

Dyslexia Characteristics & Lookouts

An individual with dyslexia usually has several, not just one or two, of the characteristics listed below. These characteristics usually persist over time and interfere with his or her learning. If a student is having difficulties learning to read and you have noted several of these characteristics, he or she may need to be evaluated for dyslexia and/or a related disorder. Notify your SpEd Chair/Designee on campus.

Difficulty with oral language

- Late in learning to talk
- Difficulty in pronouncing words
- Difficulty acquiring vocabulary or using age-appropriate grammar
- Difficulty following directions
- Confusion with before/after, right/left, etc.
- Difficulty learning the alphabet, nursery rhymes, or songs
- Difficulty understanding concepts and relationships
- Difficulty with word retrieval or naming problems

Difficulty with reading

- Difficulty learning to read
- Difficulty identifying or generating rhyming words or counting syllables in words (Phonological Awareness)
- Difficulty with hearing and manipulating sounds in words (Phonemic Awareness)
- Difficulty distinguishing different sounds in words (Auditory Discrimination)
- Difficulty in learning the sounds of letters
- Difficulty remembering names and/or the order of letters when reading
- Misreading or omitting common little words
- "Stumbling" through or guessing at longer words
- Poor reading comprehension during oral or silent reading
- Slow, laborious oral reading

Difficulty with written language

- Trouble putting ideas on paper
- Many mistakes spelling
- Doing well on weekly spelling tests, but continuing to have many spelling mistakes in daily work
- Difficulty in proofreading

If you have students who are identified as dyslexic...

Use fonts such as **Arial** and **Comic Sans**, as letters can appear less crowded. Alternatives include **Verdana**, **Tahoma**, **Century Gothic**, **Trebuchet**, **Calibri**, **Open Sans**.

Font size should be 12-14 point. On this page, **Comic Sans** is used with 14-point font size.

Use dark colored text on a light (not white) background. Avoid green and red/pink, as these colors are difficult for those who have color vision deficiencies (color blindness). Consider alternatives to white backgrounds for paper, computer, and visual aids such as whiteboards.

Now ask yourself, why is it necessary to employ a variety of instructional strategies? One size does not fit all. It never will.

Even in high school, dyslexia will not go away, but intervention and good instruction go a long way in helping students with reading issues. Left untreated, it may lead to low self-esteem, behavior problems, anxiety, aggression, and withdrawal from friends, parents, and teachers.

I-3 Differentiation

Differentiates instruction for student needs by employing a variety of instructional strategies.