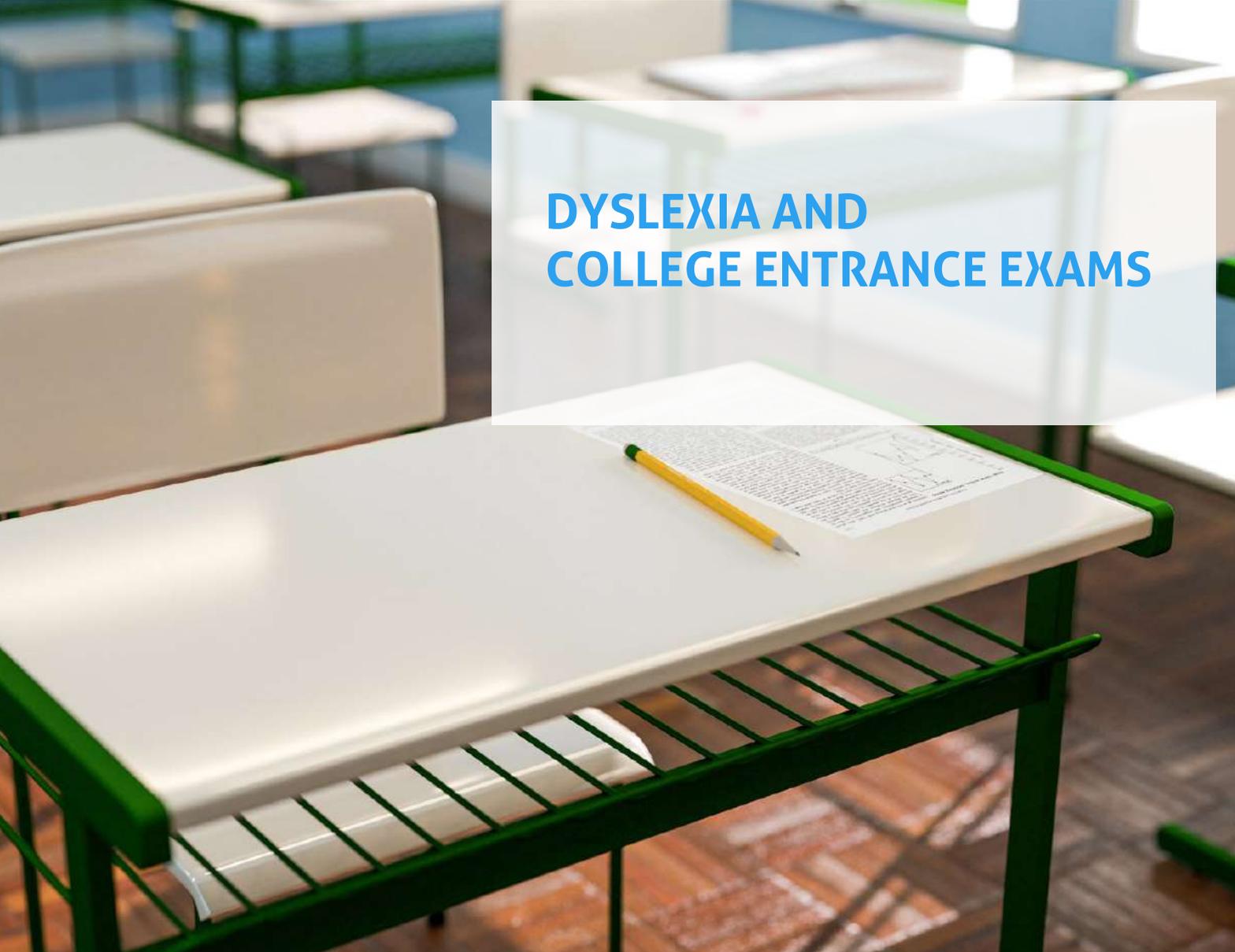


Dyslexic Advantage

NEWSLETTER



DYSLEXIA AND COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

- GUIDED REPEATED ORAL READING
- DYSLEXIA'S SOCCER
- DIGITAL SAT
- DYSLEXIA NEWS



Dear Friends

Hope everyone has having a happy and healthy July.

Big changes for college entrance exams - if you have a college-bound student, check things out. The digital SAT is better and now everyone can use a calculator.



Fernette Eide MD, Editor

Huge shout-out of thanks for our sponsors, Premium subscribers, and donors for life-changing resources they provide. If you're enjoying our book, please add a review at Amazon, Audible or somewhere else. It helps spread the positive message - and thank you!



The **NEUROLEARNING** Dyslexia Screening App is \$79.99 and available for children and adults 7-70 years old. iPad, iPhone, Android, and Kindle Fire.

The app may be used to identify and qualify for services such as Benetech's huge free library of e-books.

Thanks to Shelley Wear, Trish Seres, Michelle Williams, Cheryl Kahn, and Jack Martin. Thanks to Lady Grace Belarmino for design and layout and Andi and Freshea for their social media and admin help!

PREMIUM

Editor's Note: to make our publications easier to read, we will avoid use of italics and certain types of fonts.

Newsletters can be read online **HERE**. This issue will be available on the Joomag site for 3 months and can also be downloaded as a pdf file.



CONTENTS

DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE ISSUE 91 JULY 2023 NEWSLETTER

4

GUIDED REPEATED ORAL READING



8

DYSLEXIA'S SOCCER



16

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS



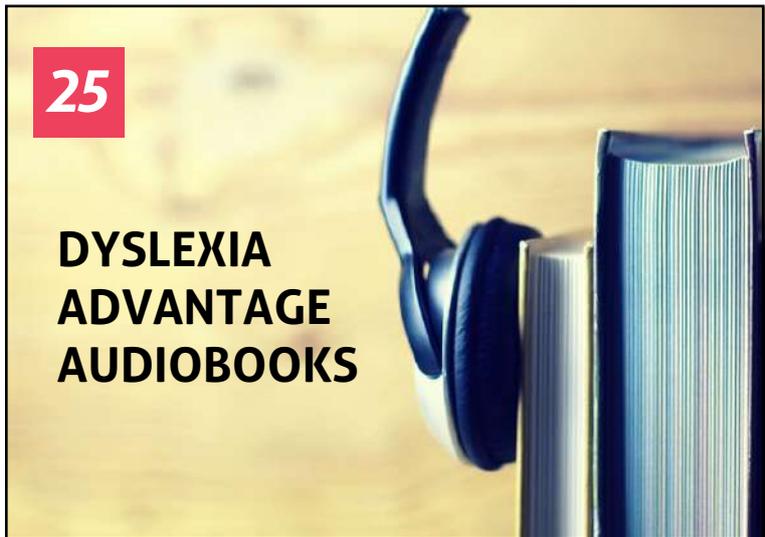
24

DYSLEXIA NEWS



25

DYSLEXIA ADVANTAGE AUDIOBOOKS



THE IMPORTANCE OF GUIDED REPEATED ORAL READING IN TRAINING OF SKILLED READERS

By Brock Eide, MD MA, co-founder of Dyslexic Advantage and Neurolearning SPC

In recent years, research on reading development has revealed that truly skilled reading requires two kinds of skills: the ability to quickly and accurately decode or “sound out” unfamiliar written words using the rules that govern letter-sound relationships; and the ability to recognize automatically or “on sight” most of the commonly used words in your language. Research has also shown that in most people these two abilities are developed sequentially, with decoding skills developing first, and sight word recognition later. Unfortunately, for most students who remain poor or “dysfluent” readers, including those with dyslexia, sight word recognition skills never fully develop, and they remain dependent upon slower decoding or sounding out strategies for most of the words they read.

Recently, two leading reading researchers from the United Kingdom, Professors Angela Fawcett and Rod Nicolson, have suggested that some of our common instructional practices for building basic reading skills may unintentionally be “fixing” many poor and dyslexic readers at the sounding out stage and making it harder for them to develop sight word skills. These researchers are experts on procedural learning in students with dyslexia. Procedural learning is the ability to make “how to” skills (such as decoding, spelling, and recognizing words “by sight”) automatic, so they can be performed both quickly and accurately, and without the use of conscious mental resources. Their work has shown that, on average, students with dyslexia are much slower in making these skills automatic than non-dyslexic ones; but frustratingly, they have also found that dyslexic students are much slower in unlearning any skills they have already made automated, so that those skills can be replaced with more efficient and effective skills



In the case of reading, their concern is as follows. If we teach students decoding first, then sight word reading later, we may unintentionally be making it harder for the ones with procedural learning challenges to ever advance from using decoding strategies to fluent sight word recognition. Their automatic response when seeing text will be to try to decode the words first, rather than try to recognize them as wholes.

To prevent this unintended “fixation” on decoding, these researchers proposed that students should practice strategies which encourage sight word recognition much earlier in the instructional process than it has typically been used—perhaps even simultaneously with the transition from basic letter-sound and sound manipulation instruction (phonological awareness) to instruction in phonics and word decoding.

According to the work of the National Reading Panel (NRP), one of the best techniques for teaching fluent reading based on sight word recognition is guided repeated oral reading, sometimes called “echo reading”. In this strategy, a skilled reader or “guide” will first read a passage, then the student will read the same passage back. The guide will then identify errors, re-demonstrate the correct reading, and have the student try again. The NRP found this practice to be effective in improving not only reading accuracy and speed, but also reading comprehension.

I recommend that guided repeated oral reading (typically 15-30 minutes daily) be started early for most of the students with dyslexia.

I would also highly recommend guided repeated oral reading for people of any age who want to improve their reading fluency.

GUIDED READING

Brief addendum from Fernette: What Brock is referring to is the beneficial practice of echo reading passages (listening to a fluent reader reading a passage, then reading it yourself).

This sort of reading practice does not take the place of decoding work and reading decodable books. It is a different type of practice of the other skills one must master (involving smooth eye movements, sight words, etc.) in order to become a fluent reader in the future.

Sometimes we have seen students who have never had this practice - but over the years only read what they could fully decode themselves. By the time they become teens and have reached a level of decoding proficiency, they are surprised that their reading is still so slow and effortful.

What they should have been doing all along as a separate practice is this guided reading model where you hear fluent reading of passages and then you read it yourself. You have the memory trace in mind about the passage - so it helps the decoding - but in the meantime you get practice and reading with good speed and fluency.

In the classroom, guided reading can take the form of a teacher pre-teaching vocabulary, reading aloud a passage with good fluency (as a model), choral reading a passage together, then splitting up in pairs to read the passage to each other. It can also be a boost for students who otherwise are still having to work at decoding every word.

At home - having a parent or older sibling (or even audio recording from the library) read a short passage, followed by a child may be a way to incorporate echo reading into a daily routine. You can choose the funny parts or dramatic parts or let your student choose.

If you want to sign onto a subscribe web-based book service with audio support that can be used for guided reading, check out your local library to see if there is a service that you can access for free. Otherwise there are programs like [EPIC](#) or [Tumblebooks](#) or [Buddy Books](#) or [LightSail](#) that incorporate guided reading in their book offerings.



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THE BALL AND THE CHALLENGER: DYSLEXIA'S SOCCER

GUEST POST: KATERINA TSOMI, DOCTORAL STUDENT, BRIDGES GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR COGNITIVE DIVERSITY

The following story was shortened for inclusion in our magazine. For Katerina's entire wonderful story, visit Katerina's website [here](#).

When I was in fifth grade, teacher told me to go and sit next to Angel..

Angel, to my eyes, was a mysterious child. In the classroom, he was always quiet and self-conscious. Outside class, he used to spend his time running around the school yard really fast. But the greatest mystery around Angel was the contrast between his running speed and his reading speed. Every time the teacher asked him to read aloud, Angel read really slowly and spelled each word. Usually the teacher became impatient with him and accused him that yet again he hadn't studied enough. Angel didn't reply to these accusations. But his face said everything, because his feelings traveled upon his features like trains travel through stations: embarrassment, anger, indifference, irony.



My face, on the other hand, displayed only two emotions: surprise and sadness. I didn't, don't and won't ever understand why none of our teachers could see that Angel really tried. It wasn't so hard to see! It was all over his face and body as he struggled to read. Every time Angel read aloud, the classroom's silence was so dense that it could be cut through with a knife. To me that was proof that all our classmates realized the simple truth of Angel's effort and showed their respect and support by trying not to distract him with extra noise. Still, the teacher could not get it...

Sitting next to Angel enabled me to get to know him a little better. It turned out that he had tons of humor and made me laugh throughout the darkest and most anxious moments of class. But But he could also become very critical and harsh both with himself and me. The best moments though were when, disheartened and/or bored, he grabbed his pencil and created drawings onto the white margins of his books. I admired his drawing skills. Imaginative shapes and forms jumped out on the white space as his hand moved with speed and precision. These were the times when his face was colored with focus, aliveness and interest.

Angel was dyslexic and nobody knew it because back then there was no assessment and diagnosis of dyslexia in Greece....

It is not a surprise then that when a child is told that he or she is dyslexic that they do not know what this really means. It has been found that dyslexic people display a right-hemisphere processing and therefore have a tendency to see the whole picture, making connections and inferences, rather than focusing on fine details ([Eide & Eide, 2023](#)). It seems only fair to approach dyslexia in a right-hemisphere, whole picture way.

This is exactly what Brock and Fernet Eide (2023) do in their book: "The dyslexic advantage". They explain that dyslexic brains work in a certain way that has significant advantages which come along with certain trade-offs. They use the acronym M.I.N.D. to describe four areas of strengths frequently found in dyslexic minds. These are:

1. M-strengths or Material Reasoning: They are the 3D abilities that help people reason about the shape and position of an object and the ways it interacts with other objects. Some dyslexic individuals tend to create an interconnected 3D mental image of the world and perceive spatial imagery. In the classroom, they struggle with the trade-offs of symbol reversal and subtle language challenges but outside the classroom are very creative.
2. I-strengths or Interconnected Reasoning: They are the ability to make connections between different points of view, make links between different fields of knowledge, understand systems and maintain a big-picture. This may lead to challenges with fine-detail processing.

THOUGHTS ON DYSLEXIA

3. N-strengths or Narrative Reasoning: They are the ability to recall powerful personal memories that have a highly narrative format. These memories help individuals reconstruct their past but also make images of their future. That is why dyslexic people learn better using experiences rather than abstract concepts.

4. D-strengths or Dynamic Reasoning: It is the ability to observe patterns that help dyslexic individuals make predictions or solve problems with ambiguous or incompletely known variables. Its trade-off is extra need for reflection and reduction in speed (Eide & Eide, 2023).

Not all dyslexics display all of the above strengths but they all display a unique mixture of them, just like a unique DNA-strand of dyslexic strengths. These strengths are inherent in the dyslexic mind but they frequently remain dormant and in the shadows because of the emphasis that is given in their trade-offs. Eventually though, a dyslexic person will discover and understand his/her mind enough to start utilizing its abilities. Eides' book is full of stories of eminent dyslexic adults who had a really hard time as children at school but, as they were growing up, they were able to unlock their potential and put it into good use. The dyslexic experience is paralleled with the caterpillar which grows up to become a butterfly (Eide & Eide, 2023).

But how does this powerful transformation actually happen? A group of researchers, namely Dr Fumiko Hoeft and her colleagues, Dr Haft and Dr Myers, wished to answer this question and so they searched for the factors that promote cognitive and socio-emotional resilience. They came up with the following:

- Strong language and general knowledge skills
- Strong executive functioning
- Strong fine motor skills
- Strong attention skills
- Self-awareness and self-determination
- Realistic planning and goal setting
- Strong sense of control over their choices
- A growth mindset combined with hope and positive belief that obstacles can be overcome and talents can be developed
- Strong relationships with supporting adults, especially parents and teachers, and one or more peers (Haft et al., 2016; Eide & Eide, 2023).



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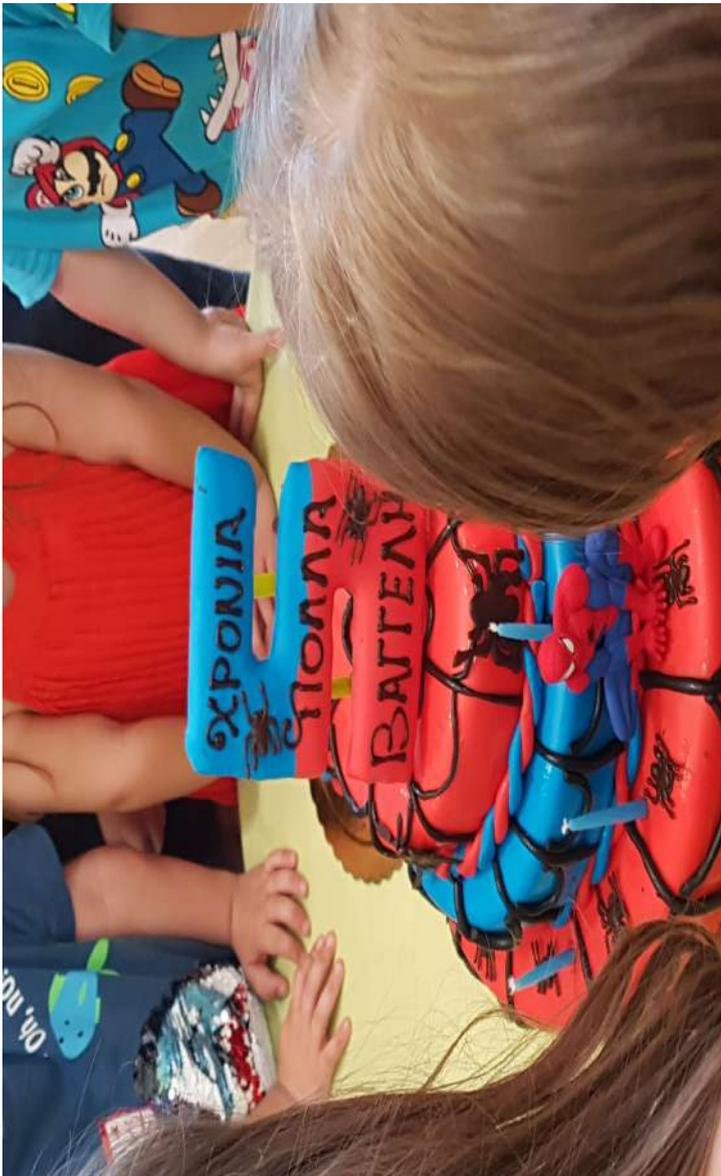
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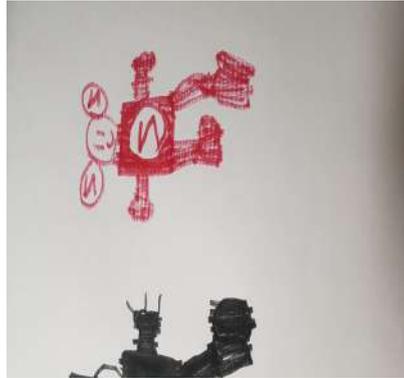
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THOUGHTS ON DYSLEXIA

I suspect that at this point you might wonder what happened to Angel. He dropped out of middle school and spent a couple of months with his favorite island of origin, Kefalonia. In this beautiful place, which is full of the greenest trees and the bluest waters, helping his uncle repair motorbikes in his garage and talking to him about his difficulties at school, he was able to reconnect with his inner voice. He realized that he would never be able to finish school. He never thought that he was not smart but he always knew that he was not good at reading and writing. He returned to Athens and he found a job at a bakery, where a professional baker taught him his art. These days, Angel creates unique birthday cakes on which he draws by hand the most complex drawings.



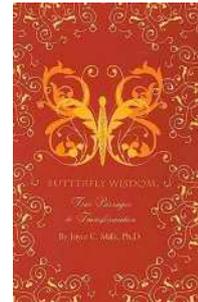
His most demanding customer is our oldest son. He orders 3D drawings for his cakes, just like how he sees his own drawings and the school's leaflets. You see, he is also dyslexic with great M-strengths.



When he learned I was going to write this article he told me to share this message:

“Don’t be afraid, dyslexia is not something terrible. It has its advantages and disadvantages. It makes you see drawings and school leaflets in a 3D way but it also makes it difficult for you to read and write.” (E. Mourelatos, personal communication, June 2, 2023).

My great teacher and advisor is Dr Joyce C Mills, an award-winning play therapist and author of eight books including *Butterfly Wisdom*. She is also dyslexic.



She shared this metaphor about dyslexia:

“You see things differently, you see things past the words. The words are blocking your experience. The words can be intimidating. So, what would you do if you had a challenger, a friend of yours, and you were playing soccer? You’d find a way to get that ball past the challenger. You’d find your way because within you is that resource. (J. C. Mills, personal communication, May 18, 2023).

So next time you think about dyslexia, you might want to keep these messages in mind. You might want to try to get that ball past the challengers and into the goal! And you might want to show to other dyslexic children and teens how to play and relate both with their balls and their challengers.

UNLOCKING SUMMER READING: WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT FOR PARENTS TO GET READING TOO?

Summer learning loss is a concern for both educators and parents, thankfully there are ways to combat it. Parents play a pivotal role in their children's lives, and setting a good literacy example during summer break can help children make reading gains that will impact both their academic achievements and life-long relationship with reading.

Reading can be a frustrating task for children learning to read, and even more so for those with reading difficulties such as dyslexia. However, parents can provide a positive reading model for their children by incorporating reading into their daily lives. This allows children to see reading as a source of knowledge and enjoyment, rather than a chore.

Parents who have reading difficulties can utilize literacy support such as assistive tech, showing their children that with the right support, it's possible to overcome reading barriers and gain self-confidence. For children who have reading difficulties themselves, this is an empowering example that reading is an attainable goal for them as well. Text-to-speech support like the C-Pen Reader 2 can inspire readers of all ages to improve their literacy and read for enjoyment.



**Click here to read
the full blog!**



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DYSLEXIA: THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

FEWER COLLEGES REQUIRING STANDARDIZED TESTS

If you or your students struggled with standardized tests, there is good news on college admissions as increasing numbers of schools no longer require tests for admission.

This fall, over 80% of four-year colleges won't require students to submit ACT or SAT scores. There are over 1800 institutions that are test-optional.

See an updated list from Fair Test [HERE](#).

Standardized tests can be especially difficult for dyslexic students because the questions aren't being presented in the context of classroom discussions and homework. Many students lack appropriate accommodations for extended time or writing in a test booklet, so high-stakes test may especially underestimate a student's ability.

NCAA DROPPED MANDATORY COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

Always check with the schools that you are considering applying to, but many schools eliminated mandatory tests and the NCAA revised their policy.

For more information from NCAA visit [here](#).

More discussion about this is available from [Honest Game](#).

THE SAT HAS BEEN CHANGED TO BE SHORTER AND ONLINE. CALCULATORS ARE NOW ALLOWED ON ANY SECTION

It may be helpful for students to know that the new [Digital SAT](#) is now here.



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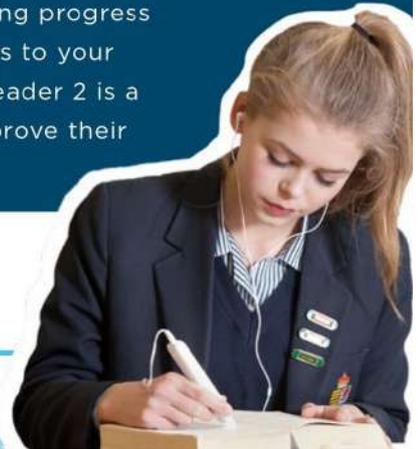
Educators and parents are working hard to help students maintain reading progress over the summer. It's a great time to add proven text-to-speech supports to your current strategies to boost student reading independence. The C-Pen Reader 2 is a portable assistive tech reading tool helping students across the U.S. improve their literacy.

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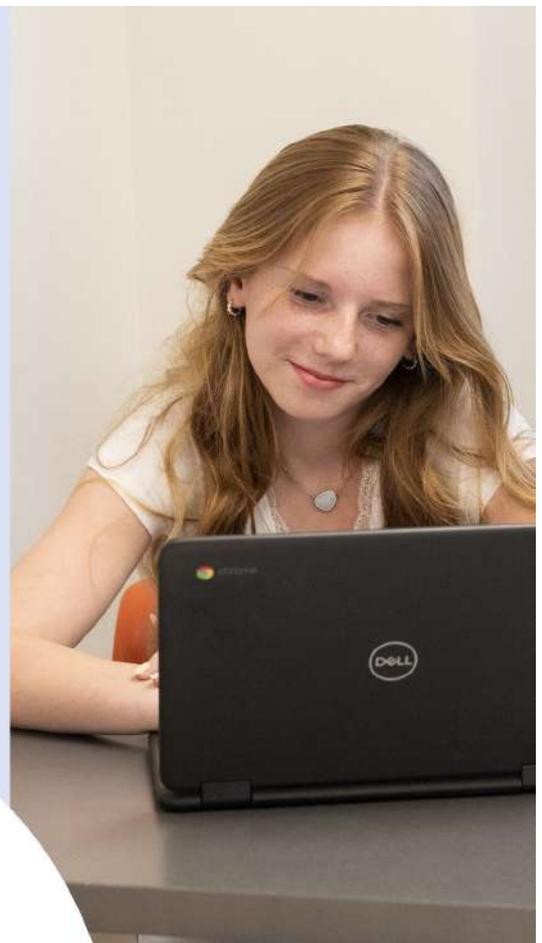
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COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

The College Board is making a full transition to digital testing, so pencil and paper testing and those dreaded scantron bubble sheets will be gone for the vast majority of students; students who require pencil and paper tests will be able to receive them as an accommodation, however.

Importantly, in this update to the SAT, the "calculator-free" section of the new SAT (introduced in 2016) has been removed. We know many dyslexic students with dyscalculia who were forced to switch to the ACT because of this discriminatory change.

The new digital SAT is 2 hours instead of 3 and has shorter reading passages. There are 3 parts - Reading, Writing, Math, with a break between each.

The Digital SAT can be taken on a laptop or tablet. It can be a personal or school-issued device.

Included in the test: a way to flag questions to return to them later, a countdown clock that students can choose to show or hide, a built-in graphic calculator that students can use on the entire math section, and a math reference sheet with common formulas.

The revision committee must have considered mistakes in the previous design.

STARTING FALL 2023, PSAT TESTS WILL ALL BE DIGITAL

The PSAT often taken earlier by high school students - and making students eligible for National Merit Scholarships will all be digital by Fall 2023.

What this means is that students taking practice tests should take computer-based practice tests if they want to simulate what real tests will be like. There is an official digital SAT practice section at the [Khan Academy](#).

With all the changes in the PSAT and SAT, if your student chooses to take them, we would strongly recommend taking practice tests that include learning how to use or hide available tools and specific test-taking strategies - like whether to guess if you can narrow down choices.



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National Center for Learning Disabilities, the International Dyslexia Association have evaluated the Sonday System(r) and deemed that the program contained the required elements for teaching reading identified by the Nation Reading Panel.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

Many of the digital SAT changes seem like an improvement for dyslexic students. For instance from the College Board:

"Questions throughout the digital test will be more direct, and closely focused on assessing what students need to know to succeed in college and career. In the Reading and Writing section, instead of a few long reading passages with multiple questions per passage, students will see many shorter texts, each tied to just one question. For the Math section, questions in context (word problems) will be more concise than those on the current test."

Additional information that seems helpful includes providing a technology monitor in the test-taking classroom, and options to recharge for students who have extended time accommodations.

Click here to read more about [ACCOMMODATIONS FOR THE DIGITAL SAT](#).

If approved for accommodations, students can have a human reader for the test or use their screenreading software. Students approved for dictation on the test can use their software's speech-to-text.

These changes are a tremendous improvement over prior tests where students suddenly may have had to learn new dictation software for an exam. It does mean that students who want to prepare well for the exams should learn how to use their software well.





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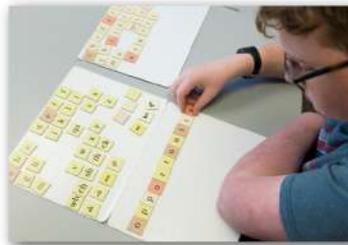
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COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

WHY SHOULD MY STUDENT TAKE A COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAM IF IT IS NOT REQUIRED FOR SCHOOLS OR NCAA?

There are many reasons why dyslexic students may choose to take college entrance exams even if they are not required for the schools they are applying for or their athletic programs. At the top of the list for reasons why is the fact that good test scores can increase financial aid packages and make students eligible for scholarships. Some students may even be able to obtain scholarships based on their test scores, without applying.

Scholarships and large financial aid packages mean smaller loans and potentially fewer working hours needed to make ends meet during the school year.

Strong test scores may also help students with admissions to select schools - especially if they have uneven grades in coursework or only homeschool grades from parents. The scores support their ability to succeed in higher education.

Some states may require or strongly encourage all high school students to take the SAT or ACT. SAT or ACT School Days are sometimes created by state boards of education to encourage students to take them and apply to college.

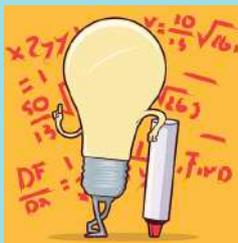
Although rare, there are [certain employers](#) who will ask for SAT scores for jobs. Examples include careers like finance or consulting.

TESTS OR NO TESTS

Regardless of whether you or your student opt to take one of the college entrance exams, the changing landscape of these tests means that it's important to hold on to your individual differences, life perspectives and experiences, interests, and talents beyond grades and test scores.

It's a good thing that colleges and universities are making changes to welcome students who in previous times may not have been considered "college material."

Remember also that most community colleges and some technical colleges have "open door" policies which essentially mean 100% acceptance. Even without a high school diploma, some schools allow students to earn high school and college credits at the same time, so a high school diploma is not essential.



How Dyslexia Can Impact Elementary Math

Edutopia



NYC Schools Revamp Reading Programs After Years of Declining Test Scores

CBS



New Charter Public Schools Specialize in Dyslexia

EdWeek



Schools for Dyslexia Also Promote Social-Emotional Resilience

Education Week



The Science of Reading May Be the Next Battle Ground in California

The 74



Conversation Starters: How to Talk About Reading Difficulties with Your Child

Understood

DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE AUDIOBOOK



Dyslexia is My Publishing Super Power

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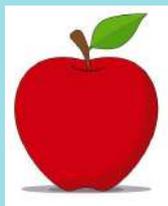
Advice for Actors with Dyslexia

Backstage



New Rule Would Change Reading Lessons in Wyoming

The 74
World Dyslexia



Texas: Accelerating Student Success with Dyslexia Services

Dallas Examiner



Dyslexia Grants Special Powers, Researchers Say

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