

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES



ADDvanced Solutions
Supporting you to find the answers

Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a common disorder that affects around 10% of the population, 4% severely. Dyslexia is the most common and probably the most well-known of the Specific Learning Disorders (SpLDs).

As with dyspraxia, dyslexia usually runs in families. It is characterised by difficulties with processing letters and words, and typically will result in individuals mixing up letters within words, and also mixing words within a sentence. It can also result in difficulties with short term memory, and with other executive functioning (organising, sequencing, processing time and perception of time).

Children with dyslexia may have slower speech development, and may have difficulty keeping in rhythm (clapping, singing etc). They may also find it more difficult to remember the names of friends, relatives as well as colours and shapes. Dyslexic people think in a different way: they are often visual thinkers and highly creative and can be very good at problem solving. They can sometime come across as unusual because of this, and their tendency to miss cues in social interactions. Good days and bad days are common for people with dyslexia; which can be frustrating for them and their parents / teachers if not understood.

Useful tips for dealing with dyslexia

- Give instructions in chunks rather than a long list of instructions all at once.
- There is an increasing number of games and programmes available to help with dyslexia; the SENCO at school should be able to access these.
- Dyslexics generally understand verbal instructions more easily than written and so it may be helpful to record teaching sessions to play back, rather than making notes.
- Teachers should also adopt a very positive and reassuring attitude, using plenty of descriptive praise and encouragement (as with all learning difficulties).
- Use available technology such as phones, tablets, laptops etc. to help with organisation and planning.
- Because of their ability to see things from many different viewpoints, they may need help to focus and prioritise.
- Value their ability to think 'outside the box' and find ways to incorporate it positively.
- Be patient if they are having a 'bad day', reduce pressure and remind them that a 'good day' will come!
- Sometimes using coloured paper or coloured overlays can help with reading, but be aware that different colours are effective for different people, and they don't always help.

Remember, dyslexia does not affect intelligence, but may make learning new skills more difficult.

Many of well-known creative thinkers have dyslexia including Alexander Graham Bell, Leonardo da Vinci and of course Richard Branson. People with dyslexia can find detailed work with reading or numbers exhausting, because of the extra processing that this involves for them. School in particular can be extremely draining and for children / young people with dyslexia homework can seem an impossible task. Understanding this can be key to finding ways to help. Encouraging and rewarding all successes, big and small, is key to supporting and building confidence.

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