

A circular botanical illustration border surrounds the central text. It features various plants including ferns, a red maple leaf, a green leaf with a white vein, a yellow flower, a purple flower, and a green leaf with a white vein. The background is a light blue-grey color.

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# Dyslexia

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# What is dyslexia?

“Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty that mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills. It is likely to be present at birth and to be life-long in its effects. It is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed, and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual's other cognitive abilities. It tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods.”

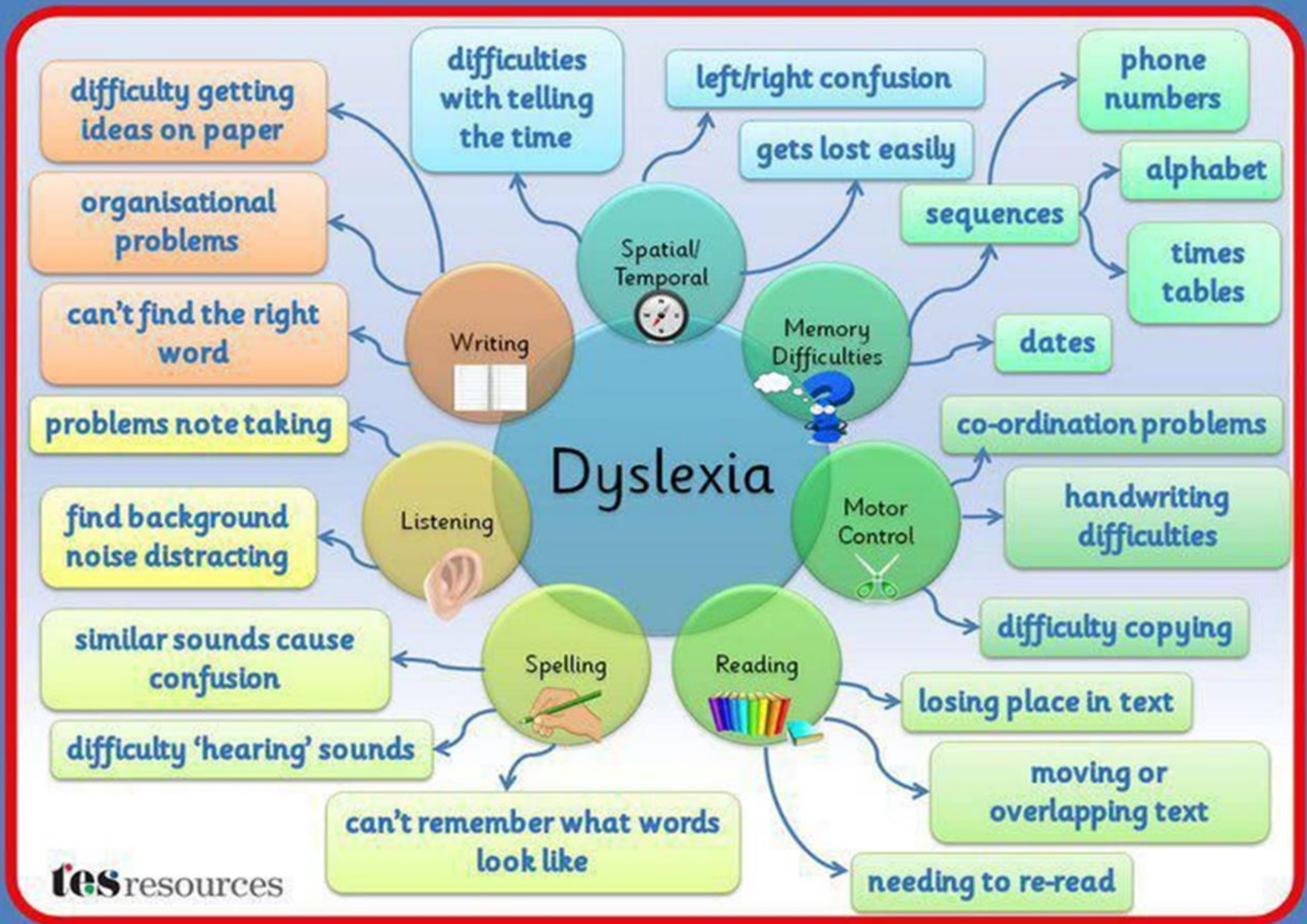
Dyslexia Action



# Types of dyslexia







# Potential Educational Issues

The most common difficulty is within literacy. It often takes far more persistence and effort to gain reading and writing skills. Even when these have been acquired to a good level, there can still be persistent problems relating to:



- Speed;
- Comprehension (understanding what has been read);
- Fluency of reading;
- Spelling;
- Written expression, etc.
- Due to weaknesses within memory systems there can be problems with:
- Organisational skills;
- Completing complex tasks;
- Prioritising;
- Sequencing
- Remembering messages or lists of instructions;
- Handling information that requires using sequencing, etc.

**Numeracy can also create problems for dyslexic individuals; not so much with the concepts, but with the associated processes and procedures. Common difficulties can include:**

- Making calculations (particularly complex calculations with a sequence of steps);
- Recognising/confusing symbols and their associated concepts;
- Drawing shapes and/or graphs;
- Remembering multiplication tables, etc.
- Potential Issues in Social Interaction

**Difficulties can also be found for some within social interaction. For example::**

- Remembering names;
- Finding the correct name/term for something;
- Incorrect use of tone of voice;

- Taking language literally, leading to difficulty with sarcasm and subtle humour;
- Confusing words and phrases (e.g.: "par cark" for car park, and "six of one a dozen of the other", etc.)

This can lead to embarrassment and a fear of saying the wrong or inappropriate thing.

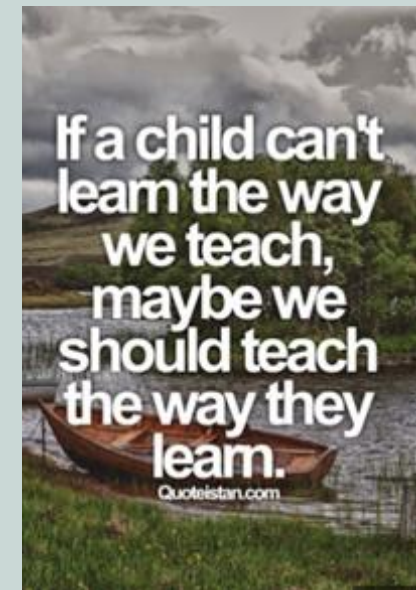
It can also make an individual appear "slow" in their interactions with others as they may need more time to process incoming information. For example they may not laugh quickly enough when the punch line of a joke is delivered, or they may miss the point of a joke entirely if there is a play on words.

The impact that dyslexia can have is capable of dramatically narrowing an individual's horizons. Fortunately, many individuals who are dyslexic do develop very good coping strategies although there are those who will need a good deal of coaching and support to assist them in developing these.

# Direct Teaching V Inclusive Teaching



- Dyslexia presents itself differently. Some children will have barriers to learning and others will have found ways of coping and masking.
- Screeners can be good if used correctly. An official test is expensive and will give a label, this only helps for GCSEs. Year 6 children can be supported with a reader and extra time regardless of a diagnosis.
- It is important that we get to know all children and recognise their barriers (dyslexic or not) and find ways that they learn. There is no one fits all rule. Not all children will need the same intervention.
- Interventions are important and children must be taught how to read and spell. Each intervention could look very different depending on the child's need and how they learn. It is important that we reflect on interventions and admit when something isn't working. If a child has had years of phonic teaching that has had no impact then we must look at other ways of teaching.

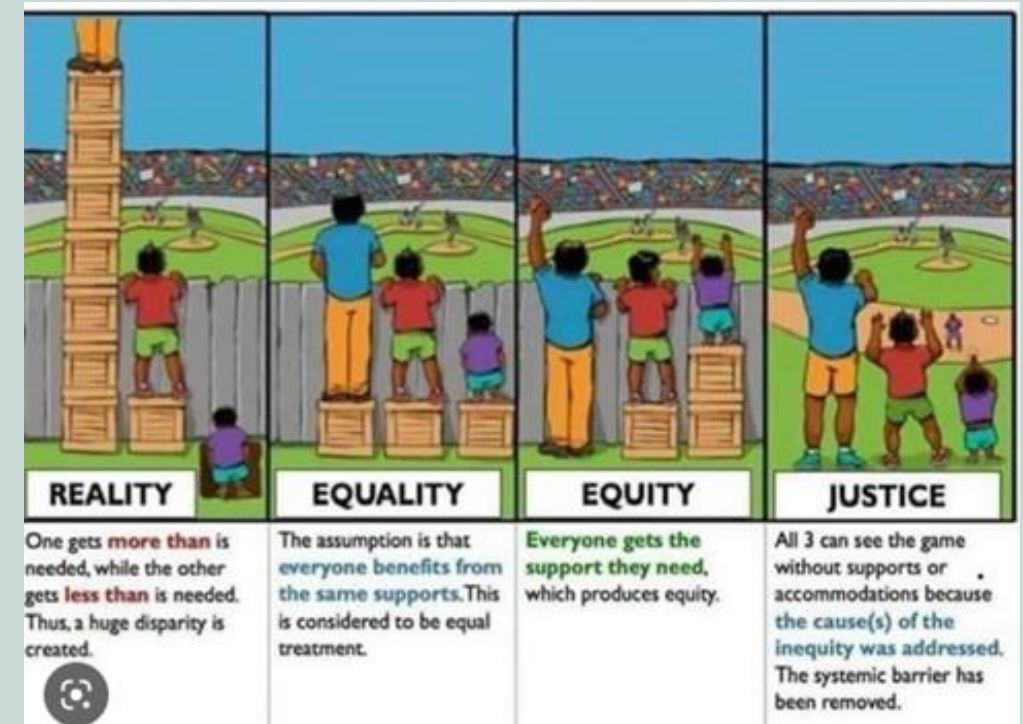




# Direct Teaching V Inclusive Teaching



- Interventions are essential when teaching missing elements, skills and knowledge, but what is really important is that we are allowing all children access to learning every moment that they are in class. They should not be limited to learning and making progress in a 20 minute intervention. This is why it is so important that we make our classrooms dyslexic friendly. We must make sure that we remove barriers for children who can't read or spell and we must allow them to have the same start point as others.



# How to make our classrooms dyslexia friendly: What children need



- Everyone has a unique pattern of strengths and weaknesses, and learns things at a different pace and in a different way. Therefore an environment that tries to take account of and that values such differences and the diversity that they bring to the learning experience is likely to be more successful than one that takes a “one size fits all approach”.
- A lot of things that would be beneficial for a dyslexic individual will in fact be of benefit to a lot of others as well. A great deal of what is cited as “dyslexia friendly good practice” is in fact simply: “good practice”! You may well find that you do a significant amount of it anyway without really considering it as being dyslexia friendly - often we do these things simply because we know that they work.
- It should also be noted that many mild-to-moderate dyslexic individuals will not receive any additional support, and indeed may go through education with their dyslexia unnoticed. In such cases, being in a dyslexia friendly environment can make a significant difference to these individuals and improve attainment levels.



# Teachers who are easy to learn from



- At the start of the lesson, they are clear about what they want us to do.
- Show us as well as tell us.
- Give us time to listen.
- Use pictures and structural material.
- Show enthusiasm for the subject.
- Let us ask questions.
- Help when we get stuck.
- Are patient with our mistakes.
- Are nice to us – please do not shout when we get it wrong.
- Create a peaceful environment in the classroom.
- Understand us and spend time helping us.
- Prepared to repeat instructions.
- Happy to answer questions.
- Proactively check we are doing it right.
- Explain, check that we understand.
- Write things down clearly.
- Teach the basic information “without rambling on about other things”.
- Smile when we ask for help.

# Teachers who are difficult to learn from



- Give too many instructions too fast.
- Don't check when we have understood.
- Get angry when we haven't understood.
- Don't encourage or allow us to ask questions.
- Rush us and tell us off if we don't get enough done.
- Don't let us think for long enough before we have to start.
- Shout.
- Show us up in front of the class (asking for test scores or to read out loud).
- Put writing on the board that we can't read.
- Stand in front of the board so we can't see it.
- Rub it off the board before we can copy it down.
- Overemphasis on grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Too much writing.
- Dictation.
- Too much reading.
- Having to remember facts or formulae.
- Don't give us enough time.
- Make us copy from the board.
- Put us down in front of the class.
- Are unwilling to explain.