

NEUROSCOPE

Dyslexia Awareness Guide

Understanding Language, Processing & Learning Differences

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Dyslexia Awareness & Practice Guide

1. What Dyslexia Is

Dyslexia is a natural difference in how the brain processes written and spoken language. It affects reading, spelling, sounding out words, organising sequences, and holding information in mind. Dyslexia is completely unrelated to a person's intelligence. Many dyslexic individuals are excellent at thinking in pictures, noticing patterns, solving complex problems, and seeing the big picture.

2. How Dyslexia Shows Up Day-to-Day

Dyslexia looks different in every person. Some people read slowly, while others find it hard to spell or remember spoken lists. Because reading and writing require much more mental effort for a dyslexic brain, it often causes tiredness and fatigue. It can also affect processing speed and short-term memory, making it hard to copy notes from a screen or follow instructions with many steps. These differences are biological, not behavioural.

3. Early Signs of Dyslexia in Children

Common Observations

- Mixing up or reversing letters frequently.
- Finding phonics and letter sounds hard to learn.
- Slow, hesitant, or effortful reading.
- Avoiding reading or writing tasks completely.

Memory & Sequencing

- Difficulty remembering multi-step spoken instructions.
- Struggling to find rhyming words or sequence patterns.
- Poor handwriting or highly inconsistent spelling.

4. Dyslexia in Young People

As studies become more advanced, young people often experience specific structural barriers:

- **Information Extraction:** Finding it difficult to summarise main points or extract key data from long texts.
- **Exam Pressures:** Slower reading speeds directly impacting performance in timed assessments.
- **Organisation:** Challenges keeping track of homework deadlines, timetables, and learning equipment.
- **Anxiety & Fatigue:** High mental exhaustion leading to stress around literacy-based tasks.

5. Dyslexia in Adults

Adults often develop excellent coping mechanisms, but specific challenges can remain visible in professional and daily life:

- **Document Review:** Feeling overwhelmed when reading or proofreading long emails and texts.
- **Writing Speed:** Taking longer to draft formal messages, reports, or letters.
- **Time Management:** Finding it hard to accurately estimate how long a project or task will take to finish.
- **Task Avoidance:** Intentionally choosing roles or tasks that do not involve heavy administrative or text work.

6. How to Support Dyslexic Learners (All Ages)



Chunk Information: Break every task down into small, clear, and actionable numbered steps to prevent cognitive overwhelm.



Use Visuals: Use clear diagrams, icons, colour-coded schedules, and pictures to lighten the memory load.



Reduce Copying: Avoid asking learners to copy text directly from a board or screen. Provide pre-printed notes or digital files instead.



Offer Extra Processing Time: Give individuals plenty of extra time to read, think, plan, and write out their replies without rush.



Multisensory & Framework Supports: Combine seeing, hearing, and physical activities together. Provide clear sentence starters and templates to structure ideas. Encouraging verbal answers and celebrating personal effort builds massive confidence.

7. Assistive Technology Tools

Modern digital tools provide independent access and bypass mechanical barriers effectively:

- **Text-to-Speech:** Reads written text aloud so the individual can listen instead of decoding.
- **Speech-to-Text:** Software that types out spoken words automatically (dictation).
- **Accessible Audiobooks:** Services such as RNIB, Audible, or Learning Ally that make books fully audible.
- **Specialised Layouts:** Clean fonts like OpenDyslexic or Lexend, alongside coloured digital screen filters, to prevent letters from jumping or blurring.
- **Visual Frameworks:** Mind-mapping apps (like MindMeister or Inspiration) to plot and see connections between ideas visually.

8. Strengths of Dyslexic Brains

When environmental friction is removed, these powerful inherent cognitive assets become clear:

Creative Innovation

Exceptional problem-solving skills, imaginative storytelling, and original ideas that look at a situation from outside the box.

Interpersonal Value

Highly developed empathy, emotional insight, and spatial reasoning that see connections others miss.

9. Classroom Strategies for Teachers

- Provide clear, completed examples before beginning a new task.
- Use specific colour-coded folders and subjects to simplify personal organisation.
- Pre-teach key vocabulary and technical terms before a major lesson.
- Provide checklists and writing frames to guide independent work.
- Ensure there are predictable daily routines and quiet spaces for focused reading.

10. Strategies for Parents

- Read together regularly in a relaxed way with absolutely zero pressure.
- Use audiobooks to enjoy stories and build vocabulary safely.
- Break home learning and homework down into short, friendly segments.
- Encourage personal strengths, hobbies, and interests outside of literacy.
- Celebrate effort and resilience to protect self-esteem and remove shame.

11. Why Dyslexia Support Matters

Effective support is not about trying to "fix" spelling or reading skills. It is about understanding how the brain functions and changing the environment so that every individual can use their gifts safely and successfully. By providing clear frameworks, structure, and understanding, we completely remove frustration and build lasting confidence. Support unlocks natural potential; it does not correct a deficit.