

## Practitioners' Task Force on Learning Disabilities Dyslexia Poster

### 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 of 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 most severe forms, will qualify a student for special education, special accommodations, or extra support services.”

*Source: The International Dyslexia Association “Dyslexia Basics Fact Sheet” 08/07.*

### Characteristics of Dyslexia

- Persons with dyslexia may exhibit any of the following characteristics:
- Inaccurate and inefficient single word recognition
- Inability to identify a word by sounding out the individual letters and blending them together
- Sound/symbol confusion
- Problems distinguishing, identifying, or separating the sounds in spoken words
- Slow and inaccurate text reading
- High frequency of errors in oral reading
  - omitting sounds
  - adding sounds
  - substituting sounds
  - reversing or mis-sequencing letters within words when reading
- or writing (b/d, frist/first, on/no)
- Directionality problems with letters
- Difficulty with written expression
- Difficulty building ideas and images
- Slow and inaccurate text reading resulting in poor fluency
- Problems understanding or remembering new concepts
- Problems with comprehension that go beyond word recognition
- Poor visual memory for words in print (inability to image words)
- Poor auditory memory for retaining sounds/symbols, words, and concepts

Dyslexia occurs on a continuum from mild to severe and is often hereditary. Dyslexia will likely be severe if a person exhibits both of the last two characteristics listed above.

While the exact causes of dyslexia are unclear, recent studies of anatomical and brain imagery have shown differences in the way the brain of a person with dyslexia develops and functions. It is not due to a lack of intelligence. With proper teaching methods, people with dyslexia can learn.

Sources: *Bridges to Practice*, the Michigan Dyslexia Institute, and the International Dyslexia Association

## RESOURCES FOR TUTORS AND TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA

The principles of direct and explicit instruction and the content of a multi-sensory structured language program are essential for effective teaching methodologies for persons with dyslexia. The resources below are based on the Orton-Gillingham approach, recommended by the International Dyslexia Association, and are appropriate for adults. (Note: Letters in parentheses refer to the Publishers and Websites section.)

### Software

1. *Language Tune-Up Kit (LTK at Home)* , [www.jwor.com/products.htm](http://www.jwor.com/products.htm)
2. *PhonicsTutor® Frequent Words CD-ROM* and *PhonicsTutor® Classic CD-ROM*
3. *Phonics Tutor*, [www.phonicstutor.com](http://www.phonicstutor.com)
4. *My Reading Coach*, [www.mindplay.com](http://www.mindplay.com)
5. *Reading Horizons*, [www.readinghorizons.com](http://www.readinghorizons.com)
6. *Strategies for Older Students*, Lexia Learning, [www.lexialearning.com](http://www.lexialearning.com)

### Books and Kits

1. *Advanced Language Tool Kit*, (a) (b)
2. *Multi-Sensory Teaching of Basic Language Skills & Activity Book* by Judith R. Birsch, (b)
3. *Recipe for Reading and Workbooks* by Frances Bloom and Nina Traub, (a) (b)
4. *Speech to Print: Language Essentials for Teachers and Activity Book* by Louise Cook Moats, (b)
5. *Linguistic Concepts for Orton-Gillingham*, (b)
6. *Sequential Phonics*, (e)
7. *The ABC's of O-G*, (e)

### Multi-Sensory Supplies

1. Sensational Sand and Tray, (b) (e)
2. Phoneme-Grapheme Card Packs, (b) (e)
3. Blending Board (b), (e)
4. 45 English Speech Sounds (Phonemes) Audio Tape, (e)
5. Rote Card Deck, (e)
6. Tactile Dice, Alphabet Dice, Alphabet, Phonetic, Vocabulary and Structural Quizmo, (b)

## Programs

1. *Barton Reading and Spelling System* by Susan Barton, [www.bartonreading.com](http://www.bartonreading.com)
2. *The Wilson Reading System* by Barbara A. Wilson, [www.wilsonlanguage.com](http://www.wilsonlanguage.com)
3. *Project READ*, [www.projectread.com/uploads/Catalog\\_Web\\_Update.pdf](http://www.projectread.com/uploads/Catalog_Web_Update.pdf)

## Publishers and Websites

1. Educator's Publishing Service, [www.epsbooks.com](http://www.epsbooks.com)
2. Institute for Multi-Sensory Education, [www.orton-gillingham.com](http://www.orton-gillingham.com)
3. International Dyslexia Association, [www.interdys.org](http://www.interdys.org)
4. LD OnLine, [www.ldonline.org/index.php](http://www.ldonline.org/index.php)
5. Michigan Dyslexia Institute, [www.dyslexia.net](http://www.dyslexia.net)
6. Really Good Stuff (appropriate manipulatives), [www.reallygoodstuff.com](http://www.reallygoodstuff.com)
7. SchwabLearning, [www.schwablearning.org](http://www.schwablearning.org)
8. Resource Room, [www.resourceroom.net/readspell/index.asp](http://www.resourceroom.net/readspell/index.asp)

## Research on Dyslexia

*The Neurobiology of Reading and Dyslexia* by Sally E. Shaywitz, M.D., and Bennett A. Shaywitz, M.D., *Focus on Basics*, Volume 5, Issue A - August 2001, [www.ncsall.net/?id=278](http://www.ncsall.net/?id=278)