Inclusive design, Dyslexia and Usability

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Dyslexia

- a general term for disorders that involve difficulty in learning to read or interpret words, letters, and other symbols, but that do not affect general intelligence.
- On average 1 in 5 of all people in the world have dyslexia. – Dr. Sally Shaywitz, Yale Center for Dyslexia & Creativity.
- Dyslexia is not due to either lack of intelligence or desire to learn; with appropriate teaching methods, students with dyslexia can learn successfully.
- Dyslexia is the most common learning disability
Dyslexia and me,

- Didn’t fully read chapter books till 4th grade
- Still flip letters when writing papers / discussion responses but not when writing code
- Coding is more like solving a problem then actually writing
- Coding clicked for me easily unlike phonics when I was younger, it just made sense

This is a good website to understand what it is like to try to read with dyslexia: http://geon.github.io/programming/2016/03/03/dsxyliea
Usability and Dyslexia

To ask or not to ask that is the question?

The answer is always - ask but in a respectful way.
Usability and environment

Not all testing setups make the results true.

Asking the participants - non-dyslexic and dyslexic how and where they use the software/app/website

What does the area look like where they do this?

These questions can tell us more about how maybe a usability session might get affected by these factors- maybe even being able to mimic that environment within testing as well
Branch out

Don’t be afraid to get advice from people with learning disabilities on your software/website/app

Most learning disabilities don’t effect the actual intelligence of the person

Fellow UX researchers, Engineers, Designers are great resources for testing and inclusive design
Inclusive Design and Dyslexia

What is done in print media to make it easier on Dyslexic people and how can we implement similar accommodations to software / app / website content:

Bigger text

More space in between words / paragraphs

Ability to change background color in order to help with navigation of a site / software / app (color transparent sheets are often used in schools to help children with dyslexia be able to read with more ease)
Inclusive design and testing

When doing usability testing and trying to also do inclusive design—things to consider

- Font type - present several different fonts
- Font size - present different sizes
- Level and type of dyslexia the user has
In the end...

Ask more questions

Do more research

Use colleagues with disabilities for sounding boards

Understand many learning disabilities do not affect the actual intellect of the person

Inclusive design benefits not only the user with disabilities but the general population as well