

## What Are the Warning Signs of Dyslexia?

The following are common signs of dyslexia in people of different ages. If you or someone you know displays these signs, it doesn't necessarily mean you have a learning disability. But if troubles continue over time, consider testing for dyslexia.

### Dyslexia: Warning Signs By Age

<b>Young Children</b> <b>Trouble With:</b>	<b>School-Age Children</b> <b>Trouble With:</b>	<b>Teenagers and Adults</b> <b>Trouble With:</b>
Recognizing letters, matching letters to sounds and blending sounds into speech Pronouncing words, for example saying “mawn lower” instead of “lawn mower” Learning and correctly using new vocabulary words Learning the alphabet, numbers, and days of the week or similar common word sequences Rhyming	Mastering the rules of spelling Remembering facts and numbers Handwriting or with gripping a pencil Learning and understanding new skills; instead, relying heavily on memorization Reading and spelling, such as reversing letters (d, b) or moving letters around (left, felt) Following a sequence of directions Trouble with word problems in math	Reading at the expected level Understanding non-literal language, such as idioms, jokes, or proverbs Reading aloud Organizing and managing time Trouble summarizing a story Learning a foreign language Memorizing

**Dyslexia** is a language-based processing disorder that can hinder reading, writing, spelling and speaking, as well as social interactions and self-esteem. Are you concerned that your child isn't learning, communicating or relating to others as successfully as his or her peers? Does your child especially struggle with reading? Is it affecting your child's confidence and motivation? If so, the following list of common warning signs of dyslexia in children in Grades 3–8 may help clarify your concerns.

Everyone struggles with learning at times. Learning disabilities (LD) such as dyslexia, however, are consistent and persist over time. The following list is a general guide, not a tool to identify dyslexia. Our [Interactive Learning Disabilities Checklist](#) is an additional resource to consider. Finally, be aware that some of the “symptoms” listed below also apply to other learning disabilities as well as other disorders such as [Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder \(ADHD\)](#), which often co-exists with LD .

### For at Least the Past Six Months, My Child Has Had Trouble

#### Language

- Understanding instructions or directions
- Repeating what has just been said in proper sequence.
- Staying on topic and getting to the point (gets bogged down in details).
- Naming people and objects.
- Speaking with precise, accurate language, proper grammar and a varied vocabulary.
- Distinguishing between words that sound similar.
- Pronouncing words correctly.
- Speaking smoothly, without much halting or use of “filler words” (like “um”).
- Rhyming.
- Understanding humor, puns and idioms.

## Reading

- Reading age-appropriate content with good fluency.
- Reading aloud or silently with good understanding.
- Feeling confident and interested in reading.
- Remembering sight words and other printed words.
- Learning and remembering new vocabulary words.
- Accurately analyzing unfamiliar words (tends to guess instead).
- Reading words and letters in the correct order, seldom reversing or skipping over them.
- Understanding word problems in math.

## Writing

- Mastering spelling rules.
- Spelling the same word consistently and correctly.
- Writing letters, numbers and symbols in the correct order.
- Proofreading and correcting self generated work.
- Expressing ideas in an organized way. (older children)
- Preparing/organizing writing assignments. (older children)
- Fully developing ideas in writing. (older children)
- Listening and taking notes at the same time.

## Social-Emotional

- Participating in a peer group and maintaining positive social status.
- Interpreting people's non-verbal cues, "body language," mood and tone of voice.
- Dealing with peer pressure, embarrassment, and expressing feelings appropriately.
- Setting realistic social goals.
- Maintaining positive self-esteem about learning and getting along with others.
- Maintaining confidence about "fitting in" with his classmates and other peers.

## Other

- Learning/remembering new skills; relies heavily on memorization.
- Remembering facts and numbers.
- Sense of direction/spatial concepts (such as left and right).
- Performing consistently on tasks from day to day.
- Applying skills from one situation to another.
- Learning new games and mastering puzzles.

If your child displays several of these warning signs, don't hesitate to seek help. Print this article, check off the warning signs that apply to your child and take the list to the professional(s) who you consult. With proper identification and support, your child will be better able to succeed in school, the workplace and in life. No one knows your child better than you do, so trust your instincts if you think help is needed. Being an advocate and taking early action can avoid frustration and help pave the way for a bright and productive future!