

Disability Campaign.org

Reading and Writing with Dyslexia



Image: Getty Images, ABCnews.go.com

According to the Dyslexia Center of Utah, “One in five students, or 15% to 20% of the population, has a language-based learning disability.” Dyslexia is a specific learning disability marked by difficulty with reading, writing, and spelling. Often people with dyslexia mix-up letters and words — a “b” is confused with a “d” or the word “was” is read as “saw.” Some letters and words may appear upside down or squished together.

It's important to note that though dyslexia affect a person's learning, it does not determine someone's intelligence, such as the case with Albert Einstein and Thomas Edison — two brilliant people with this learning disability.

Because most of us learn languages at an early age, children are often the first to be diagnosed. Teachers or parents may identify symptoms and signs through a child's reading and writing, such as when a child is asked to read aloud or cannot spell simple words or his or her name. Some children, though, go undiagnosed and though they may learn coping mechanisms and succeed as adults, early diagnosis and intervention will give your child the best opportunity to excel and be confident in his or her language abilities.

Symptoms of Dyslexia

- Problems with reading words
- Confusing small words, writing words backwards
- Reversing the shapes of letters
- Processing speed
- Memorizing
- Problems with writing

Keep in mind that just because a person has one of the symptoms doesn't mean he or she has dyslexia. If these symptoms continue or become more bothersome, you or your child may need to get tested by a doctor and language specialist or therapist. The specialist may ask questions and perform a skills test to achieve a diagnosis.

Being diagnosed with dyslexia doesn't mean you can't do well academically, socially and professionally. Your doctor, specialist, or therapist will make recommendations to include tools, techniques and strategies for reading, writing and speaking. Below are some additional resources for you to take into consideration.

- **Font Type.** Experiment with the different font types, colors, or styles installed on your computer or within your word processing document. You can also search the web for font types specifically designed for people with dyslexia, such as **Dyslexie**.



Image: DyslexieFont.com

- **Background color and lighting.** Consider changing the background image or color on your computer screen, or change the lighting in your office. Colored filters, such as those used for **Irlen Syndrome**, have also proven to help people with dyslexia.

- **Electronic and Audio Books.** Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and AudioBooks.com offer books in electronic and audio format. Many of these books can be read or played from your phone, laptop and tablet or as CD in your car.

- **Audio recorders or pens with built-in audio recorders.** Paying attention to your professor or at a work meeting while writing notes is tricky with dyslexia. Ask if you can record the meeting or class to then listen to afterwards. You can even ask a friend or coworker to take notes for



Image: Amazon.com

- you. Most universities or schools will work with you to accommodate your needs, but you must communicate those needs.

- **Voice Recognition and Dictation programs.** Software such as **Dragon Naturally Speaking** for your PC or **Siri** on your iPhone can write for you. These programs use voice recognition software, meaning you speak and they write/type for you. The accuracy can be very high, but some programs have a learning curve and take time getting used to.

For more information, visit the National Institutes of Health's list of organizations dedicated to serving and informing people with dyslexia:

http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/dyslexia/org_dyslexia.htm.

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