

Dyslexia

ALN - Cognition and Learning

Universal Provision Strategies

- Use of word mats.
- Use of Rainbow Arc.
- Clarify or simplify written directions.
- Underlining or highlighting the significant parts of the directions.
- Present a small amount of work.
- Block out extraneous stimuli.
- Line markers can be used to aid reading.
- Additionally, using larger font sizes and increasing spacing can help separate sections.
- Highlight essential information.
- Use a placeholder in consumable material.
- Provide additional practice activities e.g.: instructional games, peer teaching activities, self-correcting materials, computer software programs, and additional worksheets.
- Provide a glossary in content areas.
- Use an audio recording device.
- Use of assistive technology. Assistive technology products such as tablets, electronic readers/dictionaries/ spellers, text to speech programs, audio books.
- Use explicit teaching procedures, i.e., present an advanced organizer, demonstrate the skill, provide guided practice, offer corrective feedback, set up independent practice, monitor practice, and review).
- Repeat directions. Ask pupils to repeat the directions in their own words.
- Simplify directions by presenting only one portion at a time.
- Maintain daily routines.
- Provide a copy of lesson notes.
- Provide students with a graphic organizer. An outline, chart, or blank web can be given to students to fill in during presentations. This helps students listen for key information and see the relationships among concepts and related information.
- Use step-by-step instruction. New or difficult information can be presented in small sequential steps.
- Simultaneously combine verbal and visual information. Verbal information can be provided with visual displays (e.g., on an overhead or handout).

- Write key points or words on the whiteboard. Prior to a presentation, the teacher can write new vocabulary words and key points on the whiteboard.
- Use balanced presentations and activities. An effort should be made to balance oral presentations with visual information and participatory activities.
- Balance between large group, small group, and individual activities.
- Use mnemonic instruction. Mnemonic devices can be used to help students remember key information or steps in a learning strategy.
- Emphasize daily review. Daily review of previous learning or lessons can help students connect new information with prior knowledge.
- Change response mode. For students who have difficulty with fine motor responses (such as handwriting), the response mode can be changed to underlining, selecting from multiple choices, sorting, or marking. Students with fine motor problems can be given extra space for writing answers on worksheets or can be allowed to respond on individual whiteboards.
- Provide an outline of the lesson. An outline enables some students to follow the lesson successfully and make appropriate notes.
- Place students close to the teacher. Students with attention problems can be seated close to the teacher, whiteboard, or work area and away from distracting sounds, materials, or objects.
- Encourage use of assignment books or calendars.
- Use cues to denote important items. Asterisks or bullets can denote questions or activities that count heavily in evaluation. This helps students spend time appropriately during tests or assignments.
- Design hierarchical worksheets. The teacher can design worksheets with problems arranged from easiest to hardest. Early success helps students begin to work.
- Allow use of instructional aids. Students can be provided with letter and number strips to help them write correctly.
- Number lines, counters, calculators, and other assistive technology can help students compute once they understand the mathematical operations.
- Display work samples. Samples of completed assignments can be displayed to help students realize expectations and plan accordingly.
- Use peer-mediated learning. The teacher can pair peers of different ability levels to review their work, read aloud to each other, write stories.
- Use flexible work times. Students who work slowly can be given additional time to complete written assignments.

- Provide additional practice. Students require different amounts of practice to master skills or content.
- Use assignment substitutions or adjustments. Students can be allowed to complete projects instead of oral reports or vice versa. Also, tests can be given in oral or written format.
- Expect less written work.
- Allow more time for reading, listening and understanding.
- Prepare a printout of homework and stick it in their book.
- Provide numbered steps, e.g. 1. Do this. 2. Do that etc.
- Do not ask them to copy text from a board or book.
- Give a printout. Suggest they highlight key areas and draw thumbnail pictures in the margin to represent the most important points.
- Add extra space around headings and between paragraphs.
- Ensure hyperlinks look different from headings and normal text.
- Don't ask person with dyslexia to read aloud.
- Words are likely to be misread or skipped, causing embarrassment.
- Accept homework created on a computer.
- Word processors make life much easier. Allow them to use the Spell Checker and help with grammar and punctuation so that you can see the quality of the content.
- Discuss an activity to make sure it is understood.
- Visualising the activity or linking it to a funny action may help someone with dyslexia remember.
- Give the opportunity to answer questions orally.
- Use different colour for each line if there is a lot of written information on the board or underline every second line with a different coloured.
- Ensure that the writing is well spaced.
- Leave the writing on the board long enough to ensure the child doesn't rush, or that the work is not erased from the board before the child has finished copying.
- A structured reading scheme that involves repetition and introduces new words slowly is extremely important.
- Don't ask pupils to read a book at a level beyond their current skills.
- Save the dyslexic child the ordeal of having to 'read aloud in class'. Reserve this for a quiet time with the class teacher. Alternatively, perhaps give the child advanced time to read pre-selected reading material, to be practiced at home the day before. This will help ensure that the child is seen to be able to read out loud, along with other children.

- Real books should also be available for paired reading with an adult, which will often generate enthusiasm for books. Story tapes can be of great benefit for the enjoyment and enhancement of vocabulary.
- All pupils in the class can benefit from structured and systematic exposure to rules and patterns that underpin a language.
- Spelling rules can be given to the whole class. Words for class spelling tests are often topic based rather than grouped for structure. If there are one or two dyslexics in the class, a short list of structure-based words for their weekly spelling test, will be far more helpful than random words. Three or four irregular words can be included each week, eventually this should be seen to improve their free-writing skills.
- All children should be encouraged to proofread, which can be useful for initial correction of spellings. Dyslexics seem to be unable to correct their spellings spontaneously as they write, but they can be trained to look out for errors that are particular to them.
- Use and encourage the use of estimation. The child should be taught to form the habit of checking his answers against the question when he has finished the calculation, i.e. is the answer possible, sensible or ludicrous?
- When using mental arithmetic allow the dyslexic child to jot down the key number and the appropriate mathematical sign from the question.
- Encourage pupils to verbalize and to talk their way through each step of the problem.
- Teach the pupil how to use the times table square and encourage him to say his workings out as he uses it.
- Encourage a dyslexic child to use a calculator.
- Ensure that he has been taught to estimate to check his calculations.
- Put key words on a card index system or on the inside cover of the pupil's maths book so it can be used for reference and revision.
- Put the decimal point in red ink. It helps visual perception with the dyslexic child.
- Make sure a small reference chart is available to serve as a constant reminder for the cursive script in upper and lower case.
- If handwriting practice is needed it is essential to use words that present no problem to the dyslexic child in terms of meaning or spelling.
- The use of computers for word processing.
- Supply audio recordings of lessons that can then be written up at a later stage.

- Written record of the pupil's verbal account, or voice activated software can be used.
- More time should be allocated for completion of work because of the extra time a dyslexic child needs for reading, planning, rewriting and proofreading their work.
- Provide coloured overlays.
- Provide handouts in lessons rather than asking pupils to copy text or take notes.
- Provide all handouts on coloured paper.
- Use a sans serif font on all printed materials, such as Verdana, Arial or Calibri and make sure the font is at least 12 point or above.
- Change background colour when using a whiteboard or computer screen.
- Provide highlighters so learners can track text that has been read, or highlight important pieces of information.
- Provide access to assistive technology such as a computer, for pupils who find it difficult to write quickly enough in class.
- Use multisensory ways of teaching.
- Allow additional 'thinking' time.
- Break information up into smaller 'chunks'.
- Larger inter-letter / character spacing (sometimes called tracking) improves readability, ideally around 35% of the average letter width. If letter spacing is excessive it can reduce readability.
- Inter-word spacing should be at least 3.5 times the inter-letter spacing.
- Larger line spacing improves readability and should be proportional to inter-word spacing; 1.5/150% is preferable.
- Avoid underlining and italics as this can make the text appear to run together and cause crowding. Use bold for emphasis.
- Avoid text in uppercase/capital letters and small caps, which can be less familiar to the reader and harder to read.
- Avoid green and red/pink, as these colours are difficult for those who have colour vision deficiencies (colour blindness).
- Use alternatives to white backgrounds for paper, computer and visual aids such as whiteboards. Use cream or a soft pastel colour.
- When printing, use matt paper rather than gloss. Paper should be thick enough to prevent the other side showing through.
- Left align text, without justification.
- Avoid multiple columns (as used in newspapers).
- Lines should not be too long: 60 to 70 characters.

- Use white space to remove clutter near text and group related content.
- Break up the text with regular section headings in long documents and include a table of contents.
- Use active rather than passive voice.
- Be concise; avoid using long, dense paragraphs.
- Use short, simple sentences in a direct style.
- Use images to support text. Flow charts are ideal for explaining procedures. Pictograms and graphics can help to locate and support information in the text.
- Consider using bullet points and numbering rather than continuous prose.
- Give instructions clearly.
- Avoid double negatives.
- Avoid abbreviations where possible; always provide the expanded form when first used.
- Provide a glossary of abbreviations and jargon.
- Use single colour backgrounds. Avoid background patterns or pictures and distracting surrounds.
- Use sufficient contrast levels between background and text.
- Rehearse mathematical vocabulary constantly, using multi-sensory/kinaesthetic methods.
- Use dark coloured text on a light (not white) background.
- For headings, use a font size that is at least 20% larger than the normal text. If further emphasis is required, then use bold.
- Use formatting tools for text alignment, justification, indents, lists, line and paragraph spacing to support assistive technology users. In Word, you'll find these tools in the 'Layout' tab.