

Dyslexia Workshop

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Aims:

1. What is dyslexia and what does it mean?
2. What might the signs be?
3. What are the possible difficulties it could cause?
4. How can we help children with dyslexic tendencies to fulfill their potential?

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dys = difficulty

lexia = language

- *Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.*
- *Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.*
- *Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities.*
- *It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points.*
- *Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia.*
- *A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well founded intervention.*

- Good spatial awareness and visualising skills
- Creative
- Good oral skills
- Aptitude for constructional or technical toys/ games
- Lateral thinking and problem solving
- Imaginative

Table 1: Developmental phases of dyslexia in children and young people learning to read in English³⁴

Developmental phase	Signs of dyslexia
Preschool	Delayed or problematic speech. Poor expressive language. Poor rhyming skills. Little interest/difficulty learning letters.
Early school years	Poor letter-sound knowledge. Poor phoneme awareness. Poor word attack skills. Idiosyncratic spelling. Problems copying.
Middle school years	Slow reading. Poor decoding skills when faced with new words. Phonetic or non-phonetic spelling.
Adolescence and adulthood	Poor reading fluency. Slow speed of writing. Poor organisation and expression in work.

The Simple View of Reading

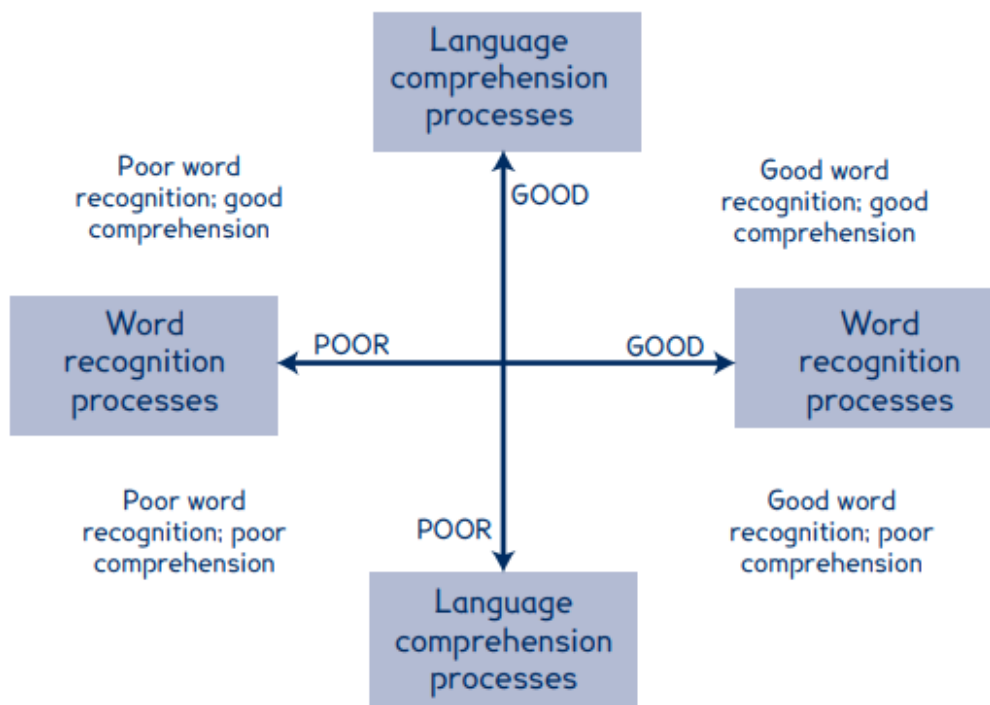


Figure 2: Influences on long-term outcomes⁵⁷

Protective influences – better outcomes

- High quality intervention.
- Strong oral language skills.
- Ability to maintain attention.
- Good family/carer support.

Snowballing: reading comprehension

Not reading unless have to; limited experiences

Self-esteem


'The Juggling Act'/Cognitive load: not presenting true ability in other curricular areas


THE TWO STRANDS OF READING

Phonics and Word Recognition

The ability to recognise words presented in and out of context.

The ability to blend letter sounds (phonemes) together to read words.





Understanding

The ability to understand the meaning of the words and sentences in a text.

The ability to understand the ideas, information and themes in a text.

If a child understands what they hear, they will understand the same information when they read.

Children with dyslexic difficulties particularly benefit from learning that is: highly structured, systematic, 'little and often', using graphic representation, allowing time for reinforcement and encouraging generalization

In school

- Support for spelling through phonics ie RWI scheme and interventions
- Discrete teaching of Spelling eg the neuro-linguistic spelling technique, all about the word,
- Bypassing spelling and reading through enabling eg. Word banks, 'said' words, user of laptops, thesaurus, dictionary, HFW list, conjunction list, writing frames etc

At home

To create a reading culture:

- Show that reading is 'what we do'
- Audio books
- Magazines and shorter articles
- Continue to read to them and with them
- Do the voices!
- Books that pique interest
- Rule of five
- Encouragement to read in shops, signs etc; providing purpose



To directly support learning:

- Explicitly teach word attack skills
- Teach and discuss new words before, during and after reading
- Use Spelling Shed
- Mnemonics, pictures of words, making a story
- Support joined handwriting
- BBC Dance Mat Typing
- Routine and organisation; responsibility eg timetable, regular homework slot
- Minimise distraction
- Use techniques on hand out to support weekly spelling
- Use the curriculum documents provided by school, noting the new language

Be patient- it is possible and you will get there!