



Socrates
Grundtvig



Guide for Parents



DyPaTeC

Dyslexia - Parents' and Teachers' Collaboration

Acknowledgment.

The initiating Institution of the DYPATEC-Project is the “Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes in der Steiermark”, Hasnerplatz 12, Graz, Austria. During the first two years the project co-ordinator was Mag. H. Posch, Graz; the third year the co-ordination was taken over by R. Claes, Luxembourg. On behalf of the workgroup, both co-ordinators are responsible for the elaboration as well as for the printing of the final product.

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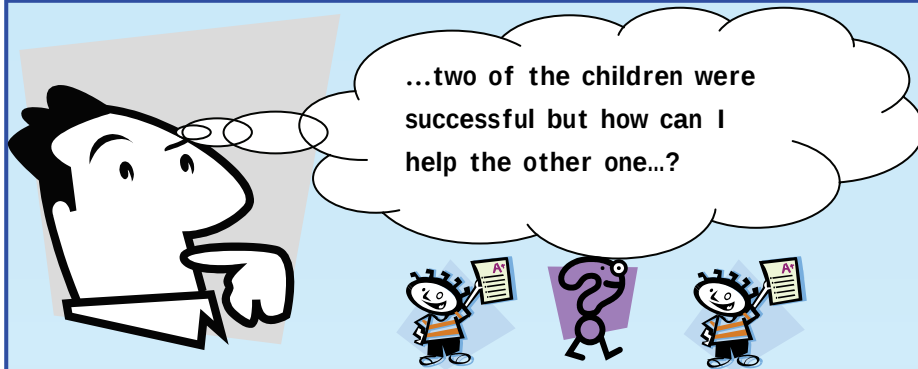
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0. INTRODUCTION



This guide on reading and writing difficulties, including dyslexia, is not only useful for **PARENTS** but also for **TEACHERS** and **SPECIALISTS** who may want to refer to the guide when talking to parents about the child with dyslexia. It includes a DVD on visual motor integration exercises. The field of dyscalculia is briefly mentioned.

The **content** covers a variety of topics that were selected by parents and teachers. It includes problems with children who are dyslexic that arise at home and at school, learning strategies and learning styles, how to support children with dyslexia in reading and writing in their mother tongue as well as in foreign languages, useful addresses, etc.

The guide is available in **seven languages**. It is the joint work of an interdisciplinary and intercultural team from the fields of medicine, psychology, linguistics and education, together with parents of children with dyslexia. The recommended literature and materials, as well as addresses to contact, are **specific to each country**.

All authors of this work feel committed to **The Convention on The Rights of Children** (United Nations 1989) that includes, for instance, that

- States Parties recognise the right of the child to education and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity (...) (Art.28)
 - States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to (a) the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential; (...) (Art.29)
- (<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>)

The team of the EU-project DYPATEC (Socrates/Grundtvig2) funded by the European Commission. June 2007

DYSLEXIA



A folder including a CD and DVD for parents, teachers, specialists.

- **Content:** topics selected by parents and teachers

- **Available in** English
German
Czech
Polish
French
Maltese
Turkish

- **Children's Rights**



1. WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

I am dyslexic...

My parents never had any serious problems with me until I started school. I noticed it took me longer than others to learn how to read so I avoided books. My handwriting was not too good either, no matter how hard I tried. Copying from the board took me ages and I never managed it without mistakes. Spelling is still a nightmare for me! My schoolbag was always in a muddle and it took me ages to find what I needed.

In class I was bullied because I was not among the best. Often I didn't understand the teacher's instructions and I was too shy to ask because I was always behind with the work. I was easily distracted in class and hated school. I felt the teachers picked on me and they often said that I was lazy and stupid.

In the playground I quickly became a leader because I had many ideas. At home my parents were confused by my difficulties at school, especially as my two elder sisters were among the best in their classes. By the time I left school, I had a low self-esteem and was not optimistic about the future.

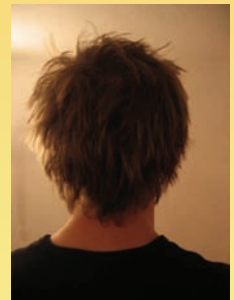
If it had not been for a very good friend of mine who told me about dyslexia, I don't know where I would have ended up. I went on to study computer science without any problems and today I run my own business successfully.

I have no problems anymore about being dyslexic but a lot of suffering in school could have been avoided if my parents and teachers had been informed about dyslexia.

Marc

DYSLEXIA

**DON'T
GIVE UP!**



**THERE IS
ALWAYS
A CHANCE!**

1. WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

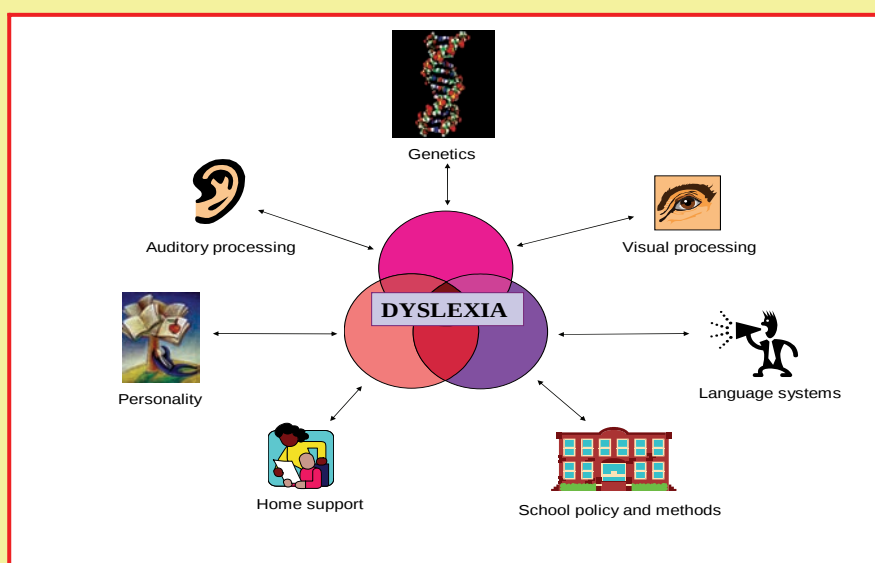
DESCRIPTION OF DYSLEXIA

Dyslexia refers to difficulties with information processing which manifests itself in problems with reading, spelling and writing. In most cases weaknesses can be identified in the following areas:

- Recognising and remembering words
- Following instructions
- Sequencing of letters in words, of words in sentences, of sentences in texts
- Recognising and understanding what is heard and/or read (auditory and visual processing)
- Poor spelling and grammar
- Organisation
- Often additional problems (coordination, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, hyperactivity, visual problems, etc.)

Secondary consequences could be low self-esteem and low motivation. Difficulties in reading, writing and spelling might be compensated for by such abilities as creative and/or visual/technical skills.

The various influencing factors e.g. genetic, auditory and/or visual processing difficulties, education etc., affect each other in multiple ways as shown below. (from: Reid 2005, Dyslexia and Inclusion, David Fulton Publishers, London)



INFLUENCING FACTORS

GENETICS



"It has been in my family for years!"

AUDITORY PROCESSING



"Some letters just sound the same!"

VISUAL PROCESSING



"Sometimes letters merge together!"

PERSONALITY



e.g. "The class clown"

LANGUAGE SYSTEMS



"Can I write what I hear?"

HOME SUPPORT



"Give me a break!"

SCHOOL



"Discover my talents!"

1. WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

Watch out for the symptoms!

PRE - SCHOOL (3 to 5 years)

- difficulty remembering sounds, words, letters
- difficulty remembering the sequence of letters of the alphabet, of words, instructions etc.
- confusing words which sound similar
- difficulty with copying and colouring
- poor memory
- history of dyslexia in the family
- slow at reacting to some tasks (letter/word games.)

PRIMARY SCHOOL (6 to 11 years)

- reluctance to go to school
- difficulty learning words/letters/sounds
- difficulties following instructions
- difficulty with splitting up words into letters or syllables
- poor knowledge of sounds and words
- difficulty in reading and/or spelling
- poor organisation

SECONDARY SCHOOL (12 to 18 years)

- difficulty in sequencing sounds/letters, in reading and/or spelling
- taking longer on written tasks and over homework
- running out of time
- Difficulty with memory, organisation
- continual frustration
- developing strategies for avoiding school

POST SECONDARY (further education, work)

- compensation (ways to avoid reading/writing)
- low self-esteem (depending on experiences at school; dyslexia associations can offer support)
- organisational problems (use of technology, tutors)
- jobs requiring little reading and/or writing

VARIATION OF SYMPTOMS

PRE - SCHOOL



PRIMARY SCHOOL



SECONDARY SCHOOL



LATER



1. WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

Literature

Government of Ireland (2001). *Report of the Task Force on Dyslexia*. Dublin: Government Publications Sales Office.

Klicpera, Ch., Schabmann, A., & Gasteiger-Klicpera, B. (2003). *Legasthenie. Modelle, Diagnose, Theorie und Förderung*. München: Reinhardt UTB.

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Rosenkötter, H. (1997). *Neuropsychologische Behandlung der Legasthenie*. Weinheim: Psychologie Verlags Union.

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Steltzer, S. (1998). *Wenn die Wörter tanzen. Legasthenie und Schule*. München: Ariston.

2. EARLY RECOGNITION AND PREVENTION

Early Identification of children

at risk of reading, writing and spelling difficulties

Difficulties in learning to read, write and spell occur in children in every land and language. Children in cultures with an alphabetic script face similar problems, even if specific national school systems and speech development may cause different effects. Over the last twenty years, researchers in various countries have discovered that it is possible to predict whether a child will have difficulties in learning to read and write by observing the development of certain functions up to the age of 5 or 6. The “children at risk of dyslexia” might have problems in the following areas:

THE FUNCTION	HOW TO CHECK?
phonological awareness	
• recognising rhymes	“Which two words rhyme: way – day – lie?”
• producing rhymes	“Find words that rhyme with ‘look’”
• memorising sequences of sounds and words	“What are the seasons of the year / days of the week?”
• recognising sounds	“Do they sound the same: cat – cut? If not – what is the difference? ”
• recognising the position of sounds and syllables in words	“What’s the first sound in the word ‘mother’?”
• learning sound-letter correspondences	“Say the sound that belongs to the letter A”.
visual-spatial functions:	
• recognising letters	“What is the name of the letter on the bus stop?”
• differentiating similar letters	“Are these letters the same or different: m-n, l-t, p-b-d-g?”
motor functions	
• fine motor skills	“Can the child thread the beads quickly?”
• motor coordination	“Can the child catch a ball?”
• balance	“Can the child stand on one leg?”
visual-motor coordination	“Can you draw the same figure as here?”
concentration span	“Can the child concentrate for a longer time on one task?”

Early identification and diagnosis of all these functions, especially language skills, can help to identify **children at risk of dyslexia.**

Early Identification

Phonological awareness

Visual-spatial functions

Motor skills

Concentration span

Integration of phonological, visual and motor skills



2. EARLY RECOGNITION AND PREVENTION

Screening methods

Based on the knowledge of the most important factors indicating children at risk of dyslexia, some **screening tests** have been developed. They are mostly **questionnaires** or **tests of phonological awareness**.

Success in reading, writing and spelling could be predicted in **70-80%** of all children aged 3-6.

Unfortunately, children with dyslexia are not usually diagnosed before the beginning of their school education. Very often it happens at the end of primary school, or even later. It should, however, be done **MUCH EARLIER!!!**

Prevention of Dyslexia

In the last decade **two main approaches** have been considered in the prevention of dyslexia:

- 1) Children, who are identified as being at risk of developing reading, writing and spelling difficulties, are given specific training.
- 2) All children aged between 3-6 take part in general programmes preparing the foundation for learning to read, write and spell.

Experiences in many countries seem to **support the second approach**. If all children aged 3-6 participate in an early intervention programme:

discrimination of suspected children at risk is avoided

A six-month programme brings success for 2-3 years at school.

Further investigations are necessary to improve our knowledge of the prevention of reading, writing and spelling difficulties.

Screening tests

- Questionnaires
- Tests of Phonological Awareness



Prevention



Preferable:

No selection; all children aged 3 - 6 take part in an early intervention programme.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SPEECH

Basic skills for using language:

- **auditory perception of speech sounds, words, and sentences**

[f] [ɪ] [ʃ] → [fɪʃ] → fish → Where is the fish?

- **perception of intonation**

You are learning. "You are learning?" You are learning!

Differences in intonation convey different meanings!

- **comprehension of words and sentences**

The cat is chasing the dog. The dog is chasing the cat.

You have to know the meaning of the words!

A different word order results in a different meaning!

- **articulation of speech sounds**

[ee] in "sea", [ay] in "say", [sh] in "shoe" etc.

- **building different forms of words**

show – showed; carry – carrying; word – words

- **arranging words in sentences**

She bought a pair of jeans.

A rabbit lives in a hole in the ground.

Besides these basic language skills there are other abilities which make the acquisition of language possible and also influence language development.

Speech
perception



? !

Language
comprehension

Production of
speech and
language

Building
sentences



3. DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SPEECH

PERCEPTION

- tactile perception - the tactile sense

- touching and grasping objects
- “feeling” sounds (e.g. “m” – “p”)

- auditory perception - hearing

- where does a sound come from?
- recognising the sound
- concentrating on one sound among different noises
- distinguishing between different sounds
- relating sounds to pictures
- writing down heard speech

The perception of sounds and syllables is most important for the acquisition of writing and spelling:

- Differentiating between sounds
mouse – house; see – say; bean – beam
- Recognising a sound
Is there an “m” in “month”, “room”...
What is the first/last sound in “sip”?
- Discriminating between sounds:
 - Words have sounds in common
cool – cat – cast; find – mind – kind
 - Words rhyme
kind – mind – king,
 - Finding the odd one out
cat – cool – hood
 - Substituting one sound for another
pin – pan; hot – hit

A good auditory perception is a prerequisite for language acquisition!

Development of vocabulary.

Articulation

Perception and comprehension of speech

Perception of sounds



3. DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SPEECH

- visual perception – seeing

- How do two shapes/pictures differ?
- Can you describe this object?
- What's the difference between p – d – b; p – q; m – w?

A good visual perception is a prerequisite for the acquisition of reading, writing and spelling!

ARTICULATORS

Lips, teeth, tongue, jaws and the soft palate are necessary for the correct articulation of sounds. Their intricate and fast movements are responsible for the production of articulated speech.

At the beginning of speech development, the occurrence of “speech errors”, such as omissions, substitutions, simplifications etc are natural.

Examples: fish → fis, cat → tat etc.

But if these errors still occur frequently after the age of 4, contact a specialist.

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

Motor development is also necessary for speaking, writing and spelling.

For writing, fine motor skills are needed in order to make the appropriate movements of the hand.

Motor problems may also occur in the mouth movements involved in speech and in facial expressions and gestures which accompany it.

Visual accuracy

Learning
letters

Distinguishing
between
letters

db

qp

MW

Articulation

Speech errors



Fine motor
skills

Mouth
movements,
gestures and
facial
expression

3. DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE AND SPEECH

As the acquisition of language is a rather complex process, here are some hints:

DO 😊

talk to your child as much as possible;

mothers can/should talk to their still unborn child (from about the sixth month onwards);

look at picture books together, talk about the pictures;

name the various things indoors and outdoors;

tell the child what you are doing right now;

listen to the child;

read books to him/her;

play language games;

teach her/him (nursery) rhymes;

every day play with your child and talk to him/her without the television or other distractions on for at least half an hour;

give your child time to correct her/his mistakes by herself/himself.

DON'T 😞

Use television as a compensation for personal communication;

laugh about the child's mistakes;

turn away from the child when he/she has made a mistake;

**Communication
with the child**

Picture books

**Vocabulary
development**

**Language
awareness**

Rule of thumb

Problems

4. FAMILY SITUATION AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

Who or what is to blame for this problem?

No-one is to blame for this problem!

- Dyslexia can be caused by a variety of factors and can be made worse by unfavourable family and school situations.
- The search for someone to blame is a normal reaction but it doesn't help anyone.
- However, a medical check (eyes and ears) should be made compulsory in every case.

Are our doubts about the intelligence of our child justified?

Other people often want to be helpful and they may tell you that the child is not up to the demands of his/her particular school. However, the truth is that the child's abilities have not really been identified.

- Dyslexia has absolutely nothing to do with being stupid. Your child might have special abilities in areas other than reading, writing and spelling.
- In spite of the difficulties that have to be overcome, you should respect and accept your child in his/her development as an independent person.

What can we do to help our child ourselves?

- A child should be gently informed about possible difficulties but should know that he/she can rely on the understanding and support of his/her parents at all times.
- The home should be a place where the child feels safe and secure. Questions about how the school day was, are not suitable as a greeting at the front door.
- Daily life in the home can be made easier by having a regular routine, helping with organising things and giving exact instructions for explanations of tasks.
- Small tasks and responsibilities, which the child is made to carry out with consistency strengthen the child's self-esteem.

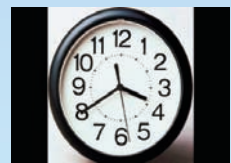
**No-one
is to blame**



**Believe in the
talents of
your child**



**Support at
home**



4. FAMILY SITUATION AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

Children learn to read by reading!

You can help your child learn to read by arousing an interest in reading. It is good to read books to your child and also with your child.

- . Play games together. Board games and interactive games can all help to develop the social skills needed to solve problems, turn-taking and to make one's own decisions.

Where can we get help?

- . There are many groups of experts and parents that deal with dyslexia (see appendix).
- . It is important as parents to be properly informed. (Books, seminars and discussions with experts).

Is "waiting" the right solution?

Parents are often advised to wait. "Things will sort themselves out. The child will grow out of it" Such advice is bad advice. You don't grow out of dyslexia!

- . The person with dyslexia learns to cope with his/her problem and to use learned compensation strategies.
- . The earlier help is given, the more effective it is. Constant failure leads to a lack of motivation and/or other negative strategies (refusal to do things, etc). These secondary effects are often more difficult to deal with later on.

What if our child is aggressive or withdrawn?

- . Children who continually experience failure and humiliation often develop behavioural problems. They may even manifest psychosomatic symptoms.
- . It is important to build up the child's self-esteem by not placing too much value on school achievements.
- . If a child's self-esteem has reached rock bottom, help may be sought from the child's teachers or an educational psychologist.

Support at home



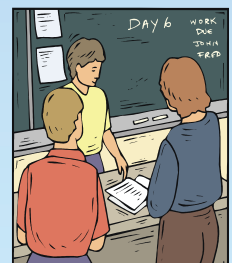
Professional help



Don't wait



Behavioural problems



4. FAMILY SITUATION AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

What should we do when relatives or friends interfere?

- . Explain the problems to close relatives and friends.
- . When there are problems at school, accept help.
However, don't put up with unnecessary interference!

How can we cope with the jealousy of brothers and sisters?

- . It is important to explain the situation of the child with dyslexia to his/her brothers and sisters in order to increase their sympathy and understanding for the child. Mutual help between brothers and sisters should be supported.
- . The child with dyslexia should not be constantly compared to his/her brothers and sisters.
- . The child with dyslexia takes up a lot of the parents' time so it is important that the other children don't miss out.

Should we help our child with his/her homework?

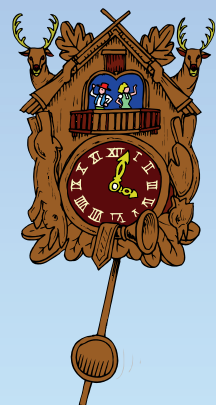
- . The child should have his/her own place to work.
- . The child should be encouraged to have a positive attitude to work. Help is necessary but only "help that leads to self-help".
- . Encourage your child to be independent otherwise he/she will begin to think that he/she can't do it without help.
- . Instructions and explanations should be short and concise.
- . Children with dyslexia can only concentrate for short periods at a time. Therefore, it is important to choose and plan short breaks.
- . If it is necessary to do extra practice with the child, it is important to stick to the time which has been agreed upon.
- . It is better to go back one step and give the child a sense of achievement than to stay on a higher level without success. A positive attitude and trying hard should be praised even if the child doesn't succeed with the task.

Interference of others

Jealousy of siblings



Support independence



Create opportunities to be successful

5. SCHOOL AND PARENTS INTERACTION

Is my child an exception in the class?

- Many parents are under the impression that their child is the only one with problems because they do not know the rest of the class.
- Remember that there are always a few pupils in each classroom who have reading, writing and spelling difficulties.

How can I speak with the teacher about the problems of my child?

- The child's achievements often swing from one extreme to the other and may be puzzling for the teacher, especially when the achievements sometimes reach the highest level ("You can do it, if you want to.").
- It is important to speak with the teacher about the problem and to ask for help.
- Show your willingness to help your child in co-operation with the teacher and avoid the teacher feeling that he/she is under pressure from you.
- Ask the teacher to test your child orally rather than in a written exam.

What can I do when a teacher doesn't take our problem seriously?

- The parents can turn to the head teacher, the local education authority and parent support groups.
- Parents can come together, form a self-help group and become active through this group.

Commonly mentioned problems in the area of parent-school co-operation:

- humiliation of the child by the teacher
- lack of training of some teachers in working with children with dyslexia
- bullying from classmates
- the initial primary school that the child attended did not want to admit the problem

Left out?

Contact with the teacher



What parents can do

Parent-school co-operation



5. SCHOOL AND PARENTS INTERACTION

- teacher's attitude towards child and parents
- parents' discontent with the way the child was prepared for school exams

What can be done in such cases?

- ***Do not feel guilty.*** Do not blame yourself or anybody else. Instead, remember that everybody is unique and special, as well as your child.
- ***Always remember that you are a specialist concerning your child.*** Accept good advice from other specialists (teacher, psychologist, etc.). However, modify the advice according to the real needs of your child.
- ***Be active in developing a partnership with your child's school.*** Remember that your child's school may not always recognise the importance of co-operation and partnership between school and parents.
- ***Be an advocate for your child!*** If you do not defend the rights of your child, do not expect that somebody else will do it.
- ***Build up a child's self-esteem and motivation.*** There is always something you can appreciate in your child. Try to find it and use it to motivate him.
- ***Have high expectations but be realistic.*** Expectations are necessary pre-conditions for success in any field, but always compare them with reality.
- ***Set reasonable goals.*** As you are the specialist concerning your child, who really knows his/her needs, you are able to set realistic goals for your child.
- ***Do not do for the child what he/she can do for him/herself.*** Do not be over-protective. Your child is as capable as other children, he/she just needs more time, tolerance and understanding.

Take individual
needs into
account



Partnership
with the
school

Build up
self-esteem

Set realistic
goals



5. SCHOOL AND PARENTS INTERACTION

Take your child's learning style into account. After an assessment of your child, help him/her to learn in the way most suited to him/her.

Think long term and be patient. It may be that your child needs much more time than others when learning to read, write and spell. However, it does not mean that there isn't any hope for the future. Be positive!



**Take learning
style into
account**

Future

6. WHAT CAN HELP A CHILD WITH DYSLEXIA IN SCHOOL?

IN ORDER TO HELP A CHILD WITH DYSLEXIA IT IS IMPORTANT THAT PARENTS AND TEACHERS REGULARLY EXCHANGE INFORMATION.

What children have said:

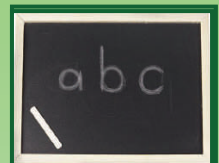
- School should be fun. It should also include hard work but not fear.
- I would like to learn with others and everybody should be able to show what he/she can do.
- I don't want to be laughed at because I make mistakes. It hurts.
- I would like to have the courage to ask questions.
- I would like to be praised for what I have achieved.
- I want to know the best way to learn.
- I would like to know how to read, write and spell well.
- I would like to know how paying attention and concentrating can help me to learn.
- I would like just once to be one of the best in a test.
- I would like to read a lot of really long books and also learn from them.

Ways to help

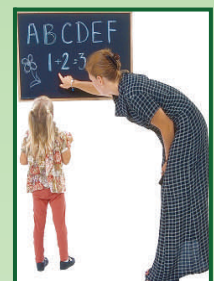
The best way to help children with special learning difficulties in reading, writing and spelling is to use different methods in lessons or with individuals. It is very important that the teacher should be able to recognise and react in the right way to the needs of the child.



I would really like to learn



Ways to help



6. WHAT CAN HELP A CHILD WITH DYSLEXIA IN SCHOOL?

The basic principles necessary for learning and teaching are being able to respect each others' strengths and weaknesses, showing understanding and being interested in the other person. Then it is possible to tackle problems together.

From a mother's diary:

My child was told off again for not paying attention in the lesson. At home there seems to be less problems with learning. Maybe it is impossible for my child to concentrate at school. When I was visiting the school, I got the impression that the learning environment was not as good as it could be.

Tips:

- Children develop and mature at different rates. Therefore, it is important that in the first class of school the children are not subjected to too much pressure.
- The child should be encouraged to write clearly and neatly. Then it is easier for the child to check his/her own work. Therefore, the child should not be put under pressure when writing.
- If the child has real difficulties in writing, this could mean that he/she has dyspraxia.
- Having to read out loud at too early a stage leads to fear and then failure. It is better to ask for volunteers or work with short texts that the child can prepare beforehand.

Basic principles



Less problems with learning at home than at school



Starting school



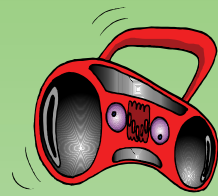
6. WHAT CAN HELP A CHILD WITH DYSLEXIA IN SCHOOL?

- If a child has problems seeing, hearing, concentrating or is easily distracted, make sure that his/her desk/table is in a suitable place. The child should be able to see the teacher and the board clearly when the whole class is being taught or the child has to copy from the board.
- Having the right person sitting next to a child plays an important role as to whether he/she can concentrate or not. Quiet children help to quieten down a lively child, whereas lively children may be a distraction. Teachers should watch this carefully and talk to the children and parents about the classroom situation.
- Children who are sensitive to noise often have problems shutting out background sounds. They need a quiet place in the classroom.
- If the child works better at home than at school, the possible causes could be fear of or sensitivity to noise. If learning in the classroom is too strenuous, the child needs support.
- With an overhead projector, some children have problems with the black writing on a white background. It is very strenuous for them. Plenty of time should be given for copying notes from the overhead.
- There should be a good mixture of periods for working and playing. Holidays should be used foremost for relaxing. However, if the child is willing, he/she should read or be read to. It is also useful to help with the planning of free time.

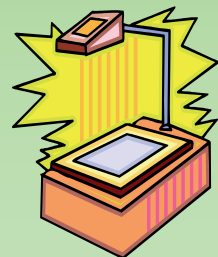
Improved concentration at school



Problems with noise



Overhead



Holidays

Relaxation



6. WHAT CAN HELP A CHILD WITH DYSLEXIA IN SCHOOL?

From a mother's diary:

Written work, especially essays, are terrible and are a burden for the whole family. My child is not so much afraid of the work itself, as of the mark. When the teacher tells my child to practise more and to work harder, this makes us sad. My child doesn't know how to practise. I must speak to the teacher about it.

Tips:

- The advice to practise more is often well meant but can be a problem. Parents need exact instructions and help on how to practise with their child. Practice which doesn't bring success makes the child unwilling to work and causes frustration and stress.
- Both stressing a child too much or not enough should be avoided. If time has just been spent practising spelling, choose something easier for the child to do.
- Children need to feel secure when doing homework and this can be helped by clear instructions (if necessary, written down). Examples from the lesson should be used to show the way of doing a task.
- Comparing words that are similar but not quite the same (there-their) can be confusing for a child. It is better to practise the first word (there) for a week and then afterwards, to practise the second word (their) for a week. They should only be compared when the child is completely sure that he/she won't be confused.
- It can help a child when writing if he/she is allowed to say the spelling rules to him/herself (butter with two /t/, i before e except after c) etc.

Afraid of marks for written work



Practise more!

Stressing a child too much or not enough

Clear instructions



Comparing similar words

Saying spelling rules

6. WHAT CAN HELP A CHILD WITH DYSLEXIA IN SCHOOL?

When learning something new, practising or revising, a variety of ways of teaching should be used e.g. teaching from the front of the class, learning in groups, working independently etc. Using a variety of methods helps the children to pay attention and concentrate.

From a mother's diary:

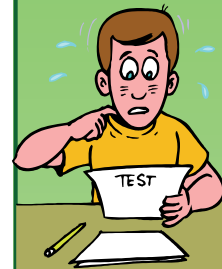
Today my child was fidgeting a lot and not really concentrating while practising. Then I found out at last what the problem was. Tomorrow there is a test. Have we practised enough? Did we start revising early enough? My child is afraid of tests but we have to learn to cope with them. How can I help my child to be less nervous so that the results reflect what the child is capable of?

Tips:

- Explain to the child patiently and in a way he/she can understand why exams and tests are a necessary part of the learning process. Starting early enough with revision and having clear goals help the child to feel prepared. He/She should feel that he/she has revised well and is ready to show what he/she knows.
- Children need help in organising their revision for various tests, learning poems etc. off by heart, preparing a project or writing essays.

Variety of methods

Fear of exams



Revising early enough

Organising work



6. WHAT CAN HELP A CHILD WITH DYSLEXIA IN SCHOOL?

- Written exam tasks should be used to avoid the child having to copy questions into his/her book. There shouldn't be too many topics for revision.
- If a child continually spells words in different ways, it would be a good idea to find out whether the child is having problems retaining the information.
- Children with dyslexia should have more time to write exams or texts etc. which in an exam should be kept to a minimum.
- The strengths of a child should be emphasised when marking a test. A word of encouragement should always be given before an oral exam to put the child at ease.
- Practice material for tests should be given out well in advance so that the child can be well-prepared. Success motivates a child and gives him/her confidence.
- Oral tests offer children with dyslexia a better chance of being successful because the fear of making a lot of spelling mistakes is not present.
- Well-planned projects, where every child can contribute his/her strengths, motivate children to learn independently and they increase their confidence and creativity.
- Marks should also include the way a child takes part in the lessons. The burden created by written tests with a lot of material to learn can be lessened by using oral tests with less material to be learnt. This gives children with dyslexia a better chance of succeeding on a regular basis. This also increases their self-esteem.

**Not too many
topics for
revision**

TIME



Marking exams



**Material for
practising**

**More oral
tests**



Projects

**Taking part in
the lessons**

6. WHAT CAN HELP A CHILD WITH DYSLEXIA IN SCHOOL?

A child with dyslexia will enjoy going to school, if individual learning needs are taken into account.

A school can support a child by:

- giving advice to parents
- having specially trained teachers for pupils with dyslexia
- helping the individual child
- working together with the parents and the child

Literature

DYSPeL (2004 – REPRINT). *DYSLEXIE – LEGASTHENIE – DYSLEXIA. „STRATÉGIES POUR RÉUSSIR À L'ÉCOLE - STRATEGIEN FÜR ERFOLG IN DER SCHULE – STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN SCHOOLS“*

Schubi Lernmedien GmbH, Gottmadingen, D. (Vgl auch Kap. 2,3,4,5,6,8,9).

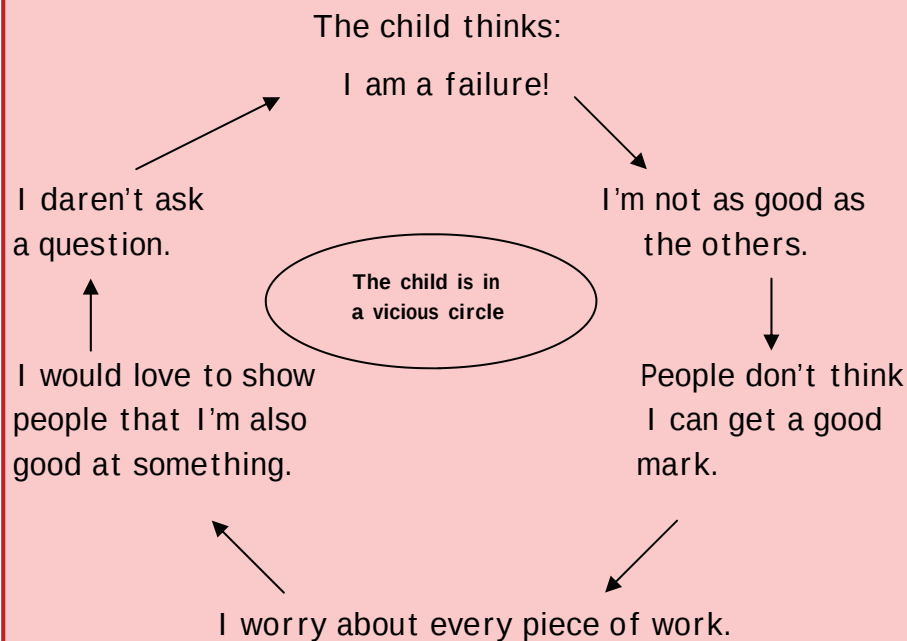


Enjoying
school

Advice

7. MOTIVATION AND SELF-ESTEEM

If a child with dyslexia continually experiences failure, he/she will have a low self-esteem and a feeling of helplessness. Parents often do not know where to turn for help and become frustrated.



The above situation has far-reaching consequences on the child's learning and behaviour. Experiencing failure many times and conflicting expectations endanger success in learning and may lead to further failure.

The solution can be found in two areas which should be worked in conjunction with each other: the motivation and the development of the self-esteem of the child.

- Motives are the reasons why someone does something or behaves the way he/she does.
- They steer a person towards a set goal.
- They can be the force behind learning and therefore they are considered to be a help in learning.
- They can awaken an interest for the subject being learnt, drive a person to find a solution to their goals in learning and activate an inner desire to learn.
- Motives are a deciding issue as to whether a person learns successfully or not.

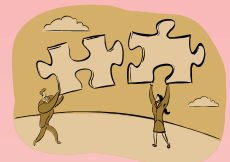
Self-esteem: How I feel about myself

**Feeling
helpless**

Vicious circle



Solution



Motivation

7. MOTIVATION AND SELF-ESTEEM

- . When motivated, learning plays a positive part in the development of the child's character.
- . Motivation is often affected by the communication between parents, teachers and the child and is usually a two-way process.

A child can be motivated with such sentences as:

"I know you can do it. Show me that you can!"

"I'm looking forward to your work. I know it is going to be good!"

"... will give us the next example. He/she has worked so well."

The child is then willing to learn because he/she can take part and he/she feels that it is possible to be successful. Teachers and parents can also create opportunities increasing the willingness to learn. For example:

- offer interesting activities
- create the possibility for success, also give rewards
- give the child a safe place to make mistakes, ensuring progress

It is good to include the child in this process and to help him/her be aware of his/her own responsibility for learning.

Encourage him to ask "why?". e.g.

- Why is it so necessary to practise?
- Why is it important to take part in the class?
- Why is it important to ask good questions?
- Is it really so important that the place where I work is tidy?

Together with the child you can find answers to these questions and help the child to find good motives for doing something.

- When I'm tidy, I save time, so
- It's okay to make mistakes but I want to make less
- It is good to ask questions because this shows that I'm taking part.

Motives and motivation can help to make the learning process of each individual more complete, active and intensive. They are absolutely necessary if learning is to be successful.

Motivation
through
encouragement



Create
opportunities

"Why"
questions



Motives

7. MOTIVATION AND SELF-ESTEEM

Self-esteem:

What role does this play in the learning and behaviour of the child? There are two parts:

Self: has to do with the individuality of the person – I

Esteem: to rate highly, to regard with respect

Every person has a self-esteem, the way in which he/she sees him/herself. He/She has ideals and goals and an idea of how to reach them. Therefore, we must accept that:

- . a child has his/her own wishes and dreams
- . parents and teachers can help him/her to be realistic
- . difficulties can also be an incentive to learn but only in so far that success can be guaranteed
- . the child's self-esteem will suffer if he/she is continuously confronted with difficulties
- . the child is also more aware of his/her lack of achievement compared to other children and often sees no way out. He/she sees him/herself as a failure

The children and their parents often become stressed and such acute stress factors can very quickly influence learning and behaviour, for example:

- . problems appear to be unsolvable
- . instructions are not understood
- . the child constantly compares him/herself with others that are better
- . mistakes are made which cause the class to laugh at him/her
- . he/she is constantly reminded to practise more

Possible reactions of the child:

- . he/she withdraws – becomes passive
- . he/she protests, becomes aggressive or becomes the classroom clown
- . he/she doesn't want to go to school anymore

If parents and teachers recognise this process in time, these acute stress factors can be avoided or reduced.

Self-esteem



Concept of self-esteem

Stress



Reactions of the child

Stress

7. MOTIVATION AND SELF-ESTEEM

It becomes much more difficult if the stress factors become chronic because this not only affects learning but also the whole mental development of the child. The daily stress which the child faces at school and at home soon has a negative effect on his/her thinking (mental) processes (e.g. concentration, memory, solving of problems). The following five steps can help to relieve chronic stress and build up the self-esteem of the child.

Improving self-esteem - 5 steps:

- **1. Communication**

If a typical stress situation occurs, talk together about it. Plan the solution step by step. The child is then confronted with the situation.

- **2. Practice**

Practice with a stressful situation by using examples:

- . concentrate on the work to be done!
- . don't let the situation get you down.

- **3. Security and hope.**

Impart a feeling of security and hope, allowing the child to make mistakes and not be judged because of them. He/She should, however, be encouraged to work on his/her mistakes in order to improve.

- **4. Praise**

Praise the child regularly because praise always improves self-esteem. Be honest about failures and work together on them.

- **5. Patience**

Whatever happens, teachers and parents should remain patient. The child should feel that he/she is being lovingly guided.

**POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE CHILD,
PARENTS AND TEACHERS ARE THE KEY TO SUCCESS.**

Results of
stress



5 steps

Communication

Practice

Hope

Praise

Patience



8. LEARNING STRATEGIES AND LEARNING STYLES

Learning Styles are different ways in which people learn.

It is important that children with dyslexia obtain some support to help them develop effective learning strategies.

The following important factors influence a child's learning:

- **Individual preferences for learning:** does your child prefer to learn visually, auditorily or kinesthetically?
- **Personality type:** is your child a risk taker or cautious and reflective?
- **Social factors:** does your child prefer to work alone or in a group?
- **Cognitive processing:** does your child have strengths in the areas of memory, comprehension and information processing?
- **Movement:** does your child prefer to learn actively and experimentally or more passively by watching and copying?
- **Other factors:** the school environment, the learning environment and the atmosphere in the classroom, the teaching style, the expectations placed on the child and the conditions for learning in the family.

How can a child learn how to learn?

Looking at their preferences for learning:

- Visually: through videos, films etc
- Auditory: by listening
- Kinesthetically: through 'hands on' activities

It is also important to consider environmental preferences, such as:

- Light
- Design
- Sound/music
- Working alone and with others

Learning how to learn

Important individual factors



How to learn



8. LEARNING STRATEGIES AND LEARNING STYLES

10 tips for children, parents and teachers which will help to make learning more effective:

1. Have a proper study area, regular times for studying and working materials at the ready
2. Begin with something easy
3. Change the activity regularly between written and oral work
4. Don't learn things that are similar one after the other
5. Learn to switch off, switch over and take a break
6. Study materials should be laid out clearly and orderly
7. Learn with all the senses: hearing – seeing – touching
8. Use multi-media (PC, MP3, cassette recorder, DVD/video) to support learning
9. Be an active learner in the classroom and at home. That means listening – thinking – asking questions
10. Use motivation as the drive to happy and successful Learning. Believe in yourself!

Learning Strategies

Learning strategies support learning. They show how to tackle certain problems. Using strategies will be more effective if the different learning styles of each child are taken into account.

Learning strategies should be taught step by step:

- using examples
- demonstrating
- practising in real life situations

The child should not only learn the strategies and practise them so that they are automatic, but also really use them.

Tips for learning



Conditions



Learning strategies



8. LEARNING STRATEGIES AND LEARNING STYLES

What is the usual way of tackling the task?

The child should know the goal that he/she should reach when learning. He/She should find out the way to the solution and carry it out:

What exactly do I have to do?

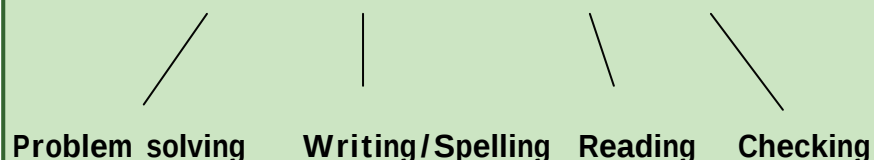
How should I go about it (plan)?

How can I check my progress and the result?

The child always needs a certain **goal** to be reached and a certain **way of going about the task** that he/she can use for other areas of learning at school and at home.

The following learning strategies are especially for learning in the mother tongue:

LEARNING STRATEGIES ARE ORDERED ACCORDING TO



1. Strategy: Understanding and solving problems (especially written tasks)

- Read the text – have you understood it?
- Look for ways of solving the problem
- Have working material at the ready
- Solve the problem and write the answer
- Compare question and answer
- Check for correctness and completeness

Learning strategies



Learning process in 3 phases



Learning strategies for learning in the mother tongue

Strategy for solving problems

8. LEARNING STRATEGIES AND LEARNING STYLES

2. Strategy: Writing/Spelling

- Speak quietly when writing/spelling
- Sound out – spell – divide into syllables
- Practise the so-called “small words” e.g. the, with, and
- Learn spelling rules– recall – use
- Comment on writing (say the rules)
- Don't forget the different parts of a word (single sounds, blends etc)
- Work with a word index box
- Check and correct
- Practise writing neatly

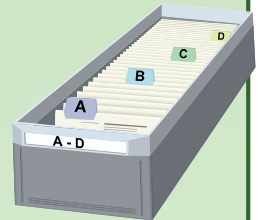
3. Strategy: Reading

- Practise to gain confidence with sound/letter relationships
- Practise to gain confidence with sounds – letters – syllables – words
- Read letters – syllables – words – texts
- Practise reading out loud and also reading quietly to yourself

4. Strategy: Check and correct

- I can find my mistakes by myself
- Check words – sentences – texts
- Check according to certain spelling rules
- Observant checking: read what is really written
- Check contents: compare the task with the result
- Check according to individual spelling problems
- Make sure the corrections are tidy and clear

Strategy for writing/spelling



Strategy for reading



Strategy for checking and correcting



8. LEARNING STRATEGIES AND LEARNING STYLES

Motivation leads to an effective development, active participation and a way of achieving success in the learning process for every child.

Many children with dyslexia can be sensitive and vulnerable when learning, especially when coping with the negative results of their learning. They need a lot of understanding, positive feedback and praise.

A child shouldn't just hear that he/she has been successful, he/she should experience success.

With the help and support of teachers and parents, the child should be able to reach his/her full potential.

(AG Lernmethodik, Studienhaus St. Blasien, Beltz – Verlag, Weinheim/ Basel, 1987.

Betz, D./Breuninger, H.: Teufelskreis Lernstörungen. Weinheim, 2. Auflage, 1987.

Otto, Chr.: Den Fehlerteufel besiegen. Eine methodische Handreichung. Waldviertler LM- Verlag, Zwettl/ Österreich. 2004.

Reid, G.: Learning Styles and Inclusion. PCP – Paul Chapman Publishing, London 2005.)

Motivation



Emotional factors



9. PRACTISING AT HOME - GENERAL REMARKS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

One constantly hears about methods which promise to help you learn to read, write and spell quickly and without a lot of effort. Such promises should not be taken seriously. Most experts today agree that learning to read, write and spell requires a lot of effort. The most important principle to be aware of is the need for patience. Pupils, parents, and teachers should realise that improvement can only be reached in small steps. When there is a marked problem with reading, spelling and writing, many years of intensive practice are usually needed.

How can you help at home?

Children with learning difficulties, who have experienced failure are generally not motivated to learn. This frequently leads to daily struggles with homework. If there are also extra exercises to do in reading, writing and spelling the problems will accumulate.

What can parents do to turn this daily stress into a well-organised programme?

- The child should have a quiet place where he/she can concentrate on his/her work without being disturbed by brothers and sisters or friends
- It is helpful to make a weekly plan. Choose which time of the day will be set aside for learning
- Depending on the age and school of the child, try not to plan more than 10 – 20 minutes of extra practice a day and do it in several blocks
- If the child is weak in reading, do plenty of practice. Reading is very important because it is vital for learning other subjects
- Together with your child, try to find the best time to learn each day. It is important to let your child help you in choosing the ideal time

Methods



Patience



Motivation to learn

Organisation

Quiet place

Weekly plan



Best time to learn

9. PRACTISING AT HOME - GENERAL REMARKS

- It is very important for success to keep strictly to the agreed time. This avoids discussions about delaying or missing out practising
- Agree together the goals for each week. This enables your child to experience success
- Use a variety of ways of practising in order to motivate your child. For example, a good software programme makes learning fun and increases the child's willingness to practise
- If your expectations are too high, the child will probably refuse to learn. In order to avoid this problem, adapt your expectations to the abilities of your child
- Concentrate on your child's successes, even if they are small. Don't forget to praise your child for trying. You could create a system of rewards to support your recognition of his/her efforts

If, for any reason, it is not possible for you to do extra practice with your child, it is advisable to get professional help. However, it is important to remember that these specialists usually give the child extra exercises to do. If this causes problems, talk to the specialist as to how to overcome these difficulties.



Keep to the plan

Goals

Motivation

Expectations

Praise

Well done

Professional Help

9. PRACTISING AT HOME - READING

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD AT HOME WITH READING?

For the child with dyslexia often the path to being able to read for enjoyment is difficult. You can support your child by regularly doing reading exercises with him/her at home.

Practising the basics

When beginning to learn to read, write and spell 4 areas should be practised in order to develop so called phonic awareness (phonemic awareness, phonological awareness):

- Breaking down spoken words into their separate sounds (sound segmentation)
- Sound/letter correspondence (grapheme and phoneme correspondence)
- Putting the sounds of letters together (blending)
- Breaking down words into syllables (syllable segmentation)

Breaking down words into their separate sounds

Before learning to read, many children do not know that words are composed of separate sounds. For example, they can't say that the word "cat" is made up of three sounds "c", "a", "t".

You ask:

- Which sound does the word dog or hen begin with?
- Which word rhymes with dig? Pig or bag?
- Which sounds make up the word red or mat?
- Which word has the sounds r-e-d, or m-a-t?

The ability to break words down into sounds can be learned with the following exercises, for example:

Practising



c-a-t
cat

9. PRACTISING AT HOME - READING

Practising sound/letter correspondence

Write the letters that the child should learn onto small cards. At the beginning just take three cards. Put the cards in any order and sound out each letter.

As soon as the child knows the three letters, add a fourth one. Practise as long as necessary until the child knows all four letters well. Then add another one etc.

So that the child can learn to write the letters, proceed as follows: Don't show the letter but say the sound that belongs to the letter on the card. The child writes the letter.

Putting the sounds of letters together

Separate letters or sounds are put together to form words (e.g. the letters c, a, t are put together to form the word "cat"). This ability is especially necessary for reading unknown words. A good way to learn this is by using a reading card. Cut out a rectangle from a corner of a square piece of card. Put the card over a word so that you can only see the first letter sound and sound the letter. Gradually draw the card to the right and say the sounds that make up the word. Eventually the whole word can be seen and should be said slowly. Then the whole word should be spoken at normal speed. You should also ask the child if they understand the word.

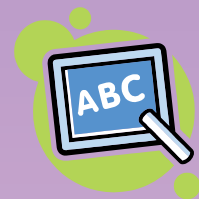
Breaking down words into syllables

For reading (and writing) it is helpful to be able to break down words into syllables. Syllables are more quickly recognised than whole words.

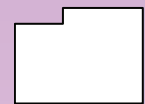
Give your child words which have been broken down into syllables e.g. on cards or words on the computer. Write sentences or short texts in syllables and draw joining lines under the syllables. In dictionaries, syllables are divided by lines or slashes.

**Reading
letters**

**Writing
letters**



**Putting sounds
together**



Syllables

9. PRACTISING AT HOME – READING

More exercises for practising reading

To increase reading speed, the child should be able to quickly read common words. Make a list of common words and, through over-learning, the child will become familiar with the words. At the beginning, the list could contain syllables, words that are similar (e.g. cat, mat, rat), words that have something in common (e.g. words beginning with “sh”). Time the child and make a note of the mistakes. Emphasise how many words the child read correctly! Every improvement increases the motivation of the child. When you read texts together with your child, it is useful to mark “difficult” words (e.g. unknown words or long words) with a coloured pen or pencil. Then use the method with the reading card to work out the word before tackling the text.

Further tips for reading texts

If a child makes a mistake when reading, it is important not to react by being annoyed or shocked or by punishing the child. The child should learn that making mistakes when reading is normal. Instead of using the word “mistake”, try using the word “misread” instead. Help the child to notice when he/she misreads a word and to correct it him/herself. When there is a mistake, say for example, “careful” and point to the misread word. The child should read the word again. Help the child by breaking the word down into syllables or pointing out a difficult letter. If the child still can't read the word, then say the word correctly yourself. It is important that your child feels accepted and not under pressure. Therefore, it is sometimes better not to mention every misread word!

The emphasis should be on success and enjoyment so that reading becomes a pleasure!

Recognising words quickly

Word list



Reading texts: Practising difficult words first

Reading mistakes



Don't put the child under pressure

The enjoyment of reading

9. PRACTISING AT HOME - READING

Choosing texts

Your child is more likely to read if he/she is allowed to choose the book him/herself. It is important that the child is interested in the topic and that he/she likes the pictures etc.

Many publishers offer series of books with a larger print, shorter sentences and pictures that help you to understand the text.

It is also helpful when the whole sentence is written on one line.

When a child is able to do certain exercises or has read a text or book, always make a note of this in a reading diary. Then it is easy to see at a glance what has been achieved.



Choosing a book

Take into account a child's interests

Reading diary



9. PRACTISING AT HOME - SPELLING

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD WITH SPELLING?

Writing can be very stressful and difficult for children with dyslexia. Therefore the time given to practising should be reduced to the absolute minimum that is necessary. In consideration of this fact, the following exercises only need a few minutes to do and are, therefore, especially suitable for children with dyslexia.

Practising words

In order to practise spelling, many parents let their children copy texts. This is not the best way to practise. Copying words doesn't work as well as dictating words.

The most commonly used method is to dictate texts and then let the pupils write out incorrectly written words one or more times. There are 2 disadvantages to this way of practising:

Even very weak spellers can write most of the words in a text correctly. It is unnecessary to write these words again and again. It takes up a lot of time and effort which could be used for something more useful.

Words that are incorrectly written need to be systematically repeated over several days. Copying them once or more times on one single day doesn't lead to an improvement.

A survey has shown that 20% of all spelling mistakes occur in the most common 100 words (e.g. with, that, there). The next 200 common words account for 10% of all mistakes. Practising these words can be of great help. The probability that they will occur in the next dictation or essay is especially high.

A list of these words can be found on the internet.

Practice time



Dictating Words

Disadvantages



Practising commonly used words

9. PRACTISING AT HOME - SPELLING

Depending on the child's age between 5 and 15 words can be practised at each session. There are many ways of doing this. A card index box is recommended for use at home. Each word is written on a card. The cards are mixed up and the words are dictated one after the other. In order to help the child to remember better the meaning of the word, a sentence is made for each word. The child, however, only writes the word that is being practised.

Example

You read out:

The apple fell from the tree. - fell

The child writes:

fell

When the word has been written, the child looks at the card and checks whether the word has been correctly written. If it is correct, a plus sign is made on the card. If the word is wrong, a minus sign is made on the card and the child writes the word again. If the child has written the word correctly several times in a row (on different days), the card is put aside and a new one takes its place.

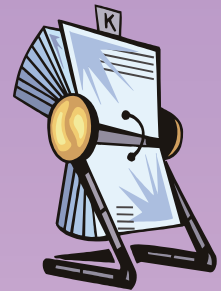
Maybe you think that all the words that are put aside will be written correctly from now on but unfortunately, that is not the case. The success quota is between 60 to 80%. If one of the words that have been put aside is incorrectly written in a dictation or essay, then that word is practised again as above.

If the list of the 300 words has been gone through, then you can choose other words which the child has spelt incorrectly in a dictation or essay.

When choosing words two criteria should be considered:

- The child wrote the word incorrectly.
- They are words that often occur in texts (according to your own subjective judgement).

A card index box



Success rate

Other words

9. PRACTISING AT HOME - SPELLING

Spelling rules

Books often give spelling rules which are not at all helpful for the child because there are too many exceptions to the rule or they build on knowledge that children don't have.

However, there are some rules that are very helpful.

For example:

i before e (piece) except after c (receive)

When you add "all" to the beginning of a word, use one "l"
all + together = altogether

When you add "full" to the end of a word, use one "l"
help + full = helpful

COMPUTER PROGRAMMES

There are now many computer programmes for practising reading and spelling. It is recommendable to use a computer with a child in order to enhance motivation. However, it is very important to select computer programmes very carefully because some of them are not of a good quality.

Programmes for reading and spelling should be judged by the following criteria:

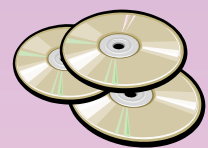
- . Many programmes have exercises where the child plays but doesn't have to write the word or sentence. There should only be a few of these exercises because they don't really help with learning to spell.
- . The words to be practised should be chosen because they often appear in dictations or essays.

It is much more fun to learn when the exercises on the computer are done together with parents, brothers and sisters or friends.

Spelling rules



Using computer programmes



10. THE USE OF COMPUTERS

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Do you recommend the use of a computer as a learning tool for children with dyslexia?

Using a computer for learning is highly recommended because it :

- is motivating
- often guarantees quick success
- can increase the learner's self-esteem
- can decrease anxiety (The computer is neutral.)
- accounts for individual needs
- provides a more relaxed learning situation in which to learn (no conflicts)
- guarantees neutral feedback
- makes a multimedia presentation of learning material possible
- is very helpful when the child suffers additionally from poor fine motor control affecting handwriting
- can reduce tendencies towards hyperactivity
- supports responsibility for learning

What is important for the child with dyslexia when using a computer?

- The instructions for using the computer should be clear and short.
- The use of colour and font according to the child's learning style preferences
- The computer screen should be flicker-free.

Where is the best place for the computer?

- Place the computer screen parallel to the window pane (avoid mirroring light on the screen).
- Use a special light just for the screen when necessary.
- Use an ergonomic chair (hand and knees should have an angle of 90 degrees).



Provide a computer

(Advantages!)



Good quality is important!



Organise a place for working

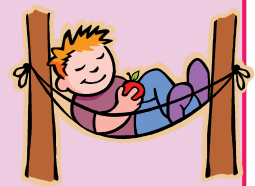
10. THE USE OF COMPUTERS

- The first line on the screen should not be higher than the eyes of the user.
- After 20-30 minutes work on the computer you should take a break (no TV or games but movement).
- Avoid noise (use noise insulation)!
- Ideally the printer should be in a separate room because it can produce distracting noise.
- Provide enough space around the computer for material needed while working on the computer

What is important when I look for software for my dyslexic child?

The market for learning software is very large with computer technology changing quickly. Therefore it is important to concentrate on features in programmes which are both useful and motivational for children with dyslexia:

- The instructions should be clear and short.
- The path to the actual activities should be short.
- You should be able to save and stop the programme at any time; A "Help button" should be provided.
- The programme should offer learning small steps.
- You should be able to select parts of the programme.
- You should be able to change a task.
- You should be able to repeat and correct a task.
- The programme should offer various levels.
- The programme should remove mistakes, allow a self-check and give immediate feedback.
- The programme should not be overloaded and full of distractions but should focus on the learning task.
- Printing of the exercises should be possible.
- The programme should account for the individual learning speed of the user.
- Many programmes require headphones. When buying a set of headphones, check that the sound quality is good.
- The language spoken should be professional and clear; the speed should be adjustable.



Take breaks!



Select learning software carefully!



Choose good quality headphones

10. THE USE OF COMPUTERS

Which learning tasks can be supported by computer software?

There are many options to choose from. It is recommended to select programmes on the basis of the individual needs of your child and to ask for advice. Usually one programme covers a number of tasks.

Some examples of various learning tasks that can be supported by computer software:

- Phonological training programmes
- Learning the alphabet
- Work with syllables
- Looking for letters in a word
- Exercises with flash cards
- Support of the exercises through colours and the possibility of being able to change the colours
- Marking of letters, letter groups, words etc. with colours
- Work in the visual field (e.g. reading word pyramids)
- Word recognition with the support of lip reading
- Learning sentence structures
- Text to speech programmes etc.

DON'T FORGET

- to consult the teacher of the child and ask which programmes could be helpful;
- that software can only support learning and does not replace the tutor or the teacher;
- to find out the individual needs of a child before you select learning software.

Note: Select software which meets the developmental stage of your child!



**Various
learning tasks**

**In order to be
effective
exercises
should always
be combined
with reading
and writing**



**Ask the
teacher or
specialist for
advice**



10. THE USE OF COMPUTERS

LITERATURE and MATERIALS

A selection of good learning software, including a description of the learning programmes, is mentioned in the following brochures/books:

Reid, Gavin (2005), *Dyslexia. A Complete Guide for Parents*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

In general, learning software changes very fast and has always to be adapted to new technology. For this reason specific programmes will not be mentioned here.

Instead you should be encouraged to look at various websites. However, also websites appear and disappear quite fast. Very often teachers and specialists are well informed about the most useful up-to-date programmes which may be especially suitable for your child's needs.

Note: Some software is mentioned in connection with the various topics you can find in this guide.

11. FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

A) GENERAL ADVICE

- What is the learning style of your child? (chapter 8)
- Is your child learning with all senses? (chapter 8)
- Can your child recognise similarities and differences between languages?

Example:

Similarity of sound and meaning

Sound: English and German [haus]

Meaning: English and German: the same

BUT different orthography:

English: house; German: Haus

- Does your child revise regularly?
- Does your child try to understand the culture of the foreign language that is being learned (writing to a pen friend, going on a holiday, films, people in the area who speak the foreign language etc.)?
- Does the school give advice on foreign student exchanges, youth magazines or films in the language?

B) SPECIFIC ADVICE

1) Sounds and letters

- Is your child aware that one letter can have different sounds?

Example:

Prepare letter cards and find all possible sounds for each letter.

Discover regularities and rules where possible.

- Is your child aware that one sound can be written in different ways?

Example:

Make a table for the sounds of the foreign language

Sound				
English [ou]	cold	shoulder	show	...
French [ɑ̃]	mentir	chanter	blanc	...
German [f]	Ofen	Affe	Vogel	...

HALLO

GRUEZI



HELLO

AHOJ

HOLA

Similarities

Differences

Contact:

Pen friend

Student

exchanges

One letter,
different
sounds



One sound,
different
letters

11. FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

- Does your child pay enough attention to letters that do not exist in his/her mother tongue?

Example: **m**

NAME—SOUND—SHAPE (draw, touch, make etc.)

“/em/ says [m] and looks like two bridges”



- Does your child practise rhymes, phrases and songs?

Chunks

How are you?
Comment ça va?
Como está?



Wie geht ´s?
Comme sta?
Hoe maakt U het?

Rhymes

Katzen können Mäuse fangen,
haben Krallen, scharf wie Zangen,
kriechen durch die Bodenlöcher
und zuweilen auf die Dächer.

Row, row, row your boat
gently down the stream.
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,
life is but a dream.



Czech	káva	láva	tráva	kráva
Catalan	pruna	bruna	lluna	engruna
Spanish	vino	camino	latino	tocino

2. Words

Examples:

- Make vocabulary cards and a file for difficult words.
- Draw a picture or a scene for each difficult word on the back of each card. Words should be written in block capitals.
- Listen to stories containing the vocabulary you want to learn. (Talking books, TV programmes, films, magazines - good quality is important!)
- Close your eyes and feel / hear / smell / taste / see everything the word makes you think of.

- How does your child acquire new vocabulary?

Practise
new sounds and
letters

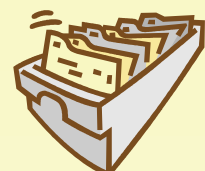


Practise
phrases,
rhymes and
songs



Rhyming-words

New
vocabulary



11. FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Remembering words: review in the following way:

	   	 	  	  
Record (word – pause – same word again).	Listen, look, say and show or act it out (e.g with movement).	Listen and say before the tape does.	Listen and say in a relaxing position or when moving.	Listen, spell, say, write and compare.

- Learn vocabulary in small portions.
- Learn in word families: “act, active, action”.
- **How can your child learn to write words correctly?**

Examples:

- Take the letters of the word and invent a story:

C arol
O pens
A ll
T ins

- Look at the shape of the word by tracing around it and saying the word aloud at the same time.

happy

Draw a picture around the very difficult words

- Turn the words themselves, or parts of the words, into pictures:

m   n

Use morphological training and colours e.g.

teacher
teaching
pre-teaching

- Use dictionaries (visual dictionaries are recommended)

Remembering words



Using hearing

- phrases
- rhymes
- syllables



Using sight

- Look, say, cover, say, write, check
- Imagine word in colour on a contrasting background
- Use pictures



Using touch

- Write on sand, carpet...
- Make the word, “write” it with stones
- Type it



Using words in context
(short stories)

11. FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

How can your child learn **regular and irregular verbs**?

Make lists using the following order:

- Overall view of all the tenses.
- Group identical forms together (e.g. according to the same ending "ew": grew, blew etc.).
- Practise the most important forms (reduced quantity, poster).
- Practise a personal list just before a test.

Exercise: Say the infinitive of an irregular verb. Your child says the past tense (e.g. gehen – ging).

French	English
mé - maître	to buy - bought
eu - avoir	to sell - sold

3. Presenting grammar rules

- Step by step: the way to proceed is to divide the rules into single, clearly formulated steps (like a recipe).
- The steps should be separated in some way (a line, a pattern, a different page...).
- Each step should be accompanied by a picture or symbol (a creative child can design his/her own). Don't forget to leave enough space.
- Use a different colour for each rule.
- Offer explanations in the mother tongue and let the child repeat it out loud.
- Draw a diagram or funny pictures if it helps your child to remember and use the rule.
- Simplify the text if necessary.
- Make a poster for difficult rules and hang it up for as long as the child needs it.
- Collect the posters of the rules in a file, so that you know where to find them when needed.

The layout of every worksheet can support learning:

All worksheets – especially tests – should:

- use large letters (font 12-14, Comic Sans MS)
- be well laid out (not too full, clear headlines and space between the lines)
- have a well- chosen colour for the background and the writing.

Step by step



Use colours

Regular verb:

cook

cooked

cooked

Irregular verb:

go

went

gone

Poster



Layout

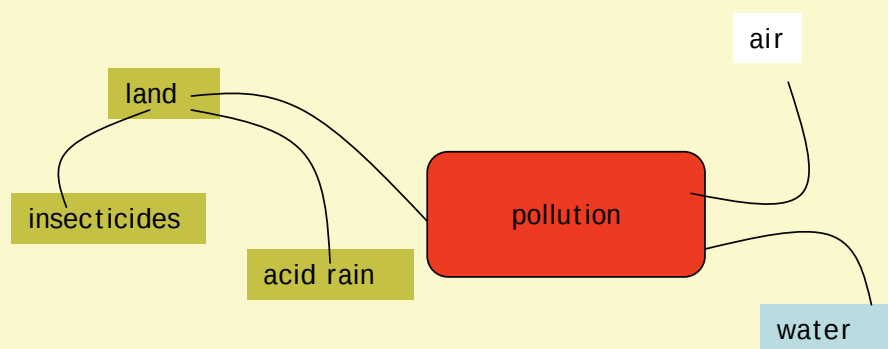
All worksheets:
clear, well laid
out

11. FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

- Collect the rules in a file, so that you know where to find them when needed.
- The contact between the foreign language teacher, the parents, the first language teacher and the child is very important.
- Do not focus on grammar mistakes when communicating in the foreign language.
- If parents show an interest in foreign languages and other cultures, this can all help to motivate the child.

4. Writing texts

- Collect ideas by making diagrams (mind mapping).



- Strategies for writing texts

Examples:

The child should (1) tell you what he/she wants to write, (2) write down the story and (3) mark the key words.

After this he/she should write the same text but

- in shortened form
- from the viewpoint of another person
- change the order of the ideas, the time, the place, etc.
- change the kind of document: newspaper, internet, interview, letter, etc.

At the end these texts can be compared.

Watch the form (margins, paragraphs). around the text...).

File



Contact



Diagrams

Mind maps



Writing
strategies



Text:

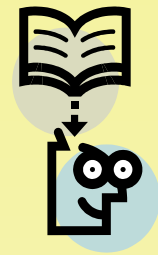
- introduction
- main ideas
- discussion
- conclusion

11. FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

5. Reading and understanding texts

- **What strategies can be used for reading a text in a foreign language?**
 - Reflect on the topic:
What is the text about?
Have you heard about the topic before?
What vocabulary do you know about the topic?
Check articles/books/internet on the topic.
Tell someone what you already know about the topic (build on your knowledge).
 - Find the best place for reading (comfortable position, good light, near to aids, no distractions)
It is possible to use a bigger print with articles from the internet.
- **What strategies can be used to understand a text in a foreign language?**
 - If you listen to a tape/video, take time to listen to the story several times and make symbols for every new idea; find words for each symbol later.
 - Use silent reading and reading aloud. Reading aloud helps to improve understanding of the text.
 - Add pictures or diagrams to the text. Put short sentences underneath.
 - Underline important ideas.
 - Simplify the text (by using easier words, shorter sentences etc.).
- **What strategies can be used to answer questions about the text?**
 - Use highlighting pens.
 - Read each question carefully and repeat it aloud in your own words.
 - Use a different colour to mark the information for each question.
- Talk to a friend about the text.

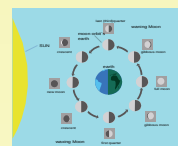
**Build on
previous
knowledge**



Add pictures



Make diagrams



Use colours



11. FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

LITERATURE

Comment: Usually teachers of foreign languages can provide parents and children with specific advice concerning books and materials that can be used for practising at home. This advice should be related to the teaching programme taking various factors into account (e.g. the parents' knowledge of the foreign language, technical know-how and equipment available etc.)

Parents can support their child by encouraging contact with the foreign language (radio and television programmes, films, going abroad etc.). The following is only an example of what is available in the area of books and materials to support the learning of a foreign language.

DYSLEXIA AND ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Birsh, J. R. (2005). Multisensory Teaching of Basic Language Skills. 2nd ed. PH.D. publ. Jun 2005. Brookes Publishing Comp.

MATERIALS

CD-ROM. The Mystery of the Lost Letters. Tintin helps dyslexic learners. BBC 2004. D•I•T•T (Dyslexia International Tools and Technologies ASBL). e-mail: admin@ditt-online.org, website: www.ditt-online.org (English, German and French on one CD)

ClozePro (winner of the 2004 BETT Special Educational Needs Secondary Software Award; for learners of all ages and abilities; suitable for use across all subject areas); website: <http://www.cricksoft.com/uk/products/clozepro/default.asp#about>



GERMAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

BOOKS

Erkert, A. (2003). *Sprach-Förder-Spiele*. Freiburg: Christopherus.

Hufeisen, B. (2004). Deutsch und die anderen (Fremd)Sprachen im Kopf der Lernenden. Wie man dieses Potenzial im Deutschunterricht nutzen kann. In: *Fremdsprache Deutsch 31*, 2004, 19 - 23.

Nodari, C. & de Rosa, R. (2003). Mehrsprachige Kinder. Ein Ratgeber für Eltern und andere Bezugspersonen. Stuttgart: Haupt.

MATERIALS

CD-ROM. Lesen 2000. Version 4XL. Mantler, O. e-mail: info@lernspiele.at, website: www.lernspiele.at ISBN 3-9501203-1-9

CD-ROM. Pramper, Wolfgang (2001), Gut – besser – Deutsch! (Computersoftware for advanced learners, Veritas) ISBN 3-7058-5780-0.

Sommer-Stumpfenhorst, N. (1997). Laute heraushören, Laute zusammenfügen. Hilfen für das häusliche Üben. 2. Aufl. Heft 1, Warendorf: Colli.

VIDEO: ECOC – Video zur Situation von dyslexischen Kindern in der EU (Legasthenie quer über die Kulturen hinweg) – also available in English.

12. LIFE AFTER SCHOOL

The child has got through school. What now?

- There are many jobs that are especially suitable for people with dyslexia in which they can at last show their skills to advantage.
- People with dyslexia are often very creative and technically skilled. Many are successful in management or in technical, creative and social professions.

Professional careers advice

- It is important to get good advice on choosing a career. This can give a person the security they need in making a decision.
- Individual preferences should be taken into account.

The role of parents in a successful transition from school

Parents can help their child to:

- be more aware of his/her learning strengths and needs.
- to use his/her strengths to overcome or bypass areas of weakness.
- to explore career interests and aptitudes through voluntary, summer, or part-time work.
- to learn to be flexible and persevering and not to allow an occasional setback or disappointment throw them off course.

After school

Which job?



The role of the parents



12. LIFE AFTER SCHOOL

Literacy

- Unfortunately some adults with dyslexia have not been formally diagnosed and the extent of their dyslexia is not fully appreciated. Their skills in reading and writing are sometimes not enough to cope with the demands of daily life.
- Today there are possibilities to learn or improve reading, writing and mathematics in adult education classes.

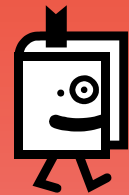
Is dyslexia a life-long challenge?

- Although we generally think of dyslexia in terms of its impact on learning ability in school, dyslexia is a life-long challenge.
- Teenagers and young adults with dyslexia may still have trouble in some areas such as reading, writing, maths, organising and managing time and remembering details etc.
- Teenagers and young adults with dyslexia can achieve success through the use of alternative learning methods, specific strategies, and technology.
- Although young people with dyslexia face some particular challenges in making the transition to adulthood, help with organisational skills, flexibility, and perseverance on the parents' part can provide important guidance and support.

Reading

Writing

Maths



Dyslexia :
a life-long
challenge



13. DYSCALCULIA

INTRODUCTION

The information processing problems which cause students to experience difficulties of a dyslexic nature e.g. short term memory, the sequencing and organisation of information and the speed of information processing can also cause difficulties in many areas of mathematics. The term often given to describe this is *dyscalculia*.

DIFFICULTIES

The nature of the difficulties which are experienced by students with dyscalculia include the following:

- the learning of number bonds
- the learning of multiplication tables
- the understanding of concepts involving directionality
- time and spatial concepts
- sequencing activities
- orientation - confusion can arise through having to process different operations in different directions
- spatial awareness
- visual discrimination resulting in confusion of signs
- mental arithmetic (mental manipulation of number/symbols in short term memory)

Maths also has its own language and this can be at the root of many problems. General mathematical terminology with words like **perimeter**, **value** and **equals** may be unfamiliar. It is interesting to ask a class to define the word 'equals' and discover the many different replies, perhaps most commonly that it means 'answer'. These words all need to be clearly understood before they can be used in calculations.

To complicate matters further, one single mathematical process can be described with a wide variety of terms. For instance, **multiply**, **times**, **product**, **of** or **add**, **increase**, **plus**, **sum** and **total**.

DYSCALCULIA

Information processing problems



Difficulties (examples)

Multiplication



Time concepts



13. DYSCALCULIA

PARTS THAT BUILD ON EACH OTHER

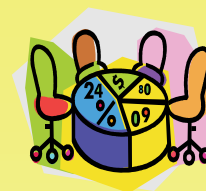
Mathematics has an interrelating/sequential structure. It is a subject in which one learns the parts. The parts build on each other to make a whole. Knowing the whole enables one to reflect with more understanding on the parts, which in turn strengthens knowledge of the whole. Knowing the whole also enables one to understand the sequences and interactions of the parts and the way they support each other.

ACT THINGS OUT IN THE RIGHT ORDER!

Since the central problem is likely to be that of relating symbols to the operations which they represent, it makes good sense for the student to first carry out the operations using structured materials. Then they should be shown how to describe symbolically what they have been doing. Students with dyscalculia are better at 'doing' than at 'naming' and a foundation of 'doing' is essential. The great advantage of using structured materials is that they ensure that 'doing' comes first and 'naming' afterwards. If the order is reversed, one is essentially confronting the student with dyscalculia with a mass of bewildering symbols and technical terms while not letting him/her have any clear idea of what he/she is supposed to do with them. Once the necessary foundations have been acquired by 'doing', however, abstract reasoning, generalisations and discoveries should then follow.

Concrete materials which are recommended for students with dyscalculia at the primary and high school level include *Cuisenaire Rods*, *Dienes Multibase Arithmetic Blocks* and *Montessori material etc.* Students with dyscalculia may have to rely on concrete materials for a longer period of time than their peers since they often find it difficult to memorise number bonds.

Maths has an interrelated structure



Right Order

Doing



Naming



Reasoning



13. DYSCALCULIA

MULTISENSORY TEACHING

When teaching Maths to students with dyscalculia therefore, the principles of multisensory teaching (visual, auditory, tactile-kinaesthetic) which apply to language work should also apply to mathematics. For example, new mathematical concepts and processes should be introduced using concrete materials, diagrams, pictures and verbal explanation. Then the student should be asked to explain the process, instructions etc. in his/her own words. Progress should be carefully monitored at each stage, checking that a particular concept has been thoroughly mastered and understood before moving on to the next step.

LITERATURE

'Mathematics for Dyslexics' - A teaching handbook, Chinn and Ashcroft, Whurr Publishers, London (1993).

'Dyslexia and Mathematics', Miles, T.R. and Miles, E., Routledge.

'Working with Dyscalculia' Came, F and Henderson, A. Learning Works, Marlborough, England, UK

Computer Programmes:

'Maths Blaster' (Knowledge Adventure)

'Number Shark' (White Space)

Multisensory Learning

Learning with all the senses



False strategies



$$4+3 = 6$$

$$9-3 = 7$$

$$3 \times 8 = 11$$

$$6 \times 7 = 47$$

$$3 \times 70 = 21$$

$$\begin{aligned} 900 - 400 \\ = 600 \end{aligned}$$

$$70 - 10 = 71$$

$$10 + 30 = 13$$

$$77 - 68 = 11$$

$$\begin{aligned} 1475 + 6894 \\ = 712169 \end{aligned}$$

14. RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH DYSLEXIA

Children with dyslexia belong to a group of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Their basic rights were set down by

THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN (United Nations, 1989):

- State Parties recognise the right of the child to education and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on **the basis of equal opportunity** (...) (Art.28)
- State Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:
(a) the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to **their fullest potential**;(…) (Art.29)

(<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>)

The above statements imply the right of each child to:

- ☺ receive a diagnosis of his/her Special Educational Needs
- ☺ an individual adaptation of the curriculum and teaching methods
- ☺ an individual adaptation of requirements according to his/her abilities
- ☺ an appeal by the parents to a special person/institution (e.g. an ombudsman) if his/her rights are not respected

Some countries have already come up with various regulations that help to put the above statements into practice:

- ☺ release from reading out loud in front of the class

e.g. in Brazil, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany – sometimes, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Sweden, USA

- ☺ not lowering marks for poor spelling

e.g. in Brazil, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Norway, Poland

- ☺ not lowering marks for poor handwriting

e.g. in Brazil, Croatia, Czech Republic, Italy, Norway, Poland

- ☺ making it possible to use a computer or typewriter

e.g. in Austria –only for older pupils-, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Ireland, UK, USA

- ☺ doing oral or tape-recorded rather than written work

e.g. Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Russia, UK, USA

The Convention on the Rights of Children



General rights

In the classroom



14. RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH DYSPLEXIA

1. Special rights for pupils with dyslexia during exams:

- ☺ allowing the spelling of words to be checked in a dictionary

e.g. in Austria – but only for older pupils, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, UK

- ☺ allowing the use of a tape recorder to listen to exam questions instead of reading them

e.g. in Belgium, Czech Republic, Norway, Switzerland, UK, USA

- ☺ allowing exam questions to be read to them

e.g. in Belgium, Brazil, Croatia, Czech Republic, Ireland, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, UK, USA

- ☺ receiving additional time during written exams

e.g. in Belgium, Brazil, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA

2. Special rights for pupils with dyslexia learning foreign languages

- ☺ Allowing the learning of only one foreign language if two or more are obligatory

e.g. in France, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Switzerland, UK, USA

- ☺ basing the foreign language marks mainly on oral performance

e.g. in Czech Republic, France, Germany – e.g. Berlin, Norway, Poland

- ⊗ In most countries, however, these rights are not regulated by legal acts.
- ⊗ Very often their application depends on the given school and teacher.

The data presented in this chapter are based on the European Dyslexia Association's questionnaire of 2003. More details on the results of the questionnaire can be found in the book by M. Bogdanowicz and H.A. Sayles "Rights of Dyslexic Children in Europe" (2004).

Exams



Foreign languages

Marks

Problems



School and home issues
“Daily routines and problems of a dyslexic child”

MORNING

Situation

Solution

Waking up

The child: very often has problems waking up on his/her own, is sleepy and has often spent the night doing some homework for school.	You: Think of some nice and funny way to wake him up, e.g. sing “Are you sleeping Brother John?” replacing the name John with the child’s name. Tickle him/her with his/her soft toy animal telling him a rhyme about the animal. Give the child a good-morning kiss.
---	--

Washing, dressing, eating

The child: if he/she has poor fine motor skills, he/she doesn’t want to perform these simple activities, as they are difficult, time consuming and not really successful for him/her.	You: Help the child as long as it is necessary, but stop helping immediately when you feel that the child is starting to cope with the task. Never do these things instead of the child!
The child: is often interested in other matters than the ones that should be undertaken at the given moment; e.g. observes the drops of water running down the window instead of washing his/her face.	You: Don’t get angry. Ask the child to tell you what he/she is supposed to be doing at the moment. Tell him/her that his/her favourite sandwich is waiting for him/her in the kitchen or that on your way to school, you will find some time to look for his/her favourite magazine at the newsagent.

Going to school

The child: is often reluctant to stay at school alone, feels anxious because of difficult and unpleasant things waiting for him/her at school.	You: Make sure that you love the child, no matter what marks he/she receives at school. Tell him/her, "I know you worked hard yesterday to learn for today's test. You have done your best. I'm proud of you. If it goes wrong, we will work on it and next time it will be alright. Don't worry!" Always kiss him/her goodbye.
The child: doesn't want to go to school, pretends to be ill.	You: Check his/her temperature, look at his/her throat and if you suspect that he/she is pretending, tell him/her that you can't find any dangerous symptoms. Try to find out what the reasons are for the child's anxiety. Very often it is due to not having done the homework or not feeling ready for a test. Try to reduce his/her anxiety and propose some rational solution e.g. a letter to the teacher explaining that the child will do the missing homework for the next day. The child ought to go to school, otherwise pretending is reinforced.

AFTERNOON

Coming back from school

The child: has a great need to tell you everything that has happened at school, especially in the case of failure or unfair treatment.	You: Listen to him/her and create an atmosphere in which he can tell you everything in order to get rid of negative emotions and stress. It is more important than eating a hot lunch. If you tell him/her, "First eat your soup and then you can tell me everything", don't be surprised if he/she doesn't want to talk anymore. Remember that your own rational ideas might not be suitable for the child, as he/she often has a different hierarchy of what's important. If you are in a hurry, tell him/her, "Tell me everything in a shortened form because I have to catch a bus in 5 minutes. Tell me more details when I'm back home".
The child: is in a bad mood, doesn't want to talk, but you can feel that something went wrong at school	You: Assure him/her that he/she is accepted and loved by you. Tell him/her you are worried because of his/her sad face and that it might be easier to cope with the problems, if he/she talks about them.

Doing homework

The child: doesn't want to do his/her homework right after school as he/she is tired and aware of the difficult and unpleasant tasks waiting for him/her.	You: Let the child rest, go outside and play or visit a friend, but not for longer than one hour.
The child: cannot remember what the homework is. He/She says there was none, which doesn't seem likely.	You: Check what the homework is, e.g. by calling the child's friend. If it happens frequently, decide with the teacher that he/she will check whether the child has made notes about the homework and you will sign it once it's done.
The child: doesn't want to do the homework and says he/she can't do it. The child: sits over the homework for a very long time, doesn't concentrate and is easily distracted by other things.	You: Check what he/she can do alone and where he/she needs help. The child should do everything he/she is able to. The parts that are too difficult should be explained and performed together with the child. Stop helping immediately you see the child starting to cope with the task on his/her own. After each longer task, reward him/her with words or a pleasurable activity. If you can see that he/she has problems again or that his/her concentration is decreasing, join in the work for a short time. You: Divide the tasks into small "portions" with the child and set short periods of time to do them. (Set a timer). Decide on some reward after a couple of "portions".

Reading books

The child: doesn't want to read the books set by a teacher as homework.	You: Read together with the child using the technique "pair reading", i.e. reading together aloud or taking turns in reading parts of the text (Bogdanowicz 1997). Interrupt the reading to talk to the child about what he/she can see in the pictures illustrating the text. Ask for his/her opinions and discuss the different problems arising from the text (Reid, Wearmouth 2002). Let the child choose a reward for "good listening" or "good reading".
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Checking the child's exercise books

The child: forgets to complete exercises (both from the lesson and the homework) and makes mistakes while writing or completing tasks.	You: Check the exercise books every day and make sure the child corrects all the mistakes. Mark the mistakes you notice with a pencil in the margins. The child should be able to notice and correct them. The corrections may be done with your assistance, but never by you.
The child: makes mistakes while writing.	You: Work with the child to teach him/her the correct spelling using methods that take into account his/her weak and strong points and his/her special educational needs.

Schoolbag

The child: very often forgets to take an exercise book, homework, some important equipment etc. He/She might have a big mess in his schoolbag, which makes it very difficult to find anything quickly.	You: Make sure that the child packs his/her schoolbag on his/her own every day (right after finishing the homework). Then check whether all the necessary equipment is in the bag and set in the right order (e.g. pencils, pens, eraser and books etc.)
The child: might forget some important things while packing his/her schoolbag.	You: Introduce planning. "What will I need tomorrow at school?" Let the child list all the necessary equipment, check the list and make the child pack the bag according to it. When the bag is packed, check if anything is missing. The child should compare the contents with the list.

Remedial teaching

The child: doesn't develop evenly. He/She has both strong, well-developed areas but also weak points, so-called developmental deficits. These include disturbances in the development of visual-motor skills, auditory-language, motor functions, as well as coordination or in other words, the integration of psychomotor functions. Specialists can help to diagnose the difficulties.	You: Keep in touch with the school and cooperate with the remedial teacher, continuing at home the exercises set by him/her. Only in this way, can difficulties be overcome and academic skills improved. To make the exercises more attractive, use rewards after each day of work.
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Tasks at home

The child: usually has a messy room, desk, cupboards and wardrobe. He/She cannot keep them tidy.	You: Hide half of the child's toys (especially those not used by him/her very often) and every other month, exchange them with the ones left in the child's room. Buy plastic or wooden containers and place them on the shelves. Label them with pictures or descriptions of the contents (if the child can read them). Clean the room once together with the child, to serve as a model. Put all his/her belongings into the relevant containers and decide on a fixed place for each one of them. The following week, assist your child while he/she cleans the room by supporting him/her verbally and rewarding him/her when the cleaning has been finished.
The child: keeps forgetting about his/her household jobs, e.g. throwing the rubbish away.	You: If a verbal hint doesn't help, put the rubbish into the child's room without any comment.

EVENING

Reading a good-night story

The child: is not interested in books or in listening to a story being read out loud. He/She has problems with focusing his/her attention and in understanding the story.	You: Every day for 20 minutes read a book chosen by the child before he/she goes to sleep. It is “reading for pleasure” that develops the need for contact with books and the habit of reading before going to sleep. It is also an opportunity to be together, discussing and reflecting over the characters from the book, laughing or crying and being happy because of the happy end.
The child: doesn't want to go to sleep.	You: Let the child leave the light turned on for another 20-30 minutes, but only if he/she reads a book during this time (alone or with your help).

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<http://www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk/>

European Dyslexia Association (eda)

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Hornsby International Dyslexia Centre

<http://www.hornsby.co.uk>

International Dyslexia Association (ida)

<http://www.interdys.org>

Dyslexia International – Tools and Technologies (D.I.T.T.)

<http://www.ditt-online.org/>

Information Network on Education in Europe

http://www.eurydice.org/Eurybase/frameset_eurybase.html

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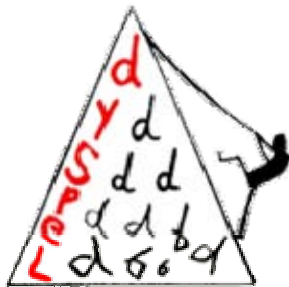
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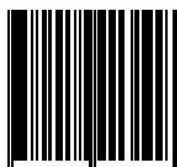
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