Parent and Educator Information

Dyslexia
Q: What is Dyslexia?
A: The Texas Education Code defines dyslexia in the following way:

1. Dyslexia means a disorder of constitutional origin manifested by a difficulty in learning to read, write, or spell despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and sociocultural opportunity.

2. Related disorders includes disorders similar to or related to dyslexia such as developmental auditory imperception, dysphasia, specific developmental dyslexia, developmental dysgraphia, and developmental spelling disability.
The current definition from the International Dyslexia Association states the following:

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.
Q: What are the primary reading/spelling characteristics of dyslexia?
• Difficulty reading real words in isolation
• Difficulty accurately decoding nonsense words
• Slow, inaccurate, or labored oral reading
• Difficulty with learning to spell.

**The reading/spelling characteristics are the result of difficulty with the following:**

• The development of phonological awareness, including segmenting, blending, and manipulating sounds in words
• Learning the names of letters and their associated sounds
• Phonological memory (holding information about sounds and words in memory)
• Rapid naming of familiar objects, colors, or letters of the alphabet
Secondary consequences of dyslexia may include the following:

- Variable difficulty with aspects of reading comprehension
- Variable difficulty with aspects of written composition
- A limited amount of time spent in reading activities
Q: What are the common characteristics that may be associated with dyslexia if they are unexpected for individual’s age, educational level, or cognitive abilities?
Characteristics of Dyslexia for Students in Kindergarten through Third Grade

- Had or has delayed speech
- Has difficulty with rhyming
- Pronounce words (busgetti for spaghetti)
- Has difficulty remembering nursery rhymes or chants
- Is slow to develop new vocabulary words
- Has difficulty with recalling the right word
- Had or has trouble learning numbers, days of the week, colors or shapes
- Had or has difficulty learning to write his or her name
- Does not spell words phonetically (spelling-by-ear)
- Has difficulty breaking words into their parts (snowman into snow and man)
- Has difficulty breaking words into their phonemes (man into m/a/n)
- Had or has difficulty learning letter names and their corresponding sounds
- Has difficulty recognizing words in isolation
- Has difficulty decoding nonsense words
- Has slow, inaccurate or labored oral reading
- Has a family history of reading problems
Characteristics of Dyslexia for Students in Fourth Grade Through High School

- Has history of reading and spelling problems
- Has slow, inaccurate, or labored oral reading
- Has inadequate vocabulary
- Avoids reading for pleasure
- Has difficulty with aspects of written composition
- Has difficulty spelling
Q: What is the procedure for assessment for dyslexia?
When formal assessment is recommended, the district completes the evaluation process as outlined in 504 using the following procedures:

- Notify parents or guardians of proposal to assess student for dyslexia (504)
- Inform parents or guardians of their rights under 504
- Obtain permission from the parent or guardian to assess the student for dyslexia
- Assess student, being sure that individuals/professionals who administer assessments have training in the evaluation of students for dyslexia and related disorders.

Note: If the student is being assessed as part of a special education evaluation or is already served in special education and a dyslexia evaluation is being requested, IDEA due process procedures must be followed.
1. Data Gathering

- Vision screening
- Hearing screening
- Teacher reports of classroom concerns
- Report of on-going assessments
- Accommodations provided by classroom teachers
- Academic progress reports (report cards)
- Samples of school work
- Parent conferences
- Testing for limited English proficiency (all years available)
- Speech and language screening through a referral process
- The K-2 reading instrument as required
- Universal screening for all grade levels available
- State student assessment
- Response to previous interventions (RTI)
2. **Formal Assessment**

Domains to be assessed depending upon the student’s age and stage of reading development

a) **Academic skills**
   - Letter knowledge (name and associated sound)
   - Reading real and nonsense words in isolation (decoding)
   - Reading fluency (both rate and accuracy)
   - Reading Comprehension
   - Written spelling

b) **Cognitive process**
   - Phonological/phonemic awareness
   - Rapid Naming

c) **Additional areas that may be assessed**
   - Vocabulary
   - Listening comprehension
   - Oral expression
   - Written expression
   - Handwriting
   - Orthographic processing
   - Mathematical reasoning
   - Intelligence
3. **English Language Learners**(bilingual, ESL, and LEP)

In addition to formal assessment

- Home Language Survey
- Assessment related to identification for limited English proficiency (oral language proficiency tests and norm-reference tests)
- State testing
- Texas English Language Proficiency System (TELPAS) information (Reading Proficiency Test in English [RPTE] and Texas Observation Protocol [TOP])
- Linguistic environment and second-language acquisition and development
- Previous schooling in and outside of the United States
4. Identification of Students with Dyslexia

The identification of dyslexia is made by a 504 committee. The 504 committee determines the identification of dyslexia after reviewing all accumulated data. In order to make the appropriate identification of dyslexia the 504 committee will make decisions base on the following three questions:

1. Is the child having trouble at the word level?
2. Is it due to a deficit in phonological or phonemic awareness?
3. Are the weaknesses in reading unexpected in relation to the student’s other cognitive abilities and unexpected in relation to the provision of effective classroom instruction?
Q: What are the components and approaches of instruction for students with dyslexia?
Components of Instruction

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics
- Language structure
- Linguistic instruction directed toward fluency
- Strategy-oriented instruction

Instructional Approaches

- Explicit
- Direct
- Systematic
- Sequential and cumulative
- Intensive
- Curriculum that matches student’s ability
- Small group
Q: Can individuals succeed in varied fields despite their dyslexia?
Famous People with Dyslexia

Click on the link above to watch a video.