



## Dyslexia Research Information.

### BDA definition of dyslexia.

Dyslexia is best described as a combination of abilities and difficulties that affect the learning process in one or more of reading, spelling, writing. Accompanying weaknesses may be identified in areas of speed of processing, short-term memory, sequencing and organisation, auditory and/or visual perception, spoken language and motor skills. It is particularly related to mastering and using written language, which may include alphabetic, numeric and musical notation.

Some dyslexics have outstanding creative skills. Others have strong oral skills. Some have no outstanding talents. **They all have strengths.** Dyslexia can occur despite normal intellectual ability and teaching. It is independent of socio-economic or language background."(The Dyslexia Handbook 2002, p67.)

### History.

**The first diagnosis of developmental dyslexia** mentioned in any publication appeared in The British Medical Journal, 7 November 1896. "A Case of Congenital Word Blindness" by W. Pringle Morgan, M.B. Seaford, Sussex.

It was an account of a 14 year old boy, Percy.

"...in spite of this laborious and persistent training, he can only with difficulty spell out words of one syllable". "The schoolmaster who taught him for some years says that he would be the smartest lad in the school if the instruction were entirely oral." (The Dyslexia Handbook 1996, p11-14.)

**The definition recommended by the Research Group of Developmental Dyslexia of the World Federation of Neurology in 1968** reads:

"A disorder manifested by a difficulty in learning to read despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence and socio-cultural opportunity. It is dependent upon fundamental cognitive difficulties which are frequently of a constitutional character."

"**Dyslexia constitutes a Special Educational Need** as defined by the 1993 Education Act having been first recognised by Parliament in the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970."(The Dyslexia Handbook 1996 p10.) It is one of several Specific Learning Difficulties.

## **Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD).**

These include:

- Dysphasia, speech and language delay and/or deficit.
- Dyspraxia, motor and co-ordination difficulties.
- Attention Deficit Disorder with or without Hyperactivity (ADD/ADHD).
- Autism, Aspergers Syndrome, Tourette Syndrome.
- Dyslexia.

In some cases,

- more than one SpLD may occur, or
- dyslexia with a tendency towards one of the other SpLDs, or
- one SpLD with dyslexia as an outcome.

(See [Related Organisations](#) for contact details.)

## **The incidence of dyslexia.**

A study by Nathalie Badian in 1984 suggested that in the Western world, dyslexia was thought to be four times more common in males than females and affected 4% of the population severely, regardless of socio-economic status, race or level of intelligence. However, a more recent study suggests that the gender ratio is more equal. (Zabell C and Everatt J, 2000.) Many studies of incidence have produced varying figures because they have used different criteria. This means, in effect, one child in every classroom will need ongoing appropriate specialist teaching throughout his/her time in school and support in further education, training and employment.

It has been suggested that up to 10% of the population (or even more) show some signs of dyslexia, particularly when it is present in other members of the family. (See Pennington B F (1991) *Diagnosing Learning Disorders*, New York; Guilford).

It is not a disease to be cured; nor do people "grow out" of it.

Early recognition and appropriate intervention can ameliorate its effects. Dyslexic people learn to accommodate to a greater or lesser degree depending on their own personality and the type of support they have received from both home and school.

Individuals will experience difficulties throughout their lives and the majority learn to develop strategies to enable them to cope most of the time, although in stress situations all the original problems can recur.

Many achieve academically and go on to further and higher education. Some have special talents, e.g. in art, architecture, or engineering.

(See [Successful dyslexics](#))

## **Sources of research information about dyslexia.**

Students should ask tutors who set research essays to suggest relevant articles. These could be requested from the British Library through any public library or (probably) directly for a fee.

**COPAC** provides free access to the merged online catalogues of some of the largest university research libraries in the UK and Ireland.

COPAC Helpdesk, Email: [copac@mimas.ac.uk](mailto:copac@mimas.ac.uk)

Web: <http://copac.ac.uk/copac>

**The British Library** has over 1,000 journal titles covering education, psychology, cognition and learning.

**Google Scholar** allows the user to search through a variety of academic literature (including books, theses, peer-reviewed papers, preprints, abstracts and technical reports).

Web: [www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com)

## **Relevant Journals include:**

Annals of Dyslexia: London Library.

International Dyslexia Association Web: [www.interdys.org](http://www.interdys.org)

British Journal of Educational Psychology.

British Psychology Journal, Cognition. Both British Psychological Society Web: [www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk)

Dyslexia Journal. Wiley. Web: [www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-DYS.html](http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-DYS.html)

Irish Journal of Psychology. Web: [http://www.psihq.ie/comms\\_irishjournal.asp](http://www.psihq.ie/comms_irishjournal.asp)

Journal of Research in SEN, NASEN Research database, NASEN. Web: [www.nasen.org.uk](http://www.nasen.org.uk)

Journal of Research in Reading, Reading (both UKRA)

Web: [www.blackwellpublishers.co.uk/journals/JRIR/descript.htm](http://www.blackwellpublishers.co.uk/journals/JRIR/descript.htm)

New Scientist occasionally has relevant articles. Web: [www.newscientist.com](http://www.newscientist.com)

Reading Research Quarterly. International Reading Association. Web: [www.reading.org](http://www.reading.org)

**See also books, magazines, e.g.**

David Fulton (Publishers) Ltd. Web: [www.fultonpublishers.co.uk](http://www.fultonpublishers.co.uk)

Special Children, Questions Publishing Ltd. Web: [www.education-quest.com](http://www.education-quest.com)

**Disability-Research and SpLD Discussion Lists.** Web: [www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/disability-research.html](http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/disability-research.html) and Web: [www.jiscmail.ac.uk/archives/spld.html](http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/archives/spld.html)

**Berkshire Mathematics.** Mahesh Sharma research information.

**National Literacy Trust.** Web: [www.literacytrust.org.uk/database/dysresearch.html](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/database/dysresearch.html)

**The Dyslexia Research Trust, Oxford.**

Web: [www.dyslexic.org.uk](http://www.dyslexic.org.uk)

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