

# DYSLEXIA AND DYSLEXIA FRIENDLY CLASSROOMS

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Blean Primary School

Rebecca Rice, Independent  
Chartered Psychologist

# Outline...

- Interactive
- Building upon existing competencies- what is already known
- How children learn to read and spell
- Dyslexia definition
- Discussing implications for teaching and intervening
- Dyslexia Friendly Classrooms

# How to become a fluent reader and speller

- English speech is written in a visual code where symbols, known as letters are used to represent individual sounds
- Each sound may be represented by 1,2,3, or 4 letters
- Sounds may be written in more than one way
- Some symbols may represent more than one sound

# Cognitive functions and Literacy

- There are specific differences between oracy and literacy and between reading and writing as forms of literacy. Writing carries a heavier cognitive load.
- There is a bottleneck in working memory that places constraints on children learning to read and write until they have learned to use particular processing strategies, including speed in semi-automating the skill and chunking information
- There is a watershed in learning to read and write which usually occurs around the ages of 7-8 years when semi-automation begins to be established

# Handwriting Development

- Scribbling- an important part of learning to write by hand as it exercises and provides practice for the eye-hand coordination needed in fluent writing. It lays down memory traces from links between visual imagery and kinaesthetic imagery, the muscular remembering of movement
- The timing of learning cursive writing is important. An important skill that temporarily slows up the progress towards easy, fluent writing. Implications for SAT's?
- Does learning cursive in Year 3 negate the fact that early learning is most advantageous?
- The aim with handwriting is to push progress forward to the stage where it becomes automated

# Skill automaticity

- Essential in facilitating writing and spelling
- Practise needs to be sufficient so that skills become automatic
- Initially, following a teacher's model on the board, and adults check on movements to ensure accuracy
- Frequency of practice is paramount. Twice daily practice of handwriting in Keystage 1 and 2?
- A neat 'settling' activity
- Psychological well-being of a neat, cursive script
- Letter-join

# Getting the basics right

- Getting the mechanics right: ensuring each child has the right grip, and hand writing position
- [Correct and Incorrect Handwriting positions.docx](#)

# Segmenting, blending and phoneme manipulation

- Sounds/phonemes are represented by letters/graphemes
- Segmenting:
- Blending:
- Phoneme manipulation



# Engagement

- Meaningful
- Ownership
- Communication partners
- Having information around the classroom to use
- Clear, coherent and consistent messages
- Moving on at 75%-80% accuracy
- Moving quickly along when teaching older children who have not had phonics work but ensuring basics are there
- Moving quickly to polysyllabic words for older learners
- Ensuring high frequency words are in place for all learners
- Fast paced, and routine based instruction plus games
- Mad minutes, precision teaching, partners

# Retention

- Little and often
- Short sessions
- Distributed practice throughout the day

# Non-words

- Reading and spelling non-words
- A great way to assess code knowledge
- Working with a partner, one devise some nonsense words, and the other decode (read)
- Swap and this time, one devise some nonsense words and the other encode (spell)

# Error Correction and Scratch Spelling

- Depends at what stage in the code they are. Only correct the code knowledge they have been taught
- *Plait instead of plate. Say 'that is one of the ways we can write 'ae' and underline it in their words. In this word, ae is written in a different way. Practice the different ways you can write ae in this word and see if you can spot the correct one.*
- *If they cannot see, then tell them*

# Error correction and reading

- Say the sounds and blend the word
- Use your finger and sweep under the words
- Model decoding and blending
- Say 'x' here
- Paired reading activities

# High Frequency words

- e|**ve**|ry|one, e|**ve**|ry, di|**ffe**|rent.
- The reason for this is because we elide syllables in some words. For example, the word 'different', a three-syllable word, is usually said as 'diffrent', a two-syllable.
- The word 'every', a three-syllable word, is usually spoken in everyday talk as 'evry', a two-syllable word.
- Pupils may need to use a spelling voice. There are also problems with sounds that are elided, such as the /n / in 'government', the spelling of which is greatly helped by saying it precisely in its syllables: 'gu' 'vern' 'ment'.

# Dyslexia

- Uta Frith
- <http://Uta Frith>

# The working definition of dyslexia, British Psychological Society, 1999

*"Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops very incompletely or with great difficulty. This focuses on literacy learning at the 'word level' and implies that the problem is severe and persistent despite appropriate learning opportunities. It provides the basis for a staged process of assessment through teaching. "*



# Working Definition

- The working definition requires that three aspects be evaluated through the assessment process:
- First, assessment needs to consider whether the pupil is learning/has learnt accurate and **fluent word reading and /or spelling** very incompletely. In the context of the National Literacy Strategy, dyslexia can be defined as marked and persistent problems at the word level of the framework.
- Second, whether appropriate learning opportunities have been provided and,
- Third, whether progress has been made only as a result of much additional effort/instruction and that difficulties have, nevertheless, persisted.
- To be useful, the assessment needs to lead to workable plans of action.

# Working Definition

- ‘Very incompletely’: The accuracy and fluency of word reading and spelling can be assessed normatively through standardised tests and informally through a series of literacy related tasks that reflect the teaching that has taken place.
- The conclusion that the acquisition of reading and spelling is ‘very incomplete’ depends on the age and developmental stage of the learner. It triggers an investigation of factors that may be important in understanding the nature of the difficulties being experienced and in identifying ways of overcoming or alleviating them.

# Working Definition

‘Persistent’ in the light of response to additional teaching can then involve the ***monitoring of rate of learning progress through methods such as single-subject experimental research and precision teaching.*** These methods offer a set of strategies for carrying out ***focused assessments of pupil performance over time*** and for ***recording progress in a way that facilitates judgements about accuracy and fluency of performance.***

# Working Definition

Dyslexia is regarded primarily as a mainstream educational issue involving a ***continuum of assistance*** as determined by the severity and persistence of word reading and spelling difficulties.

# Summary

- Dyslexia is regarded primarily as a mainstream educational issue.
- This implies that teachers work to develop effective school-based assessment, intervention and monitoring
- Given the tools for interactive assessment and teaching it is possible to monitor progress in early literacy learning and to notice which children continue to need help.

# Summary

- With increased knowledge of literacy learning and literacy difficulties in the primary school, monitored intervention can take place early enough to ensure that the process of interactive assessment and teaching does not result in any unnecessary delay for those learners with severe and persistent difficulties.

# Potential difficulties



# Neurodevelopmental arc

- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- ADHD
- ASC
- Dysgraphia
- SLI
- Hypermobility



# Features of dyslexic pupils

- A dyslexic child will process information, particularly the written word, slower than other people. Effective learning in the classroom is dependent on two factors; the pupil understanding how s/he learns and the teacher being flexible enough to adapt their teaching approaches
- Expectations should be high for intellectual stimulation but reasonable for their written response and pupils should be placed in groups according to their intellectual ability levels. They may be orally confident but struggle to put their ideas into words.

# Different kinds of memory

Kind	Duration	Type of Info	Example
Short-term	Seconds	Verbal or Non-Verbal	New phone number
Working	Seconds	Any kind	Lengthy directions
Episodic	Hours to Days	Details of particular experiences	What was for lunch
Autobiographical	Lifetime	Basic facts, conceptual knowledge	Wedding day
Semantic	Lifetime	Knowledge, and personal facts	Capitals of world
Procedural	Lifetime	Any automatic skill	Driving

# So...how to work with dyslexic pupils

- Frequent
- Systematic
- Effective
- High Quality
- Consistent
- Breaking the Code
- Logical
- Developmental
- Developing Reading and Spelling together
- Activity: How to achieve the above with Year 3 pupils and above. Think and Discuss

# How to support dyslexic pupils in the classroom

- Encourage and praise as much as possible. Think 3:1
- Compact homework
- Mark written work on content not spelling or punctuation. Lots of ticks will be better than crossings out
- Make sure instructions are understood
- Consider organisational tools to support executive skills
- Be accepting but don't make assumptions about what the child knows
- Tell them what you want rather than what you do not want

# How to support dyslexic pupils in the classroom

- Be available to answer questions
- Plan lessons carefully: small sequential steps are required for maximum learning potential
- Having differentiated notes on classroom topics will help
- Allow extra time for copying from the board, taking notes or **Dictation**. Provide note sheets for those who are not yet at copying or note-taking stage
- Space text when writing on the board
- Test through oral knowledge, especially in the early years. Do not rely on written skills until they are at a sufficient level
- Teach concepts rather than asking the child to read a long text

# How to support dyslexic pupils in the classroom

- Target key facts. Organise, teach, recap and test keywords when setting comprehension exercises
- Discuss with the child whether reading aloud in class is helpful
- Gather their view and understand them
- Give short bursts of information at a time and do not overload working memory
- Give homework in the middle of the lesson so that all children understand the topic
- Compare each child to their own progress
- Only mark the spellings you are particularly targeting
- Use technologies where possible: Dragon Naturally Speaking, Reading Pens, laptops
- Encourage touch-typing
- Encourage PowerPoint and other alternative visual and spatial forms of reflecting knowledge

# Supporting Writing

## Ideas for Written work

- Writing Frames and Planners
- Writing Checklist to tick off as writing progresses
- Close Texts/Sentences to complete
- Sentence/text/picture jumbles to rearrange
- Multiple choices
- Mapping/Draw a line to link...
- Personalised word books with useful phrases/vocabulary (link to type of writing e.g. persuasive words/ descriptive words)
- Pie Corbett and Julia Strong: Talk for Writing Across the Curriculum

## Ideas for Written work

- Highlighting/Underlining
- Key rings/word mats for useful/tricky vocabulary
- Alphabet strips & letter formation and joining guide stuck to table
- Word building kits
- Spelling Choice cards/posters and consonant and vowel charts
- Coloured paper
- Tramlines and margins to aid height and placement of writing on page.
- Mini – whiteboards for ‘guessing’ before checking in dictionary
- Electronic Dictionaries/Thesaurus
- Word Processing/Spell Checking
- Clicker Computer Programme (Crick Software) for on screen word grids.
- Writing Buddies

# Supporting Reading

- Little and Often
- Reading Accuracy passages
- Word building
- Blending and phoneme manipulation practice
- Precision teaching



# Technology

- BDA Technology Pages
  
- App Wheel