

Dyslexia - Primary Teacher Fact Sheet

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The DSM-5 is the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition, American Psychiatric Association

The DSM-5 includes dyslexia as a Specific Reading Disorder - "Dyslexia is an alternative term used to refer to a pattern of learning difficulties characterized by problems with accurate or fluent word recognition, poor decoding, and poor spelling abilities. (p.67, DSM-5) (APA), 2013

Dyslexia is not curable and is a lifelong disability. It can be remediated with appropriate intervention but some difficulties may still persist.

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"Anti-discrimination law covers a wide range of disabilities and health problems. These include the following:

a learning or cognitive disability such as dyslexia;"

Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW.

"Phoneme awareness instruction, when linked to systematic decoding and spelling instruction, is a key to preventing reading failure in children who come to school without these prerequisite skills." Moats (2010)

"Our analysis indicated that the ability to perceive and manipulate phonemes (in both segmenting and blending tasks) is the aspect of phonological awareness that is most strongly predictive of later reading and spelling success." Castles & Coltheart (2004)

Quotes from fivefromfive.org.au

Disability Standards for Education Act 2005

"Perhaps the most significant feature of the Education Standards is the introduction of a positive **obligation on education providers to make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.**[355] **The Standards also impose an**

obligation on education providers to consult with affected students or their associates in relation to such adjustments.[356]"

Australian Human Rights Commission

Classroom Instruction

"Current research tells us unequivocally that struggling learners benefit: When the structure of spoken and written language, beginning with phonemes, is represented for them explicitly, sequentially, directly and systematically In the context of a comprehensive reading program"

Birsh and Ghassemi 2010

Effective Literacy Instruction includes the 5 essential of areas as identified by research:

1. Phonemic awareness
2. Phonics
3. Fluency
4. Vocabulary
5. Reading comprehension

"The evidence is clear that the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics is the most effective way of teaching young children to read, particularly those at risk of having problems with reading." Rose review, England (2006)

"If the ultimate goal of reading instruction is proficient reading comprehension then reading fluency, both automatic word decoding and prosodic reading, need to be part of the instructional repertoire offered to teachers and students, especially struggling readers." Rasinski, Rikli & Johnston (2009)

"Teaching reading [comprehension] strategies is worthwhile, but we should bear in mind that knowledge of strategies is only a small part of what makes an effective reader. A good reader also decodes fluently, has a broad vocabulary, and has wide-ranging background knowledge."

Willingham (2006) Quotes from fivefromfive.org.au

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Accommodations for Assessment Tasks

"Teachers may need to make adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment practices for some students with special education needs, so that they are able to demonstrate what they know and can do in relation to syllabus outcomes and content. The types of adjustments made will vary based on the needs of individual students.

- adjustments to the assessment process eg additional time, rest breaks, quieter conditions, or the use of a reader and/or scribe or specific technology.
- adjustments to assessment activities, eg rephrasing questions or using simplified language, fewer questions or alternative formats for questions.
- alternative formats for responses, eg written point form or notes, scaffolded structured responses, short objective questions or multimedia presentations." *Australian Curriculum advice on assessments.*

Homework

"It is generally agreed that teachers should assign homework that takes into account the needs of the students. This is especially the case of children with learning disabilities in mainstream schools. Research has shown that tasks which may be simple for some students may take a student with a learning disability a considerable amount of time to comprehend and complete." *Parliament of Victoria homework inquiry*

Dyslexia affects reading	Reasonable Adjustments
<p>Slow, laboured, inaccurate reading. Becomes visibly tired while reading. Poor reading comprehension.</p>	<p>Only ask the student to read aloud if student is comfortable. Allow use of audio books. Allow use of assistive technology such as a c-pen and text to speech software. Limit amount of reading. Provide outlines, summaries, vocabulary words and preview questions. Reduce amount to be read.</p>
Dyslexia affects spelling	Reasonable adjustments
<p>Continually misspells words. Misspells even when copying from the board.</p>	<p>Allow use of assistive technology where appropriate such as predictive spelling and word processor. Teach the rules and structure of the English Language. Provide word banks.</p>
Dyslexia affects writing	Adjustments
<p>Poor, nearly illegible handwriting. Leaves out spacing and punctuation. Unusual pencil grip, grips too tightly, poor posture when writing. Writing is a slow, laboured, non-automatic task. Difficulty with organisation of thoughts on paper.</p>	<p>Allow use of assistive technology such as snaptyping, screen shots, predictive spelling and word processor. Allow extra time to complete tasks. Do not expect large amounts of writing. Avoid copying notes from the board. Give student opportunities to express knowledge verbally.</p>

	Give student scaffolds graphic organisers and writing frames.
Dyslexia affects organisation and memory	Adjustments
<p>Learning any task that has a series of steps which must be completed in a specific order can be difficult.</p> <p>Dyslexia causes sequencing difficulties.</p> <p>Dyslexia causes difficulties with organisation.</p> <p>Dyslexia often affects working memory.</p>	<p>Break large tasks into steps.</p> <p>Make instructions short, simple and clear.</p> <p>Ask children to repeat instructions back to make sure they have understood.</p> <p>Clarify and simplify directions.</p> <p>Use visual aids.</p> <p>Make allowances for poor memory in terms of handing in notes and in general school organisation.</p> <p>Sit student with a peer helper.</p> <p>Simplify worksheet design.</p>

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