DYSLEXIA
Northwest ISD

Characteristics
Testing
Diagnosing
Effective Strategies
Accommodations

http://www.dyslexiatraininginstitute.org/
Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is **neurological** in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with **accurate and/or fluent word recognition** and by poor **spelling** and **decoding** abilities. These difficulties typically **result from a deficit in the phonological component** of language that is often **unexpected** in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.
“Dyslexia is... neurological in origin.”

- Predisposition for dyslexia
- Often inherited
- Persists across the life-span
“...characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.”

- Accurate, rapid word recognition $\Rightarrow$ fluency
- Accuracy & fluency $\Rightarrow$ comprehension
- Varying degrees of difficulty with other language skills: such as
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Spelling
“These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction.”

- Unexplained difficulties
- Despite effective classroom instruction
- Not predicted by
  - Age
  - Cognitive ability
  - Other academic strengths
“These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction.”

- Not a lack of intelligence or ability to learn
- Not a visual or hearing deficit
“a deficit in the phonological component of language”

- Language based disorder

- Weak phonological skills impede acquisition of reading abilities and other language skills
Phonological processing abilities include:

- Phonological awareness
- Rapid naming
**Phonological awareness is:**

- A sensitivity to or an explicit understanding of the sound structure of spoken words
- The ability to notice, think about, and manipulate the individual sounds
Phonologic Awareness Skills

- Rhyme and alliteration
- Blending
- Segmentation
- Manipulation
Rapid Naming

• Efficient retrieval from long term memory of phonological information; such as,
  – Individual sounds in words
  – Pronunciations of common word parts
  – Pronunciations of whole words

• An influence on reading fluency and rate
In summary, dyslexia is...

- Difficulty in processing and producing print language
- Deficits in phonological awareness and rapid naming
- Poor application of phonics for decoding and encoding
- Struggle in using basic skills in a fluent and accurate manner
Common Signs of Dyslexia

- Learns the alphabet later and confuses associated sounds
- Learns letter-sound relationships only with explicit instruction
- Difficulty with holding sounds/words in memory (phonological memory)
- Confuses common sight words and difficulty with rapid naming
- Difficulty reading words in isolation or decoding unfamiliar words
Common Signs of Dyslexia

- Makes frequent reading and spelling errors
- Difficulty with segmenting, blending, manipulating sounds
- Has poor or slow handwriting & difficulty copying
- Struggles with reading comprehension and written expression
- Reliance on listening rather than reading for comprehension
What about reversals?

- Reversals are irrelevant in the identification of dyslexia.
- Reversals are not the cause of dyslexia.
Overcoming Dyslexia
by Sally Shaywitz, M. D.
Identification of Dyslexia
Cognitive Academic Ability

- Measure or document other cognitive and/or academic abilities (intelligence, problem solving, reasoning, listening comprehension, and/or mathematics).

- Look for characteristics of dyslexia to be unexpectedly low for the student’s age and in contrast to intelligence and other cognitive and academic abilities.
Cognitive Academic Ability

• Other considerations of coexisting factors/complications:
  – Oral Language / Speech Concerns
  – Attention
  – Handwriting
  – Vision / Hearing
  – Attendance
  – Family History
  – Behavioral/Emotional Concerns
  – Motivation
Underlying Causes

Measuring the underlying causes of dyslexia through *Phonological Processing Skills*:

- **Phonemic Awareness** - Segmenting, blending, and manipulating sounds in words (phonemic awareness) / Learning the names of letters and their associated sounds

- **Phonological Memory** – Holding information about sounds and words in memory

- **Rapid Naming** - Rapidly recalling the names of familiar objects, colors, or letters of the alphabet
Characteristics

Measure the primary reading and spelling characteristics of dyslexia including:

- Single word decoding / words in isolation
- Word recognition / decoding unfamiliar words
- Oral reading accuracy and rate (fluency-slow, inaccurate, or labored)
- Spelling
Outcomes

Determine the outcomes of the reading and spelling problems by measuring:

- **Reading Comprehension**
  - Word Comprehension
  - Passage Comprehension
  - Oral Reading Comprehension

- **Written Expression**

Recognize that the degree of difficulty will be variable for individual students.
Co-Existing Complications or Assets

Evaluation should measure or observe development in areas that may complicate dyslexia or represent an asset for the student.

• Deficits include: other language-based delays & attention problems

• Common assets include: good reasoning & mathematics skills
Identification Process at the Campus Level

• Classroom interventions and support
• Parent/Teacher conference
• Student support team – RtI
• 504 referral process
  – Data gathering & parent permission
  – Formal identification assessment and evaluation of data
  – Campus committee determination
Dyslexia Instruction

Components of Instruction include:

- **Phonological Awareness** – internal sound structure of words/units of sound/segments of spoken language
- **Sound-symbol association** – speech sounds corresponding with letter/letter combinations
- **Syllabication** – units of oral or written language
- **Orthography** – written spelling patterns and rules
- **Morphology** – units of meaning through base words, prefixes, & suffixes
- **Syntax** – sequence and order of words in a sentence to convey meaning
- **Reading Comprehension** – extracting and constructing meaning
- **Reading Fluency** – reading with speed and accuracy

Reference:  [The Dyslexia Handbook Revised 2014](#)
Dyslexia Instruction

Instructional Approaches include:

– Explicit, direct instruction that is simultaneously systematic, sequential, multisensory, and cumulative through demonstration of the task and immediate corrective feedback

– Diagnostic teaching to automaticity – prescriptive instruction that meet individual student needs of language and print concepts

– Synthetic and Analytic – presenting parts of alphabetic language to form a whole and breaking down the whole word into its component parts

Reference: The Dyslexia Handbook Revised 2014
Classroom Accommodations to Consider

- Extended Time
- Oral Tests
- Use of a Computer
- Reduced Assignments
- Avoid Counting Off For Spelling Errors
- Use a Tape Recorder
- Dictate Responses
- Textbooks on Tape
- Organizers
- Opportunity to ask again for clarification of directions

- Allow 2 or more step directions to be written
- Check Often for Understanding
- Study Guides
- Read Material Aloud
- Hard Copy of Notes
- Outlines
- Alternate Assignments
- Assigning Work in Smaller Units
- Provide Lots of Encouragement
State Assessment Accommodations

- **Accommodations for Reading**
  - Orally reading portions of the test (as allowable by TEA) and reading questions and answer choices to students
  - Extending the testing time
  - Reference the Accommodations Triangle for more information

- **Consideration of STAAR A and/or Supplemental Aids eligibility**

- Identified as having a disability that affects the examinee’s reading and who **regularly receives this accommodation** in the classroom.

- Decision determined ARD Committee or Section 504 Committee as outlined in The 2014 Dyslexia Handbook.

*All accommodations are Pending TEA Guidance and Approval*
THANK YOU