslexia:

- Difficulty reading words in isolation
- Difficulty accurately decoding unfamiliar words
- Difficulty with oral reading (slow, inaccurate, or labored)
- Difficulty spelling.

It is important to note that individuals demonstrate differences in degree of impairment.

The reading/spelling characteristics are most often associated with the following:

- Segmenting, blending, and manipulating sounds in words (phonemic awareness)
- Learning the names of letters and their associated sounds
- Holding information about sounds and words in memory (phonological memory)
- Rapidly recalling the names of familiar objects, colors, or letters of the alphabet (rapid naming).

Consequences of dyslexia may include the following:

- Variable difficulty with aspects of reading comprehension
- Variable difficulty with aspects of written language
- A limited vocabulary growth due to reduced reading experience.

(The Dyslexia Handbook-Revised, 2014)
**Parent Resources**

Available for checkout by contacting a member of the dyslexia staff.

**Books**

Overcoming Dyslexia
Sally Shaywitz, M.D.

A Mother’s Book of Ideas for The Learning Disabled Child
Kathleen A. Wild

Attention Deficit Disorder: ADHD and ADD Syndromes
Dale R. Jordan

“Could Do Better” Why Children Underachieve...
Harvey P. Mandel PhD
Sander I. Marcus PhD

Learning Disabilities 101: A Primer for Parents
Mary Cathryn Haller

Learning to Slow Down and Pay Attention: A Book for Kids...
Kathleen G. Nadeau PhD

Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice
Howard Gardner

Putting On the Brakes: Young People’s...ADD
Patricia O. Quinn, MD
Judith M. Stern MA

School-Smart Parenting: Raising Children for Success and Happiness...
Michael L. Brock

The Hyperactive Child, Adolescent, and Adult
Paul H. Wender, MD
William Glasser, MD
Louis Cook Moats

Speech to Print
Catherine A. Corman
Edward M. Hallowell, MD

Positively ADD – Real Stories

When You Worry About the Child You Love
Edward M. Hallowell MD

Copy This: Lessons from a hyperactive dyslexic
Paul Orfalea (Kinko’s founder)
Ann Marsh

Driven To Distraction
Edward M. Hallowell MD

**Famous Dyslexics**

Scott Adams
“Dilbert” cartoon creator

Ann Bancroft
Polar explorer

Dr. Baruj Benacerraf
Nobel Prize winner

Cher
Actress

Winston Churchill
Master statesman and prime minister

Charles “Pete” Conrad
Astronaut

Tom Cruise
Actor

Leonardo Da Vinci
Painter and inventor

Thomas Edison
Inventor and businessman

Albert Einstein
Theoretical physicist

Dr. Fred Epstein
Brain surgeon

Whoopi Goldberg
Actress

Dr. Fred Epstein
Nerf ball developer

Paul Orfalea
Psychiatrist

Kami Craig
Olympic Gold Medalist – water polo

Bill Hewlett
Co-founder Hewlett-Packard

John R. Horner
Paleontologist

Bruce Jenner
Olympic gold medalist

Magic Johnson
Basketball legend

Dr. Edward Hallowell
Author and illustrator

Kami Craig
Host of *The Tonight Show*

Patricia Polacco
CEO, Dole Foods

Jay Leno
Founder Kinko’s

Thomas Edison
Multi-millionaire

Whoopi Goldberg
Baseball Hall of Famer

Dr. Baruj Benacerraf
Owner Charles Schwab Investment Co.

Leonardo Da Vinci
Investigator

Dr. Edward Hallowell
Super Bowl Championship

Charles Schwab
Actor “The Fonz” on Happy Days, director
Dyslexia Facts and Statistics

- Reading problems occur primarily at the level of the single word.
- Reading is alphabetic, which means it is based on a code of sounds and how those sounds map to print.
- Reading problems occur with equal frequency in boys and girls; however, schools identify four times more boys than girls, largely due to behavioral characteristics.
- Direct instruction in decoding skills emphasizing the alphabetic code results in more favorable outcomes than does a context-emphasis or embedded approach. (All NICHD studies.)
- It is estimated that 1 in 10 people have dyslexia
- Dyslexia is not tied to IQ – Einstein was dyslexic and had an estimated IQ of 160
- Dyslexia is not just about getting letters or numbers mixed up or out of order
- Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability, that includes poor word reading, word decoding, oral reading fluency and spelling
- Dyslexia has nothing to do with not working hard enough
- 20% of school-aged children in the US are dyslexic
- With appropriate teaching methods, dyslexics can learn successfully
- Over 50% of NASA employees are dyslexic
- Dyslexia runs in families
- Dyslexics may struggle with organizational skills, planning and prioritizing, keeping time, concentrating with background noise
- Dyslexics may excel at connecting ideas, thinking out of the box, 3D thinking, seeing the big picture
- People with dyslexia excel or are gifted in areas of art, computer science, design, drama, electronics, math, mechanics, music, physics, sales, and sports

The Orton Emeritus Series:

Basic Facts about Dyslexia: What Everyone Ought to Know
College: How Students with Dyslexia Can Maximize the Experience
Doctors Ask Questions about Dyslexia: A Review of Medical Research
Early Childhood Education
Kids Who Learn Differently
Mathematics and Dyslexia
Other Sixteen Hours: The Social and Emotional Problems of Dyslexia
Phonological Awareness: A Critical Factor in Dyslexia
Questions about AD/HD and Dyslexia
Reading, Writing and Spelling: The Multisensory Language Approach
Testing: Critical Components in the Clinical Identification of Dyslexia

Dyslexia Instruction Descriptors

Prosper ISD’s dyslexia therapy, Take Flight, is a comprehensive intervention for students with dyslexia. It is a curriculum written by the staff of the Luke Waites Center for Dyslexia and Learning Disorders at Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children. Take Flight builds on the success of the three previous dyslexia intervention programs developed by the staff of TSRHC: Alphabetic Phonics, Dyslexia Training Program, and TSRH Literacy Program. It combines all three learning modalities (auditory, visual, and kinesthetic) to teach the sound and symbol relationship in the English language.

PISD Components of Dyslexia Instruction as outlined in The Dyslexia Handbook, Revised 2014 include:

- Phonological Awareness
- Sound-symbol association
- Syllabication
- Orthography
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Reading Comprehension
- Reading Fluency
- Written Expression.

Delivery of Dyslexia Instruction will include:

- Simultaneous, multisensory (VAKT)
- Systematic and cumulative
- Explicit instruction
- Diagnostic teaching to automaticity
- Synthetic instruction
- Analytic instruction.

Media

Come Inside Our World (youtube.com)
Texas Scottish Rite Hospital
"Access Denied" - 27 min. DVD documentary
Eric McGehearty (dyslexic)
“The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia”
HBO - Documentaries
1. **Notice your Child’s Success**
   Parents can easily get consumed by their kid’s deficits in reading that they forget the things their children can do well. Letting your children use their strengths will boost their confidence, and it has the benefit of letting them see that you know they are excelling at something.

2. **Celebrate Every Success**
   Meet your child on his/her reading level and celebrate the successes at that level. Harassing the students over report card grades isn’t going to boost their confidence. Struggling readers need to know what they’re doing right, not just their mistakes.

3. **Be Honest with Yourself; Set Realistic Goals**
   Your child will not read on grade level overnight. Set some short term concrete goals like practicing reading every day, make a countdown and cross out each book or chapter until you reach your goal. Set a goal that is achievable for you and your student, this will help him/her feel successful.

4. **Don’t Let Poor Spelling Stop Your Child**
   Even if your children can’t spell, they still have ideas that they need to express. Don’t let poor spelling make your child mute.

5. **Share Your Own Difficulties with Your Kids**
   Tell your child the things you are not good at. Admitting that you also have things you struggle with can provide support and help your struggling reader understand that people have different strengths and weaknesses.

6. **Read Aloud to Your Child—It’s Fun and Helpful**
   Hearing someone else read not only helps your students hear the language they speak, it also has the amazing possibility of sparking creativity and interest and a chance to work on comprehension without the battle of decoding the text.

7. **Work with Teachers to Help Your Student**
   The child needs to know what’s going on, after all…it’s his/her education. Tell them where they stand academically, what their talents are, what they need help with, and the plan for helping them learn. Kids feel supported when they see parents and teachers working together.

8. **Small Steps Can Bring Big Improvements**
   It doesn’t need to be complicated. If your child is a beginning reader, just go over the alphabet and letter sounds. If your child is a little more independent, sit with him/her and help with hard words when reading. Talk about the story, the characters, the setting; what’s the problem in the story. If your child is older, let him/her be the teacher and read books to a younger sibling.

9. **It’s Okay to Read Slowly**
   They may be a slow reader for life, don’t pressure them to read faster. Focus on accuracy and reading the words correctly and with expression. Give them strategies to help them remember what they read, which will be skills they use for life.

10. **Teach Them How to Help Themselves**
    Encourage your child to advocate for themselves by asking for help when needed. Help them understand their strengths and weaknesses, know resources that are available to help, and accommodations that are available for their success.

   (http://dyslexia.yale.edu/PAR_10thingstohelpchild.html)
"I couldn’t read. I just scraped by. My solution back then was to read classic comic books because I could figure them out from the context of the pictures. Now I listen to books on tape.”

Charles Schwab, founder of stock brokerage

“Difficulties mastered are opportunities won.”

Winston Churchill

"Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.”

Thomas A. Edison
Partnering with parents, teachers and administrators to Identify students with characteristics of dyslexia and Support students through intensive research-based instruction so they Develop skills to be successful, lifelong learners encompassing the five pillars of the Prosper Graduate Profile.