Experience Dyslexia®
A Learning Disabilities Simulation

Presented By: GCISD Literacy Interventionists
International Dyslexia Association - Northern California Branch
What is dyslexia?
Overview of Dyslexia

The International Dyslexia Association defines “dyslexia” in the following way:

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

(Adopted by the International Dyslexia Association Board of Directors, November 12, 2002)
Bottom Line

- Unexpected
- Not the result of poor/ lack of instruction/curriculum
- Difficulty with written language
  - Reading, writing, and spelling
- Underlying difficulty with phonological awareness - sound system of our language
“While no two brains are alike, the brains of people with dyslexia are distinctly different compared to those without dyslexia.” Dr. Gordon Sherman
Before

Child #1 with Reading Difficulties

After

Child #2 with Reading Difficulties

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What dyslexia is not...Myths about dyslexia

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Letter or number reversals are the best indicator of dyslexia

Specialized Fonts help people with Dyslexia

Vision therapy or colored lenses will cure dyslexia

Specific working memory training programs cure dyslexia

Students with dyslexia will outgrow it
Language Based Disability - Characteristics of Dyslexia

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**Preschool**

- Delay in learning to talk
- Difficulty with rhyming
- Difficulty pronouncing words (e.g., “pusgetti” for “spaghetti,” “mawn lower” for “lawn mower”)
- Poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants
- Difficulty in adding new vocabulary words
- Inability to recall the right word (word retrieval)
- Trouble learning and naming letters and numbers and remembering the letters in his/her name
- Aversion to print (e.g., doesn’t enjoy following along if book is read aloud)
Language Based Disability - Characteristics of Dyslexia

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**Kindergarten and First Grade**

- Difficulty breaking words into smaller parts (syllables) (e.g., “baseball” can be pulled apart into “base” “ball” or “napkin” can be pulled apart into “nap” “kin”)
- Difficulty identifying and manipulating sounds in syllables (e.g., “man” sounded out as /m/ /a/ /n/)
- Difficulty remembering the names of letters and recalling their corresponding sounds
- Difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation)
- Difficulty spelling words the way they sound (phonetically) or remembering letter sequences in very common words seen often in print (e.g., “sed” for “said”)
Language Based Disability - Characteristics of Dyslexia

Second Grade and Third Grade

Many of the previously described behaviors remain problematic along with the following:

- Difficulty recognizing common sight words (e.g., “to,” “said,” “been”) x Difficulty decoding single words
- Difficulty recalling the correct sounds for letters and letter patterns in reading
- Difficulty connecting speech sounds with appropriate letter or letter combinations and omitting letters in words for spelling (e.g., “after” spelled “eftr”)
- Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics
- Reliance on picture clues, story theme, or guessing at words x Difficulty with written expression
Many of the previously described behaviors remain problematic along with the following:

- Difficulty reading aloud (e.g., fear of reading aloud in front of classmates)
- Avoidance of reading (e.g., particularly for pleasure)
- Acquisition of less vocabulary due to reduced independent reading
- Use of less complicated words in writing that are easier to spell than more appropriate words (e.g., “big” instead of “enormous”)
- Reliance on listening rather than reading for comprehension
Language Based Disability - Characteristics of Dyslexia

Middle School and High School

Many of the previously described behaviors remain problematic along with the following:

- Difficulty with the volume of reading and written work
- Frustration with the amount of time required and energy expended for reading
- Difficulty with written assignments
- Tendency to avoid reading (particularly for pleasure)
- Difficulty learning a foreign language

Information from Texas Dyslexia Handbook
What do students with dyslexia need?

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Intervention (carry over to classroom)

Accommodations

Empathy and understanding from teachers
Reading

Reading is NOT a natural process it must be taught.
Importance of assistive technology (Learning Ally)
Simulation Time

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Learn to Read - Simulates reading/decoding difficulty

Write or Left - Simulates copying or writing difficulty

Write with Mirrors - simulates visual-motor/ writing difficult

Listen to Me - Simulates auditory/ attention difficulty
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<thead>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<td>Color</td>
<td>Tidal Zone</td>
<td>How Many Teacher Saw</td>
<td>How Many I Saw</td>
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<td>Bat star</td>
<td>orange</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ochre star</td>
<td>purple</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ochre star</td>
<td>orange</td>
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<td>purple</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Giant green anemone</td>
<td>light green</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Aggregating anemone</td>
<td>dark green</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Shield limpet</td>
<td>brown &amp; white</td>
<td>1,2 &amp; 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lined chiton</td>
<td>pink</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mussel</td>
<td>blue &amp; black</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lots!</td>
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<td>Lined shore crab</td>
<td>green</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Purple shore crab</td>
<td>purple</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Glossary:** aggregating anemone, giant green anemone, acorn barnacle, stalked barnacle, lined chiton, lined shore crab, purple shore crab, kelp crab, shield limpet, mussel, periwinkle, black turban snail, bat star, ochre star, sea urchin

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Final thoughts...

Questions:
● How did this activity make you feel?
● What were you thinking?
● How did you behave as a result?
● How does this change what you think/feel about your child’s learning/ completing work at home?
Something to leave with.....

“As a kid I had a hard time reading in school. I was the kid who would go one period a day to the class for kids with learning disabilities.”