

Secondary school a guide for parents and teachers

This guide is intended as a resource for both parents and teachers of adolescent students with dyslexia.

It is designed in good faith as a free resource. Though great care has been taken to provide accurate and up to date evidence based information, it is meant as a starting point, and further research should be undertaken.

The guide is designed so separate sections can be printed off and given as handouts.

Definition

Dyslexia is a neurological disability that affects the language system and the development of literacy skills. It is defined as a specific learning disorder more specifically a reading disorder. It is characterised by problems with spelling, accurate or fluent word recognition, working memory, processing speed, rapid automatic naming, reading comprehension, phonological decoding and weak phonemic awareness.

Dyslexia is not curable and is a lifelong disability. It can be remediated with appropriate interventions but some difficulties may still persist and need to be managed adequately.

Dyslexia can occur at any level of intellectual ability and the IQ discrepancy model is no longer regarded as an accurate diagnostic tool. It occurs across all languages but due to the complexity and variations in the English language difficulties are more apparent.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technology has shown the neurological nature of dyslexia identifying differences in the brain structure of people with dyslexia. MRI studies have also shown remediation of the brain structure through appropriate intervention.

Dyslexia and the law in Australia

DIAGNOSTIC AND STATISTICAL MANUAL OF MENTAL DISORDERS, FIFTH EDITION

"DSM-5 considers Specific Learning Disabilities to be a type of Neurodevelopmental Disorder that impedes the ability to learn or use specific academic skills (e.g., reading,

writing, or arithmetic), which are the foundation for other academic learning. The learning difficulties are 'unexpected' in that other aspects of development seem to be fine. The DSM-5 uses the term Specific Learning Disability, and then requires a second code to specify the nature of the disability - Specific Reading Disorder, Specific Math Disorder and Disorders of Written Expression. It also states in that same section: "Dyslexia is an alternative term used to refer to a pattern of learning difficulties characterized by problems with accurate or fluent word recognition, poor decoding, and poor spelling abilities." 1. Disability Discrimination act (1992) and the Disability standards for education Act (2005)

"The definition of 'disability' in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) is sufficiently broad as to include dyslexia within the meaning of that term as outlined in recommendation 1. Dyslexia would therefore be covered by the provisions of both the DDA and the Disability Standards for Education 2005 made under that Act." 2.

"Anti-discrimination law covers a wide range of disabilities and health problems. These include the following:

A learning or cognitive disability such as dyslexia." 3.

"Perhaps the most significant feature of the Education Standards is the introduction of a positive **obligation on education providers to make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.**[355] **The Standards also impose an obligation on education providers to consult with affected students or their associates in relation to such adjustments.** 4.

"Schools need to comply with the Disability Standards for Education 2005, in regards to consultation, ensuring that there is a team of people who have significant knowledge and understanding of the student, including the student and their family members or carers.

- 'Consultation' can involve the principal, class teachers and support teachers, and can include the professional expertise of therapists and other community service providers.
- The purpose of the 'consultation' is to identify the barriers to a student's learning and any adjustments that could be made.
- 'Consultation' should take place regularly and changes made to adjustments if needed.
- 'Consultation' should continue for the whole time that the student is involved with the school.

An 'adjustment' is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. The process of consultation outlined above is an integral part of ensuring that schools are meeting their obligations in relation to 'reasonable adjustments'." 5.

1. (p.67, DSM-5) The DSM-5 http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/sites/default/files/IDA_DSM-5%20Changes.pdf
2. Australian Government Response to Working party on Dyslexia https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/09_2012/response_to_dyslexia_working_party_report_online_version.doc#_Toc331669022
3. Anti-discrimination Board of NSW fact sheet http://www.antidiscrimination.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/agdbasev7wr/adb/documents/pdf/disability_discrimination_0311.pdf#xml=http://search.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/isysquery/ad8f7e94-1bb7-4dd6-b7fb-722270f6ff24/1/hilite/
4. Human Rights Commission https://www.humanrights.gov.au/federal-discrimination-law-chapter-5-disability-discrimination-act#5_2_5b
5. School obligations under the Disability Standards for Education Act 2005 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 The Australian Curriculum <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/studentdiversity/students-with-disability>

General approach

Adolescents can benefit from intensive, high quality literacy instruction. It is never too late. However a well trained and experienced teacher is needed as it may be very difficult to convince a teenager, who has years of learned helplessness and self esteem issues associated with reading, that going back to basics is needed.

Secondary behavioural and mental health issues need to be considered as the great majority of children with dyslexia will experience associated emotional issues as a result of their learning difficulty and stress. Professional advice regarding mental health issues should always be sort as a matter of urgency.

A diagnostic evaluation will indicate all areas of reading and writing that should be addressed. Intensive and skillful instruction in basic word reading skills can have a significant impact on the comprehension ability of students in fifth grade and beyond

(Center on Instruction, 2008). The Center on Instruction report of research findings indicates the following are key recommendations for teaching word study to older students: Teach students...

- to identify and break words into syllable types
- when and how to read multisyllabic words by blending the parts together
- to recognize irregular words that do not follow predictable patterns
- the meanings of common prefixes, suffixes, inflectional endings, and roots. Instruction should include ways in which words relate to each other (for example, trans: transfer, translate, transform, transition).
- how to break words into word parts and to combine word parts to create words based on their roots, bases, or other features
- how and when to use structural analysis to decode unknown words

Adapted from IDA fact sheet - Adolescents and Adults with Dyslexia

MODIFICATION OF TASKS

Assessment tasks and homework need to be adjusted to meet the learning needs of students with dyslexia. Modifications need to be made in format, content and amount. "It is generally agreed that teachers should assign homework that takes into account the needs of the students. This is especially the case of children with learning disabilities in mainstream schools. Research has shown that tasks which may be simple for some students may take a student with a learning disability a considerable amount of time to comprehend and complete." Parliament of Victoria homework inquiry

The Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Standards for Education (2005) require schools to make reasonable adjustments so that students with disability are provided opportunities and choices on the same basis as students without disability. Schools are required to make reasonable adjustments in consultation with students and/or their parents/carers.

Failure to adequately modify homework tasks and assignments may lead to increased stress on the child with dyslexia. This is an important consideration when secondary issues such as low self esteem, anxiety and depression are common. Research shows that as many as 20 percent of children with dyslexia also suffer from depression and another 20 percent suffer from an anxiety disorder (Willcutt, and Gaffney-Brown 2004).

"Research indicates that student learning may be enhanced if homework is:

- appropriate for each student's age and ability
- relevant to each student's needs
- purposeful and designed to meet specific learning goals
- varied and challenging, but achievable
- clearly stated and requirements made explicit during class time
- supported by teacher strategies for students having difficulties with homework. "

Homework Policy Guidelines NSW Department of Education and Communities

"Homework can be effective in supporting learning if it:

- Is varied and differentiated to individual learning needs

- Allows time for family, recreational, community and cultural activities and employment pursuits relevant to the student's age, development and educational aspirations
- Is balanced across learning areas to avoid stress and overload
- Is achievable and leads to an increase in students' self-confidence
- Is disassociated from any form of punishing students or a means of discipline
- Refrains from requiring dependence on unreasonable levels of parental assistance or resources that are not readily available to the student (e.g. when assigning homework which may have a computer component, where appropriate a suitable alternative should be made available)" Tasmanian Department of Education Homework guidelines.

COMMUNICATION

"Communication and the provision of clear information between teachers, parents/ caregivers and students is a requirement of an effective school Homework Policy. Parents/ caregivers of students experiencing difficulties completing homework need to be confident that these concerns can be discussed with the teacher, and that guidance and assistance will be provided. " Homework Policy Guidelines NSW Department of Education and Communities

Homework needs to be adequately explained to students with dyslexia. Teachers should check that the child understands the task. Organisational and memory difficulties are characteristics of dyslexia. Students should be encouraged to adequately record and keep track of homework through the use of assignment books, homework planners and written or digital calendars. Parents of younger students should be informed of assignments and homework tasks.

COMPLETION OF REMEDIAL HOMEWORK

Priority must be given to the remediation of a student's weaknesses. This should include focusing on individualised homework set by dyslexia specialists and learning support teachers. "Homework must be purposeful and relevant to student needs and should not jeopardise the right of children to enjoy a balanced lifestyle" (Dixon, 2007).

"Individuals with dyslexia or a related difference require explicit, direct and systematic instruction in both oral and written language. (National Reading Panel 2007) (Australian Dyslexia Working Party document 2010) (National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy 2007)" Australian Dyslexia Association.

MANAGEABILITY

"Homework that is manageable for students will:

- provide some flexibility and options to allow for different student circumstances."

Homework Guidelines NSW Department of Education And Communities.

Amount of homework set for students with dyslexia or other learning difficulties needs to be set with the consultation of the teacher, parent and student. Students with dyslexia require extra time to complete the same amount of work. Students with dyslexia are often extremely mentally and physically tired at the end of a school day due to the additional cognitive load required to produce the same work as their peers. "The dyslexics were using 4.6 times as much area of the brain to do the same language task as the controls," said Richards, a professor of radiology. "This means their brains were working a lot harder and using more energy than the normal children."~ ScienceDaily (Oct. 6, 1999)

It is far more valuable for the student to be given less homework that can be completed well than to burden a student with excessive homework. Consideration must also be given to the fact that students with dyslexia will require assistance from an adult to complete homework thus affecting the harmony of the parent child relationship. Homework can intrude on the lives of families and reduce family time available for leisure, domestic and other personal activities (Kralovec and Buell, 2001). Homework can reduce the number of positive interactions parents have with their children (Dudley-Marling, 2003). Parents may be required to assume undesired roles that may strain family relations (Varenne and McDermott, 1999).

"The quality of the homework assigned is likely to be more important than the quantity" (Canadian Education Association, & Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 2010). "The amount of homework and time spent on it should accord with the student's age and developmental level (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009)."

READING AS HOMEWORK

It is important that homework priority is given to reading for students with dyslexia.

Students should read 10 minutes out loud to a parent and 20 minutes of silent reading.

Reading should also be modelled to the child by an adult. Daily reading is essential.

"Lots and lots of practice is required for students with dyslexia to develop and master literacy skills.

Read aloud with your child when they are becoming frustrated. This helps them to understand and enjoy what they are reading and it still helps them to learn. Your child can also read along with books on tape or CD. An adult reading a bedtime story to a child from a book slightly more difficult than the child can read themselves, can help the child learn new vocabulary, generate ideas and be an enjoyable experience for both."British Dyslexia Association

RESOURCES AND FURTHER REFERENCES

- Adapted from
- Homework research Scan NSW department of Education and Communities
https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/curriculum/schools/homework/Hwk_Res%20scan.pdf
- NSW Department of Education and Communities Homework policy guidelines
https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/curriculum/schools/homework/Hwk_Pol_guide.pdf
- Homework literature review QLD department of Education and the arts.
<http://education.qld.gov.au/review/pdfs/homework-text-for-web.pdf>
- Anti-discrimination Board of NSW fact sheet
http://www.antidiscrimination.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/agdbasev7wr/adb/documents/pdf/disability_discrimination_0311.pdf#xml=http://search.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/isysquery/ad8f7e94-1bb7-4dd6-b7fb-722270f6ff24/1/hilite/
- Victorian Department of Education and Training Homework Guidelines
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/curriculum/pages/guidelines.aspx>
- Western Australia Department of Education Homework Guidelines
http://www.det.wa.edu.au/policies/detcms/cms-service/download/asset/?asset_id=14701191
- Tasmanian Department of Education Homework Guidelines
<https://www.education.tas.gov.au/documentcentre/Documents/Homework-Guidelines.pdf>
- Parliament of Victoria homework inquiry
http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/file_uploads/ETC_Homework_Inquiry_final_report_PWkrPPVH.pdf

Resources for parents

- Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre How to support your child at home
<http://www.arkellcentre.org.uk/Pdfs/How-to-support-your-child-at-home.pdf>
- Homework tips for parents
<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/parent/homework-tips>

Is My Classroom Dyslexia Aware?

Classroom Culture

- Calm and positive
- Mistakes seen as learning opportunities
- Flexible groupings
- Consistent approaches to behaviour management
- Everybody counts and is valued
- Help is given discreetly

Learning preferences

- Alternative ways of recording
- Opportunities to present alternative evidence of learning
- Adapt tasks to suit
- Use multi-sensory techniques
- Provide challenge but with adjustments
- Embed differentiation in the classroom
- Ability appropriate task

Stress free

- Time to think
- Give control and responsibility
- Encourage student voice
- Reading out loud - give option to say no
- Encourage self- advocacy
- Extra time
- Mark content not spelling

Communication and organisation

- Model all learning tasks
- Write instructions down and leave them
- Appropriate vocabulary
- Visual prompts
- Chunk learning- break tasks into steps
- Clear and explicit instructions
- Reduce teacher talk time
- Pause for processing
- Parents communication with school is facilitated
- Predictability and structure

Homework

- No Homework as an option
- Stress free and meaningful
- Modified homework
- Related to prior knowledge
- Offer alternatives to writing
- Clear instructions
- Time driven NOT task driven

Recording work

- Paste information into book
- Minimise copying from board- Make photocopies/ screenshots available / Audio, video or photographs
- Encourage mindmaps, flowcharts etc
- Non traditional assessment

Resources

- Colour coded
- Visual timetables
- Well labeled
- Familiar and consistent layout
- Easily Accessible
- Alternative resources such as audio books and video
- Bring your own device / Assistive technology available

Presentation

- Create lots of space
- Plain font of suitable size
- Bullet point key info
- Thin notes

Collaborative Work

- Peer tutoring
- Inquiry learning
- Flexible grouping
- Paired reading
- Scribed work

Environment

- Ability to refer yourself to a comfort room
- Flexibility around set up
- Structure and order
- Motivating

Time

- Short achievable tasks
- Less is more
- Remove time as a barrier - give extra time
- Time to revisit
- Flexible deadlines

Assessment

- Modification of assignments
- Allow different presentation of assignment information
- Allow extra time
- Modification of examinations
- Allow a reader/scribe
- Marking is constructive

Adapted from Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand and 100 ideas for Secondary School Teachers- Supporting students with Dyslexia Gavin Reid and Shannon Green

General ideas for all KLA's

Whiteboard drawing

EQUIPMENT:

- whiteboard markers in different colours is best
- Or in groups butchers paper and coloured markers

INSTRUCTIONS:

- use student volunteers - never force a dyslexic to read out loud to the class.
- 2 students out the front. One reader and one drawer.
- The reader reads a paragraph to the class.
- As it is being read the drawer has to try to draw pictures to represent the paragraph.
- Can also use 2 drawers if you want to involve more students.
- Then swap the pair for the next paragraph.
- Provide class with photocopy of notes to highlight. Print on pastel paper for dyslexics.

BENEFITS

- Multisensory
- High level of student engagement

GROUP ACTIVITY

- This activity can also be completed in groups. Group size is flexible.
- Each group has to draw a picture to convey their paragraph on butchers paper.
- Each group presents and explains their drawing to the class.
- Class pastes in photocopies of paragraphs.
- Can also get every student to draw a picture in book to represent every paragraph.

Drawing boxes

EQUIPMENT:

- Worksheet
- One column has summarised paragraphs in boxes
- Second column is a corresponding box for visual representation of paragraph

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Read out as class each paragraph. (Do not make dyslexics read unless they volunteer)
- Students then must draw a picture to represent each paragraph.

BENEFITS:

- Multisensory
- High level of student engagement
- Avoids copying of notes which is a difficult task for dyslexics
- Makes students think about what they are reading

Cut and paste notes

EQUIPMENT:

- Cut up notes and paste in incorrect order.
- Keep a master copy to make review easier
- Add a letter to each sentence to make review of the activity easier.
- Photocopy for class.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- The students must cut out each sentence and arrange so it makes sense.
- Review the correct order of notes with the class before they paste the correct order in the book.
- Each volunteer can read out a sentence that they think comes next.
- Variation - can do this with paragraphs as well

BENEFITS:

- Multisensory
- High level of student engagement
- Avoids copying of notes which is a difficult task for dyslexics
- Makes students think about what they are reading

Acting out

INSTRUCTIONS:

- use student volunteers - never force a dyslexic to read out loud to the class.
- 2 students out the front. One reader and one actor.
- The reader reads a paragraph to the class.
- As it is being read the actor has to try act to represent the paragraph.
- Can also use more actors if you want to involve more students.
- Then swap the pair for the next paragraph.
- Provide class with photocopy of notes to highlight. Print on pastel paper for dyslexics.

GROUP OPTION

- Can do this as a group activity.
- Each group presents their acted out paragraph to the class.

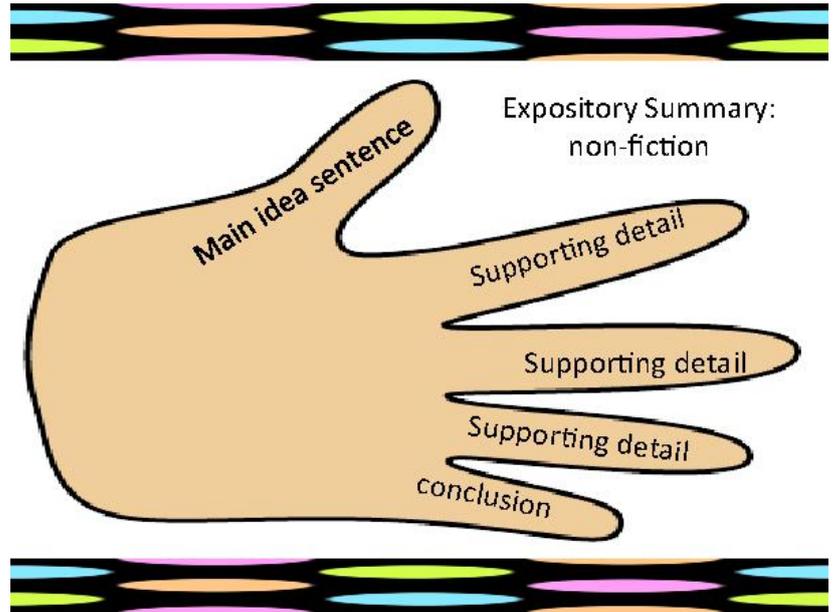
BENEFITS

- Multisensory technique KVA
- High level of student engagement

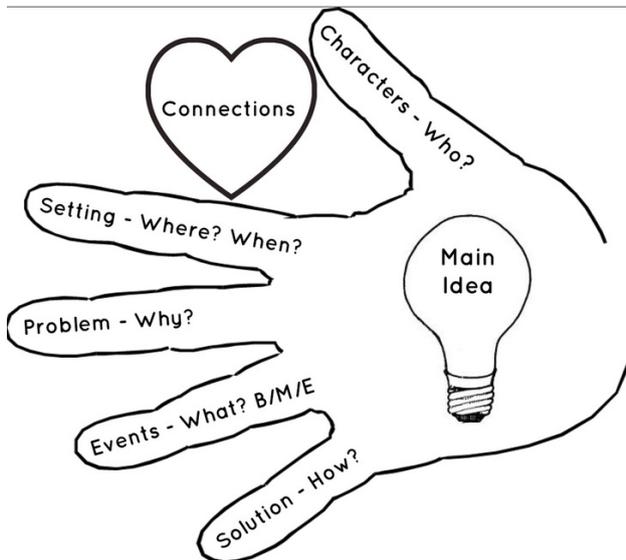
Five finger planner

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Develop sentences and paragraphs
- One question per finger
- Questions can be changed depending on the desired outcome or text type
- One question should be written on each digit of the finger or on a hand outline
- Introduce the 5 finger strategy and model it many times with the class.
- Display a poster of the hand prominently in your classroom.
- Provide a mini-version for each student.
- You may want to send a photocopied version home with each child.
- Writing on band-aids or post it notes



BENEFITS:



- Hand becomes a visual and kinaesthetic memory tool
- Helps children develop a writing technique
- By using this strategy, they can be sure to include the five major elements.
- Helps dyslexics organise their thoughts

Name: _____ Date: _____

Five-Finger Facts

Directions: What did you learn from your book? Write a fact on each finger.

Title: _____

Author: _____

Just Right! Reading Response Activity Sheets for Young Learners © 2010 by Erica Schwan, Scholastic Teaching Resources

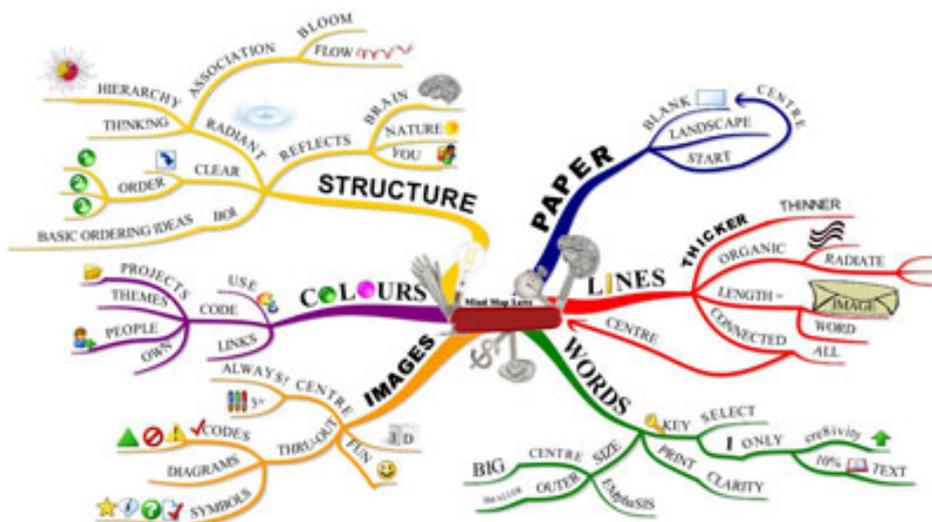
Mind maps

BENEFITS OF MIND MAPS

- helps students brainstorm any topic and think creatively.
- Mind maps are particularly helpful in the writing process and provide students with a natural way of thinking and building thoughts on a story plot or theme.
- By asking students to create mind maps demonstrating their comprehension of a concept, teachers are able to understand what a student's prior knowledge was and how well the student understands the assignment or the material being taught.
- Facilitates better understanding of relationships and connections between ideas and concepts
- Makes it easy to communicate new ideas and thought processes
- Allow students to easily recall information
- Helps students take notes and plan tasks
- Makes it easy to organize ideas and concepts

HOW TO MIND MAP

- All mind maps begin with a main concept or idea.
- From that main idea, create branches (as many as needed), that each represent a single word that relates to the main topic. It's helpful to use different colors and images to differentiate the branches and sub-topics.
- Then, create sub-branches that stem from the main branches to further expand on ideas and concepts. These sub-branches will also contain words that elaborate on the topic of the branch it stems from. This helps develop and elaborate on the overall theme of the



mind map. Including images and sketches can also be helpful in brainstorming and creating the sub-branch topics.

Scaffolds

Dyslexics often have trouble organising their thoughts as they see the "whole picture."

Writing with scaffolds helps dyslexics overcome some of their writing difficulties.

Scaffold writing:

- o provide writing frames or templates
- o provide prompt sheets and word lists
- o provide clue cards
- o provide a note-taking frame to help identify key information, whilst allowing space for the student's own notes and diagrams

OUTSTANDING SCAFFOLDS CAN BE FOUND AT

- http://www.kaleenhs.act.edu.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0009/167166/UCHSK_Student_Writing_Handbook.pdf
- http://www.21stcenturyschoolteacher.com/uploads/8/5/4/4/854417/mapping_for_success.pdf
- <http://www.palmbeachschools.org/multicultural/documents/FramedParagraphs.pdf>
- <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/wordlist/>

Mathematics	Affect	Adjustments
Working memory, Long term memory and sequencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulty learning and recalling number facts, formulae and vocabulary. - Forgets explanations. - Forgets equipment - Forgets processes - Loses place in a multi step problem. - Fails to follow sequence of instructions - Has difficult with maths mentals - difficulty organising - Unlikely to retain by rote learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allow manipulatives and memory aides - use maths dictionaries - Provide model answers - Break into steps - Allow students to develop own processes - spare equipment - use portable strategies like counting with fingers and using the ruler as a number line. - Use memory strategies - Reduce the need for memorisation. - Present concrete examples - Provide scrap paper for working - Allow mastery before moving on to next concept
Motor skills and visual issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - poor written presentation -difficulty with diagrams and graphs - problem with distinguishing between symbols, and /or the layout of the work on the page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -provide graph paper and guidelines - work in groups - Allow use assistive technology - Scribe - Provide clear and well set out texts and worksheets
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confuses maths language - Cannot connect the subject specific vocabulary to concept. - Difficulty with word problems - Substitutes and transposes letters, numbers, signs and symbols. - Loses place when reading - Difficulty reading information from tables and graphs - Difficulty copying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use memory cards with the vocabulary or maths dictionary - Provide a glossary of terms or maths dictionary - Enlarge graphs, tables and drawings. - Use coloured paper - read questions for the student. - Highlight maths signs - Need to understand meanings as relevant to mathematics.
Processing speed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increases anxiety - Decreases accuracy - slow to complete work - Loses place - Difficulty with problem solving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extra time - Expect less work - Focus on accuracy and understanding not amount
Anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - decreases working memory - Decreases processing speed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allow mastery before moving on - Motivation - Encouragement and positive reinforcement - Enable success through appropriate level of questions - Fun and games - Reduce stressors

By Belinda Dekker B.Ec. Dip.Ed.

Dyslexia Support Australia

Dyslexia NSW Support Group