What is Dyslexia?

Created in partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Education
Literacy Ambassadors 2020
What is Dyslexia?

A language-based disability

Main Challenges

abc Matching Letter Symbols to Sound
De-coding meaning
Reading
I am here.

Matching Sounds to Letter Symbols
En-coding meaning
Writing and Spelling
You are funny.

How many?
20%

Dyslexia runs in families:

Dyslexia is a spectrum disorder.

Mild Moderate Severe
“Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological 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.”

IDA, 2002 (dyslexiaida.org)
Deconstructing the Definition Activity
1. “Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin.
2. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.
3. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected.
4. In relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction.
5. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.”
Particular Deficits in those with Dyslexia
Phonological Deficits

Difficulty with phonemic awareness (blending, segmenting, manipulating sounds in words) and in attaining, remembering, and using sound/symbol knowledge to decode words.
Naming Speed Deficits

Difficulty with:

• rapid naming tasks (numbers, letters)
• automaticity with word reading and decoding
• ultimately affects fluency
Double Deficit Dyslexia:

Difficulty with BOTH phonology and rapid naming

(Wolf & Bowers, 1999)
Myths about Dyslexia
Definitions and Types

“Two Truths and a Lie”
Q1: Dyslexia

1. Is primarily a visual issue
2. Is primarily a phonological issue
3. Can be related to both phonology and fluency
Q2: Dyslexia is

1. Based in the brain
2. The result of ineffective instruction
3. A spectrum condition
Q3: Dyslexia

1. can be related to motivation
2. is related to intelligence
3. can be related to comprehension issues
Q4: Dyslexia

1. affects reading, writing, and spelling
2. can affect oral language
3. is related only to reading
Reconstructing the Definition in Simpler Terms Activity