

This is general information for your knowledge and understanding of ways you can support students with learning disabilities. It is important to remember that Dyslexia affects all people differently. Speak with the student and family to understand how Dyslexia affects the student and their learning and environmental needs. It is not Tutor Doctor's role to suggest a learning disability is present in a student, diagnose learning disabilities, suggest a course of action with the school, or to suggest treatment for learning disabilities.

What is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is one of the most well-known learning disabilities, affecting between 5 and 10% of the population. It is a difficulty in understanding and working with language that presents as difficulty with reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension; writing; and spelling. Brain imaging studies have shown that there are differences in the brain structure and function in people who have dyslexia, but it is important to understand that dyslexia is not connected in any way to a person's intelligence.

Dyslexia is not seeing letters in the wrong order and/or backward. Many children write letters backward or in the wrong order when learning to read and write, and this isn't a symptom of dyslexia.

What does Dyslexia impact?

Dyslexia can affect:

- **Phonemic Awareness:** the understanding that language is made up of different sounds.
 - Understanding that sounds are represented by one or more letters
 - Recognizing differences in phonemes (sounds)
 - Recognizing and creating rhyme
- **Decoding:** the ability to match letters to their sounds
- Reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension
- Understanding of grammar and sentence structure
- The ability to recognize sight words or remember how to spell words they have studied before
- Solving word problems in math
- Math skills and number sense
- The ability to understand and follow directions
- Recalling directions, words, phrases, and/or names of people and objects
- Pronunciation
- Understanding of jokes, puns, sarcasm, and/or idioms
- The ability to express ideas in an organized way
- Note taking
- The ability to interpret body language and nonverbal cues
- Navigation and sense of direction
- Spatial concepts- like knowing left from right
- Telling time
- The ability to create and stick to a schedule

Strategies for Supporting Students Who Have Dyslexia:

- Give the student ample time to complete tasks or give answers.
- Reduce background noise and auditory distractions.
- Use speech to text software such as *Dragon NaturallySpeaking*.
- Use text to speech software like *Read & Write Gold*, *Home Page Reader*, or *eReader*.
- Try picture dictionaries.
- Highlight different parts of speech and/or grammar rules in written texts.
- Create and use flashcards together to help memorize spelling words.
- Use visual aids such as diagrams and images.
- Bring creativity into tutoring sessions- students with dyslexia often have a very creative side.
- Trace letters in sand.
- Clap out syllables in words.
- Use audio books and/or reading apps.
- Choose books that align with the student's interests.
- Play rhyming games.
- Practice reading and build confidence in reading aloud by having the student read to the family pet or stuffed animal.
- Use graphic organizers to help organize thoughts and ideas.