

Dyslexia: Possible Barriers and Ideas for Learning

Re-drawn from Reid & Guise (2018), *Assessing Dyslexia*, SEN Magazine, March-April 2018

Type of Barrier	Barrier	Possible reasons	Intervention ideas
Memory	Difficulty remembering auditory instructions and lists	Difficulties with short-term memory	Present information visually. Give verbal instructions one at a time, and/or provide written lists of instructions
	Difficulty taking notes	Difficulties with short-term and working memory, processing speed or handwriting	Allow pupil to photograph blackboard, or give electronic access to whiteboard notes. Provide bullet point notes
Organisation	Difficulty remembering timetable, materials and equipment	Difficulties with short-term or working memory, and lack of strategies to support this	Structured support – provide checklists, repeat information, encourage routines, use visual reminders and IT supports
Movement / Coordination	Difficulty with fine motor skills, such as tying shoelaces, and writing; also, poor coordination	Possibly dyspraxia or dysgraphia – mixed laterality, lack of opportunity	Use a buddy to assist. Use visual cues for directions. Touch-typing programs.
Reading Development	Difficulty keeping up with class in reading, speed of reading, and reading comprehension	Confusing similar sounds, poor awareness of rhythm	Support in phonics. Paired reading. Audio books
Spelling	Difficulty learning phonics, or remembering spelling rules	Spelling errors, inconsistencies, unexpected mistakes, for example with high-frequency words.	Support in phonics. Overlearning. Spelling games
Writing	Difficulty in starting, forming sentences, or in overall structure of written work	Working memory or processing speed difficulties	Structured support to break tasks into steps, for example, by using checklists, writing frames and mind maps. Extra time. Use of computer to help with editing. Voice recognition software/scribe
Processing Speed	Difficulty keeping up with class work, and completing assessments in allocated time	Processing speed or working memory difficulties; lack of automaticity in key skills	Extra time, use of technologies, such as computer, voice recognition software. Fewer examples so that student can work thoroughly at their own pace. Support in key skills.
Numeracy	Difficulty in learning and/or remembering number facts	Working memory and/or processing speed difficulties	Use of manipulatives, overlearning, extra time