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If you're worried about a symptom and not sure what help you need, NHS 111 can tell you what to do next. Go to 111.nhs.uk or call 111. For a life-threatening emergency call 999. Dyslexia affects approximately 20% of the population, and the use of specialized, individualized teaching strategies can help these individuals overcome academic challenges and excel. Here, we'll explore evidence-based teaching strategies and methods tailored to specifically support students with dyslexia. We'll share effective tips for working with children with dyslexia based on the professional experience of a pediatric Speech-Language Pathologist. By definition, students with Dyslexia have trouble reading as a result of difficulties identifying speech sounds and how they relate to letters and words. Individuals with dyslexia process language differently in the brain than others. Having dyslexia is associated with the following impacts: Social and emotional impacts. Children with dyslexia may have anxiety, low self-concept and low self-esteem compared to those without the reading disorder. Delayed academic progress. Having dyslexia often causes students to struggle to keep up with peers to maintain academic progress within their grade. Reading comprehension difficulties. Difficulties decoding and poor reading accuracy often cause a student to have comprehension problems. Executive functioning deficits. Dyslexia is associated with reduced executive functioning skills, such as time management, organization, planning, and initiating tasks. Trouble with spelling and writing. Having dyslexia makes it hard for students to break down words into sounds when spelling them. Students may confuse letters that sound alike or mix up the order of letters. Speech and language disorders. Delayed speech, pronunciation difficulties, and reduced vocabulary have been linked to dyslexia. Weaknesses in learning math. An estimated 60% of individuals with dyslexia have difficulty learning math. This is due to their reduced working memory, processing speed, and retrieval of information. To effectively support students with dyslexia, teachers and other professionals can utilize various dyslexia treatment strategies tailored to fit their needs. Here are some practical tips and methods based on my professional experience: A top teaching strategy for dyslexia is to employ multisensory learning techniques. This approach engages multiple senses to improve their engagement during reading-related tasks, reinforcing learning and memory. Teachers can incorporate activities involving touch, movement, sight, and sound. One approach to this multisensory methodology is the Orton-Gillingham. Several programs are available that are based on Orton-Gillingham principles, such as: Barton Reading & Spelling System Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes. When teaching spelling, I, as an SLP, use the Simultaneous Oral Spelling (SOS) method, which follows the Orton-Gillingham multisensory approach. I call out a word and the student is asked to repeat the word, then spell the word out with their finger or tap out the sounds in the word. The student then says each letter or sound as they write the word. This helps students build phonological awareness skills through the use of visual, auditory, and motor channels. Students with Dyslexia can benefit from the use of Explicit Instruction (EI). When used as a teaching strategy for reading, EI involves providing the student with clear learning objectives and breaking down complex concepts into concrete, sequential steps that teach the critical elements of reading. Key elements of explicit instruction are: Providing several opportunities for the student to practice Presenting structured opportunities to review skills and engage in continuous practice To use this dyslexia teaching method, teachers must have a strong understanding of key reading terms, such as: consonant blend (two or more consonants together, each retaining its sound) and consonant digraph (two consonants together that stand for one sound, such as "ch"). It allows students with dyslexia to learn the rules of spelling in a concrete, systematic manner that helps them grasp new concepts more effectively. Providing dyslexic students with clear, predictable routines and structure can help them stay organized and feel prepared, confident, and comforted. Within the learning environment, teachers can establish a predictable schedule for completing activities. This can help reduce anxiety and allow the student to focus on learning. I've found success in using a consistent daily schedule that includes designated times for reading, writing, and other activities. These routines provide students with dyslexia a sense of predictability and stability, since they can struggle with anxiety. They also improve the students' initiation of tasks, which due to the executive functioning deficits, is helpful in getting things engaged in learning activities. One of the most effective dyslexia teaching techniques is to use visual manipulatives to help students visualize abstract concepts and make them more concrete. These include tools such as: Visual schedules that the teacher reads out loud to prepare the students for the day Calendars depicting what activities or concepts will be taught. Graphic organizers and charts that allow students to organize information into a way that helps them understand (such as writing the sequence of a story to help them remember it). Concrete materials such as letter tiles, cubes, sound walls, and word walls. For example, phonics cue cards (also called phonogram cards) can be used to show the sound, images associated with the sound, and a picture of the mouth in the position it appears when making the sound. These help students understand how to articulate a sound and develop their phonological awareness skills to facilitate their reading and spelling abilities. Providing ample opportunities for students to practice concepts and review learned concepts helps reinforce learning to facilitate mastery. Repetition of concepts is a dyslexia teaching method that helps solidify the neural pathways to improve the automaticity of reading. Repetition is key when teaching dyslexic learners, because they often experience short and long term memory deficits. During instruction, I frequently repeat and review concepts, and ask students to repeatedly practice applying them. Repetition and frequent practice opportunities can benefit students with dyslexia by: Strengthening connections in the brain responsible for learning and reading Among the most effective dyslexia and teaching strategies is to encourage peer support and collaboration. This can foster a sense of belonging, and promote social interaction among students with dyslexia who may be experiencing social and emotional struggles. I've found that working together with peers, such as within groups, can boost the student's motivation and confidence when tackling learning activities. For example, students with dyslexia can work collaboratively in small groups with classmates to complete cooperative learning activities. This might include playing literacy-based games or engaging in activities such as matching letter tiles to spell a given set of words. Assistive technology tools can help students with dyslexia to be able to more effectively access and comprehend written material. Tools for dyslexia include: Speech recognition software Specialized fonts such as large print Forbrain, an auditory stimulation headset, is another assistive technology tool that can help students with dyslexia. Forbrain aims to improve the student's auditory processing, attention, and communication skills by amplifying sounds as the student engages in tasks such as dyslexia interventions. It's important to take advantage of assistive technology tools both to improve students' performance and to provide them with compensatory tools they can continue to use to overcome difficulties associated with their dyslexia. For example, providing a student with dyslexia access to an audiobook allows him or her to listen to the text while attempting to read aloud. This can help promote independence and improve the student's comprehension of the text. Teaching phonics through systematic instruction can help students with dyslexia better understand the relationship between sounds and letters. Strengthening these skills can improve the student's decoding and spelling skills. Examples of phonics-based instructional programs are: SPIRE (Sequential, Phonics, Instruction, Remediation, and Enrichment) Explicit instruction of phonics (the process of matching letters to sounds) taught in a slow, structured manner helps a student with dyslexia build a strong foundation for reading. The student can then progressively develop more advanced reading and writing skills. Students with dyslexia may experience lower self-confidence due to past struggles with reading and writing. Using positive reinforcement can encourage their progress and foster a growth mindset. Acknowledge their efforts, not just their results, by giving positive feedback when they work hard or show improvement. Break down larger tasks into smaller, achievable goals to allow for frequent celebration of progress. Use reward systems or verbal praise to keep them motivated and engaged. Positive reinforcement not only motivates students but also helps shift their focus from "I can't" to "I can with effort," promoting a more positive self-image and encouraging a love for learning. For students with dyslexia, traditional written responses may not always be the best way to demonstrate understanding. Allowing flexible response formats helps these students convey their knowledge in ways that align with their strengths, leading to more meaningful assessments and boosting their confidence in sharing what they know. Offer the option to respond orally or through presentations to reduce stress and set their own pace. Encourage visual representations, like drawings or diagrams, so they can organize thoughts and explain complex ideas. Use technology-assisted responses, such as speech-to-text software or audio recordings, allowing them to complete tasks without being held back by reading and writing difficulties. When possible, focus assessments on comprehension rather than spelling or grammar to create an environment where students feel encouraged and capable. Allowing flexibility in response formats not only levels the playing field but also builds self-confidence in students with dyslexia, giving them the tools to fully participate and succeed in the classroom. Forbrain is an auditory stimulation headset designed to improve auditory processing and communication skills. By incorporating Forbrain into instruction with dyslexic students, teachers may make instruction more effective. By wearing Forbrain during instruction, students receive auditory feedback through the use of bone conduction technology. The sound of the student's own voice is transmitted back to them via the temporal bones. According to Forbrain, this retrains the brain's auditory feedback loop. The auditory feedback that students receive while wearing Forbrain during instruction can also help improve attention, speech clarity, and language processing. Students may be able to more easily understand and retain spoken information and instructions due to Forbrain's claim to improve the brain's ability to process auditory information. One of the best ways to understand the potential impact of using Forbrain with students with dyslexia is to read first-hand success stories from others. These testimonials show how Forbrain can be used as an effective teaching strategy for dyslexia when used during instruction. Jacquelin reported that her daughter used to read quickly, without any pause and in a monotone voice. She began using Forbrain and expressed, "I have seen tremendous improvement in her reading comprehension and reading rhythm, especially." Jacquelin states that "now that she has the headset, on she can actually hear how she sounds and has made his son feel as if someone was reading a book to him when he was wearing the headset." By using specialized teaching strategies for dyslexia students, teachers can significantly enhance the academic success and overall well-being of the students. These individualized strategies include incorporating multisensory learning approaches, utilizing assistive technology, creating a collaborative learning environment, and integrating tools such as Forbrain. Through this, teachers can create an environment where students can thrive when receiving reading instruction. Educators working with students who have dyslexia should consider implementing the dyslexia teaching strategies reviewed here to facilitate these students reaching their full potential. Bazen, L., de Bree, E. H., van den Boer, M., & de Jong, P. F. (2023). Perceived negative consequences of dyslexia: the influence of person and environmental factors. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 73(2), 214-234. DOI: Brosnan, M., Demetre, J., Hamill, S., Robson, K., Shepherd, H., & Cody, G. (2002). Executive functioning in adults and children with developmental dyslexia. *Neuropsychologia*, 40(12), 2144-2155. DOI: 02/00046-5 O'Brien, T. (2020). Understanding the socio-emotional impact of dyslexia in the inclusive classroom. In *Dyslexia*. IntechOpen. DOI: Dyslexia is a common learning disability affecting how individuals read and write. Discussing dyslexia, its impact on students, and the various management strategies are important to help create a culture of understanding for individuals with dyslexia. Dyslexia is a neurobiological condition affecting how the brain processes written language. It is not a result of laziness or lack of intelligence but a specific difficulty in recognizing and decoding words. Individuals with dyslexia may experience reading, spelling, and writing challenges, which can impact their academic and professional lives. Dyslexia is not a one-size-fits-all condition; it varies in severity and can manifest differently in different individuals. Learn more about the signs and symptoms of Dyslexia at different ages. Reading Difficulties: Individuals with dyslexia often struggle with reading fluency and accuracy. They may need help recognizing and decoding words, leading to slower reading rates and comprehension issues. Spelling and Writing Challenges: Spelling errors and difficulties with writing can be a significant hurdle. Dyslexic individuals may have trouble spelling words or organizing their thoughts on paper. Poor Phonological Awareness: Dyslexia often involves weak phonological awareness, which means individuals may have trouble identifying and manipulating the sounds of spoken language. Difficulty with Sequencing: Dyslexic individuals can find it challenging to process information in a linear sequence, making tasks like following instructions or comprehending complex texts more difficult. This approach engages multiple senses simultaneously, helping individuals with dyslexia to absorb information more effectively. It may involve activities like tracing letters while saying their sounds or using colored overlays to make reading more accessible. Various software and tools are available to aid individuals with dyslexia. Text-to-speech, speech-to-text, and spell-check software can be valuable tools for reading and writing. Enrolling language programs that focus on a systematic and phonetic approach, can provide a systematic and individualized approach to reading and writing, breaking language into manageable components. Much like the popular Orton-Gillingham Approach for teaching students with dyslexia, Oxford Learning's programs also use a structured approach to learning that breaks reading and spelling down into smaller skills involving letters and sounds. In educational and professional settings, requesting accommodations like extended test-taking time, audiobooks, or speech-to-text software can help level the playing field for dyslexic individuals. A supportive network, including teachers, family, and friends, can make a difference. Understanding and patience go a long way in helping dyslexic individuals build their confidence and succeed. Encouraging a positive self-image and building resilience is crucial. Dyslexic individuals can benefit from confidence-building activities to help reduce anxiety and stress associated with the challenges of dyslexia. Dyslexia may present unique challenges in reading and writing, but students can thrive with the right strategies and techniques. Our tutors are trained with key approaches that help students with dyslexia build confidence and succeed in school. By providing the appropriate support, accommodation, and encouragement, we can create an inclusive environment that allows students with dyslexia to reach their goals and see school success. Get started today! Find a Location Near You Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation. No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. How can financial brands set themselves apart through visual storytelling? Our experts explain how. Learn More! The Motorsport Images Collections captures events from 1895 to today's most recent coverage. Discover The Collection Curated, compelling, and worth your time. Explore our latest gallery of Editors' Picks. Browse Editors' Favorites! How can financial brands set themselves apart through visual storytelling? Our experts explain how. Learn More! The Motorsport Images Collections captures events from 1895 to today's most recent coverage. Discover The Collection Curated, compelling, and worth your time. Explore our latest gallery of Editors' Picks. Browse Editors' Favorites (redirected from Dislexia) Also found in: Dictionary, Thesaurus, Encyclopedia. The word dyslexia is derived from the Greek word, dys, meaning poor or inadequate, and the word lexia, meaning words or language. Dyslexia is a learning disorder characterized by problems in processing words into meaningful information. This is most strongly reflected in difficulty in learning to read. For almost a century after dyslexia was first described in a British medical journal in 1896, it was thought to be the result of a visual processing problem. Various forms of eye training were tried to improve visual perception; these generally failed. Today, researchers understand that dyslexia is a problem that arises from difficulties or inefficiencies in the brain in analyzing and processing individual letter sounds (called phonemes) and blending them into words at a speed that allows comprehension and fluency. Thus, the most prominent sign of dyslexia is difficulty in learning to read. Nevertheless, people with dyslexia may have other language-related deficits such as problems understanding rapid speech, difficulty in following complex or multi-part instructions, or trouble remembering things in correct sequence. Because of the difficulty in processing letter sounds, people with dyslexia are often poor spellers. It was once thought that letter reversal (e.g., from instead of form) was a sign of dyslexia, but as of 2008, research finds that although dyslexics do reverse letters, this problem is not more common in people with dyslexia than in those without the disorder. Reading disorders are the most common type of learning disorder, and dyslexia is the most common reading disorder. Between 15% and 20% of American elementary school children have significant, continuing difficulties with learning to read, reading fluency, and/or reading comprehension, but only about 5% are referred for special help in reading. Of those, between 65% and 75% are boys. Dyslexia occurs in people of all races, and income levels, however, African-Americans with dyslexia are more likely to be misdiagnosed and mislabeled as mildly mentally retarded. Dyslexia is not linked to low intelligence (low IQ). Many people with the disorder have average or above average intelligence and show an unexpected difference between achievement and aptitude, although this is not a requirement for a diagnosis of dyslexia. The disorder is not something that is outgrown; most children with dyslexia continue to read more poorly than their peers in adulthood despite learning various strategies to minimize the disorder. Causes and symptoms? The underlying cause of dyslexia is not known, although research suggests the condition is often inherited. Using positron emission tomography (PET) scans and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), researchers have been able to track the parts of the brain that become active when people with and without dyslexia read. Their general conclusion is that the brains of people with dyslexia are organized differently than those without the disorder and that this different organization results in less concentrated and efficient analysis and processing of the written representation of letter sounds into meaningful information. Common signs of dyslexia include problems with: identifying single letters or words breaking down words into their individual sounds (phonemes) blending individual sounds into meaningful words at an appropriate speed reading comprehension chronically reading below grade level accurate spelling transposing letters in words following complex directions confusion with opposites (up/down, early/late, and so on) Diagnosis Anyone who is suspected to have dyslexia should have a comprehensive evaluation, including hearing, vision, and intelligence testing. The test should include all areas of learning and learning processes, not just reading. A trained reading specialist, school psychologist, private child neuropsychologist, or educational specialist may do the evaluation. In the United States, public schools are required to provide free and appropriate evaluations of children suspected of having a disability, usually within 60 days of a parent's or guardian's request. However, a parent or guardian must initiate the request in writing. Diagnosis can be complicated by the presence of other disorders that affect learning. People with dyslexia often have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). There is such a strong correlation between ADHD and dyslexia that some experts recommend automatically evaluating any child suspected of having either condition. Dyslexia is not a learning disorder that includes trouble recognizing language sounds and how they relate to written language, also known as "decoding." Areas in the brain responsible for processing that detect and link sounds to their corresponding letters don't function in people with dyslexia the same way that they do in people without it. Research published in the *Journal of Learning Disabilities* suggests dyslexia can affect up to one in five people. Although it doesn't impair development or intellectual functioning, this variation in neuro processing makes it difficult for students with dyslexia to quickly and accurately hear, store, remember, and produce different speech sounds. As a result, students with dyslexia can struggle with reading, writing, and spelling. They frequently take longer to decode words when reading and may have limited comprehension of what they've read. They also may have trouble rapidly verbalizing responses to what they see. Dyslexia presents itself in various ways, but a student's eye strongly factors into the symptoms teachers may observe. Students with dyslexia in grades K-5 struggle to remember letter names and sounds. Recognizing sight words also poses a problem. When reading aloud, these students may substitute words and confuse letters with similar appearances or sounds. For example, students commonly mix up the letters b and d. Additional signs of dyslexia in this age group include difficulties: Blending letter sounds Sound out unfamiliar words Recognizing words that rhyme Skipping smaller words such as and if when reading aloud Spelling the same word consistently Remembering important details from readings It's common for younger students with dyslexia to feel frustrated and overwhelmed when reading. Many avoid reading as much as possible. Students in grades 6-12 may have a hard time recalling common abbreviations and acronyms such as approx. and ASAP. These students may need much more time to read assignments than their peers. When speaking, they may struggle to find the right words and use substitutes instead. For example, they may substitute the word gate for fence. Other common signs of dyslexia for older students include: Taking notes and copying material from the board following multistep instructions Spelling all words phonetically Summarizing stories Making sense of jokes, idioms, and puns Reading at a normal or quick pace Dyslexia can significantly affect students in classroom environments, especially when educators don't use inclusive teaching strategies for students with dyslexia to help address its related challenges. For starters, dyslexia can impede a student's academic progress. Students with dyslexia may struggle to keep up with their peers. Their basic skills, such as word reading, can fall below grade level, as do their reading, comprehension, and analysis skills. Research also shows that dyslexia can affect students' ability to perform across the curriculum. In fact, a recent study published in the *Journal of Learning Disabilities* found that students with dyslexia performed well below their peers in both reading and math. Such learning deficits build up over time, making it more and more challenging for students with dyslexia to experience academic success. In addition to its academic impact, dyslexia has social and emotional impacts. As noted, some students with dyslexia struggle to find words, making it hard for them to express themselves. This can interfere with their ability to make social and emotional connections. At some point, students with dyslexia also begin to notice that they don't learn as fast as their peers. This may cause them to question their intelligence and develop low self-esteem. It may also cause them to withdraw or misbehave out of frustration. While students with dyslexia face challenges, they can still thrive in school if given the right support. Teaching strategies for students with dyslexia can help these learners compensate for the different ways that their brains process information, giving them a chance to succeed academically. In many classrooms, students rely almost entirely on their sight and hearing to learn. Multisensory learning aims to incorporate tactile and kinesthetic activities into the learning process as well. This gives students with dyslexia more ways to understand, remember, and recall new information. Multisensory learning engages students in movements and activities that involve touch. This, coupled with the use of visual and auditory materials, creates multiple opportunities for students with dyslexia to absorb and retain information. It also helps take abstract ideas and turn them into something more concrete. Multisensory activities may include: For hands-on writing activities, students receive paper plates with sand. The teacher calls out a sound and students repeat it. Students then trace a letter in the sand corresponding to that sound as they visualize the letter's name and sound. This kinesthetic activity stimulates the brain in many different ways, giving students a greater chance of successful retention. Flipping board activities, teachers use large cards printed with individual letters, digraphs, such as sh and st, to form a CVC word or a word consisting of a consonant, a vowel, and a consonant. To help students read the word, the teacher covers up the letters and reveals them one by one. Students produce the sound of each letter individually and then blend them together to read the word in its entirety. For arm tapping activities, teachers display a card with a word written on it. Using their dominant hand, students say the letters of the word. As they say each letter, they simultaneously tap their arms, starting from their shoulder down to their wrist. Next, students say the whole word and sweep their hands down their arms as if underlining the word. Assistive technology empowers students with dyslexia to overcome some of the challenges that hold them back. These tools help students save time and give them a chance to showcase their abilities and knowledge in ways not possible before. Assistive technologies range from recording devices that allow students to take notes to voice recognition tools that transform speech into text on a screen. Assistive technologies that can help students keep pace with their classmates include: These devices contain dictionaries that recognize phonetically misspelled words. Students type in a word to the best of their ability and the spellchecker provides the word's correct spelling through text or audio. Students with dyslexia can use this tool to build their confidence when writing and get instant feedback on their spelling. Some students with dyslexia struggle to see words accurately on the page. Letters may appear to be moving or students may see them in the wrong order. Line readers can help eliminate some of these distractions. The tool highlights a single line of text at a time and blocks the surrounding areas. This helps students keep their place and stay focused. Digital scanning pens can capture both handwritten and digital text and transmit it to a mobile device or a computer. Some versions of the tool read text out loud as a user scans it. Students with dyslexia often have individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that lay out accommodations appropriate to their needs. Educators are responsible for familiarizing themselves with these accommodations, which may include the following: Extended time to take tests The option to provide oral answers rather than written ones Exemption from reading out loud in class A quiet study space Additionally, when introducing new material, teachers can use teaching strategies for students with dyslexia such as: Preteaching vocabulary and unfamiliar ideas Prewriting outlines of the lesson with space for student to add notes Creating advance organizers that preview the material covered in the lesson Giving students a glossary of terms used in the lesson Teachers may also consider the following inclusive strategies when giving instructions: Offering written step-by-step directions and reading them aloud Keeping instructions simple Showing students how to break assignments into smaller tasks Providing checklists that help students monitor their understanding and progress Underlining keywords and ideas on materials that students should read first Giving examples of completed work, along with rubrics Educators who effectively employ teaching strategies for students with dyslexia open doors for a group of learners who might otherwise be stifled. With the right training, educators can gain the skills needed to empower dyslexic students. Discover how American University's online Master of Arts in Teaching prepares educators to create classrooms where all students can thrive. Child Mind Institute, "Understanding Dyslexia" *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, "Reading and Math Achievement in Children With Dyslexia, Developmental Language Disorder, or Typical Development: Achievement Gaps Persist From Second Through Fourth Grades" *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, "The Prevalence of Dyslexia: A New Approach to Its Estimation" *Learnsity*, Line Reader Tool *Mayo Clinic*, Dyslexia National Center on Improving Literacy, Defining Dyslexia Number Dyslexia, "7 Engaging Multisensory Approach Activities" *TeachHub*, "How Does Dyslexia Impact Student Learning Long Term?" *Understood*, "Classroom Accommodations for Dyslexia" *Wired*, "The Best Assistive Technology for Dyslexics" *Dyslexia* affects somewhere between 5 and 10% of the population, so it's bound to happen sooner or later. Here's the good news: there are many easy-to-implement teaching tips and tricks educators continue to use with great success. Quite a few of them will benefit your entire class — and not just your students who have dyslexia. And there's more good news to add. If you're not strictly teaching students to read, write, or spell — you can still use many of the tips we'll be discussing. So math, science, and even art and P.E. educators can benefit from these tips, too. Here's an overview of the types of teaching tips for students with dyslexia we'll be covering today. We most closely associate dyslexia with difficulty learning to read and with other language and reading skills like writing and spelling. Dyslexia, however, goes beyond letters, spelling, and learning to read and write. Dyslexia can affect how a child comprehends what they read and even what they remember. It can cause students to have difficulty following directions. Dyslexia and Math Skills Somewhere between 60 and 100% of people with dyslexia experience difficulty learning math. Children with dyslexia often struggle with math because they have problems following directions, remembering steps, keeping things neat and ordered, and recognizing the meanings of symbols — all required aspects when learning math. For example, a child with dyslexia may have trouble completing a crowded, busy math worksheet. The student may not remember the complicated steps to solve a mathematical equation or geometric proof. Yet, challenges in learning are just the beginning. Students With Dyslexia and Bullying Children with dyslexia are often teased and bullied — partly because they're viewed as different from the other students and partly because their learning differences often single them out for special attention from teachers. Bullying is a significant problem for all students with special needs, as their differences make them easy targets for bullies. Low self-esteem from simply living with a disability adds to the problem. For ways to counteract and prevent bullying in your classroom, have a look at our bullying products and services. That said, there are also certain positives for children with dyslexia. Advantages of Dyslexia Now for some advantages students with dyslexia experience. Studies at Harvard, MIT, and elsewhere have proven that adults and children with dyslexia better understand visual information such as spotting differences and gaining a broader more inclusive view. In the words of one researcher, "While typical readers may tend to miss the forest because its view is blocked by all the trees, people with dyslexia may... miss the trees, but see the forest." — Matthew H. Schneps And these abilities are not just limited to visual perceptions, but sound and hearing, as well. Students with dyslexia can often detect softer sounds, hear a single voice in a crowded, noisy room, or excel at musical abilities. So while it may be more challenging to teach children with dyslexia to read or spell, they may have surprising other talents your students without dyslexia don't have. Let's look at methods you can adopt to benefit all your students. Teaching Tips That Benefit the Entire Class Take Some Advice from the OG (Approach, That Is) Two very famous educators named Orton and Gillingham developed an approach to teaching children with dyslexia that has since been found to help non-dyslexic students as well. It's called the Orton-Gillingham approach. While it's specifically geared towards helping students learn to read — from letters to phonics to independent learning with proficient reading skills — the method introduces aspects that can help you teach any child any subject. The Orton-Gillingham approach stresses teaching methods that are: Multisensory — since dyslexia affects the way the brain processes visual information, engaging the other senses like touch and sound works around this deficit Direct — it's helpful for the students to know what they are to learn, why they need to understand it, and how it will be taught Systematic and sequential — step by step, building upon the skills already mastered Positive and reinforcing — focus on the successes, the work that was done well, and the individual skill strength, rather than overall performance Emotionally sound — focusing on the positive and on each child's success concerning their prior skills sets creates a learning environment that fosters positive mental attitudes and self-esteem There are many ways to implement these strategies into your teaching methods, no matter what subject or age you teach. From Scrabble tiles and magnetic letters for teaching spelling, to math manipulatives at any grade level, to hands-on science, art, and music lessons — this approach's multi-sensory aspect benefits all students. And whether it's a lesson on how to spell three-letter words or Einstein's theory of relativity, you can help your students with dyslexia by using the Orton-Gillingham approach. P.E. should be approached similarly to teaching languages: a set of substituted to be mastered in a systematic, ground-up, sequential way. Awareness of this approach can make a massive difference in a student's performance. And what student wouldn't benefit from a focus on success and individual progress in an atmosphere of positive reinforcement? General Classroom Tips Here are some other tips that can help all your students, in all of your subjects — from teaching a five-year-old child with dyslexia to read, to teaching middle schoolers to spell, to teaching teenagers trigonometry: Don't punish students for forgotten or lost items. Instead, set up systems to keep everything in its place. Create bookmarks or take-home slips with homework assignments that include numbered step by step instructions. Allow voice recorders in place of note-taking. Allow typed and printed assignments instead of handwritten. Using word processors on computers can eliminate spelling and grammar issues in essays, reports, stories, and poems. Create an "oral" classroom with "thinking time" that allows for more spoken answers. Prompt answers from more than one student for each question to provide different linguistic and auditory inputs. Provide opportunities for private reading and writing every day. This will help reinforce skills without the potential for public embarrassment. Explicitly teach how to break down assignments and tasks into their ordered, separate, sequential parts. Include "fun" learning in your curriculum — board games, puzzles, workbooks, computer games, and other fun and exciting activities (especially those created specifically for people with dyslexia). Now let's look at some ways you can help the student with dyslexia in a more personalized manner. One-On-One Teaching Tips What NOT to Do With Your Students With Dyslexia Let's first look at some things not to do when teaching a student with dyslexia, regardless of age. Don't ask them to read aloud. It can lead to embarrassment and a sense of failure. Don't ask them to copy things from a board or text. Don't expect them to complete assignments as quickly as the rest of the class. Tips You SHOULD Be Using Now, let's get to the things you should do for your student with dyslexia: Set up a study carrel or individual space with noise-canceling headphones to help eliminate distractions. Allow the use of headphones and text-to-speech screen readers for any in-class lessons or computer. The software will "read" the text on the screen, so the student doesn't have to. Encourage them to set one up at home, too. Provide an Aline reader to help with written text and create templates that highlight just one math worksheet problem at a time. Provide copies of the text and highlighter markers when you are covering textbook material. Guide the student on what to highlight for future reference. Work with the student's parents so they can help their child at home in an appropriate manner, using some of your tips and tools. Simple awareness of dyslexia might not equate to proper management of the learning disability at home. Ensure parents follow through with their child practicing the non-academic skills they'll need to succeed throughout life — like following instructions, breaking tasks into smaller parts, "everything in its place," etc. How Positive Action Can Help Positive Action supports teachers of all grade levels. We offer evidence-based curricula for special needs kids that enhance learning skills, improve classroom management, create positive school communities, and strengthen your students' families and your school's community. Register for a 15-minute webinar overview of everything we offer. We can help you create the classroom, the school, and the community all your students deserve. Skip to content