



What Does Dyslexia Mean For Me?

Everyone is different and so are all dyslexic people. Dyslexia affects people in different ways. Dyslexia is nothing to be ashamed of. Many people see their dyslexia as an advantage.

1. Explaining my dyslexia to others.

Dyslexic people often say it is difficult to explain their dyslexia. These are some of the things they say:

- "My brain is wired differently."
- "It's like my computer crashing with too much information!"
- "I know what I want to say, but I can never find the right words."
- "I see things from a different perspective."
- "I have all the right ideas, but I can't get them down on paper."
- "Speaking out in front of other people makes me stumble and forget what I was trying to say."

When talking to employers and tutors you may need to be more specific. Be honest about everything you find difficult but emphasise ways you have found to get around these problems, for example:

- "My spelling is poor, but I use a spellchecker and for an important document I ask a colleague to proof read."
- "I find a series of instructions difficult to follow but if I have time to make notes or a written list I can do the job."
- "I sometimes have to work harder and in a different way."

2. Understanding the way I think.

Dyslexic people hear and see normally but have difficulty remembering what they hear and see. This is called processing information. Brain scan experiments have shown that dyslexic people use different areas of the brain to process information.

A report by a psychologist or specialist dyslexia teacher (if you have had an assessment) should be able to identify your individual strengths and weaknesses.

We all absorb information in different ways. Some people learn best through listening, some by seeing and others by doing. There are also combinations of these. Understanding how you absorb and process information is useful in the workplace or during study.

3. We all have our own learning styles.

This is the way we process information best. If you can identify your learning style you can improve the way you work.

There are three main learning styles;

- Auditory - using sounds and words.
- Visual - using your own images, imaging pictures in your mind.
- Kinaesthetic - active learning, doing, touching, practising things.

There can be any combination of these, for example, auditory-visual or auditory-kinaesthetic. All three styles together are known as meta-cognitive learning.

Look at these lists of activities related to each area of learning. Think of your learning experience. Try to identify activities which you know would suit you best. This can provide a rough guide to your learning style.

Auditory:

- Audio tape.
- Dictation.
- Lectures.
- Video conferencing.
- Radio.
- Discussion.
- Using mnemonics to remember facts.
- Taking part in debates.
- Reading aloud.

Visual:

- Computer based learning.
- Videos/TV.
- Photographs.
- OHP presentations.
- Pictures.
- Diagrams.
- Using interactive CD-Roms.
- Using mind maps, flow charts.
- Colour coding your notes.

Kinaesthetic:

- Interactive CD-Roms.
- Field Trips.
- Computer based learning.
- Activity based learning.
- Visits.

- Rehearsing and performing.
- Using movement to stimulate memory.
- Drawing diagrams and mind maps.
- Using games.

Your dyslexia may cause you personal difficulties as well as the more obvious task related problems. You may not be very self-confident. It is important that you are able to accept the areas you have strengths and those where you have weaknesses. Try not to worry if you cannot do a task, everyone has weaknesses. Having a positive and honest attitude will gain you much respect.

4. People remember:

- 10% of what they read.
- 20% of what they hear.
- 30% of what they see.
- 50% of what they hear and see.
- 70% of what they say and write.
- 90% of what they say as they do something.