



Five Ways Parents Can Help

Find out as much as you can about dyslexia then explain it to your child. A CBBC Newsround clip called 'My Dyslexic Mind' may be a helpful resource.

1. Look out for signs of emotional stress.

Consequences of dyslexia are frustration, anger, low self-esteem or becoming withdrawn.

Before reading and spelling can be improved your child needs to believe they can succeed.

2. People with dyslexia need constant praise and support to rebuild self-esteem.

It is very important to have someone who believes in you and is supportive.

Praising even very small achievements will build self-confidence.

3. Never compare their school work with that of their brother or sister.

Perhaps because they already feel bad about themselves people with dyslexia are often super sensitive to criticism.

4. Don't get angry when kit is lost or homework forgotten.

Failing to remember spoken and written instructions or forgetting where something has been left can be a consequence of dyslexia. They can't always help it and may feel frustrated by being unable to remember. Help them become more organised by introducing organisational strategies. (See below)

5. At the beginning of each school year meet your child's teacher.

Make sure they know about your child's needs and how you can work together to help your child.

Organisation Strategies

A person with dyslexia can sometimes find it difficult to organise everyday tasks.

1. Provide checklists. Set routines.

2. Colour-code their timetable so that lessons can be seen at a glance.

3. Pack school bags the night before and put them by the front door.

4. Establish a place where everything must be put away immediately after use.

Spelling Strategies

Many schools teach spelling using a traditional method of 'Look, cover, write, check' but this does not always work for those with dyslexia. Children need to learn a variety of strategies, from which they can choose those which work best for them. Here are some examples to try:



1. Mispronounce the word the way it is spelled.

For example, 'want' say 'w...ant'. This is good for silent letters and for 'Wed..nes..day'.

2. Link the word to a picture.

A picture is more readily remembered and acts as a visual clue. For example, 'first' is often misspelled as 'ferst'. Draw an 'i' winning a race and say 'I come first'. They will remember the picture of the 'i' which is the part of the word which is forgotten.

3. Use mnemonics.

This strategy uses a phrase where the first letter of each word spells the one you want to remember.

As a mnemonic for 'does' say "does Oliver eat spaghetti?"

The first letter of each word spells the word 'does'.

Drawing a funny picture will reinforce the memory.

Try to start the mnemonic with the word you want to remember.

4. Learn to spell word families.

Link words into spelling pattern families eg: light, fight, bright etc.



Writing Strategies

Someone with dyslexia needs much more time to complete writing tasks. Verbalising their ideas before starting to write is an important part of the writing process.

1. Plan using key words.

People with dyslexia need a visual plan to help structure their ideas. Before starting a writing task, make a list of ideas using only one or two words for each bullet point. When writing, each point can be expanded into a sentence. Cross it off the list as it is written.

2. Use a computer rather than writing with a pen.

Discuss with the school about providing some opportunities for your child to produce written work on a word processing program. This will help with speed, spelling and legibility.

Reading Strategies



1. Build up words by uncovering part at a time.

Encourage your child to use their finger or a small card to reveal a word in chunks. Build up the word, syllable by syllable and learn to recognise prefixes and suffixes.

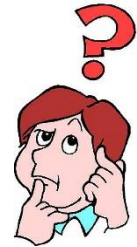
2. Use a coloured background/overlay.

Some people with dyslexia experience a 'glare' when reading black text on a white background. This can make it difficult to focus and tiring to read. Try laying a sheet of coloured acetate over the page to see if it helps.

3. After a short burst, take over the reading to provide a rest period.

Discuss what you have read to make sure it is understood.

Memory Strategies



1. Picture thinking.

People with dyslexia often think in pictures. Use this strength by visualising the thing you want to remember. When revising a topic make a page of drawings to represent the main points. Use mind maps to record information. Adding colour also sometimes helps.

2. Give no more than two instructions at a time.

For example, put your bowl in the dishwasher then brush your teeth. To make it more memorable get your child to repeat it back or visualise doing the action.

3. Reinforce learning with actions and multisensory activities.

See it. Hear it. Say it. Do it.

