Dyslexic Advantage NEWSLETTER



- DYSLEXIA AND MENTAL HEALTH
- UNLOCKING WRITING WITH TUTOR KAT DEWEES
- ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER ON HIS DYSLEXIA
- DYSLEXIA NEWS



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Dear Friends

If you have questions about your students heading back to school, join us for an online **BACK TO SCHOOL Parents Q &A** that will be perfect for families new to dyslexia as well as anyone who has questions before new schhool year starts.. The event is FREE for PREMIUM subscribers and otherwise \$30. Gift a friend? It all goes to support Dyslexic Advantage: September 23rd 9 am PDT / 12 noon EDT. Sign up HERE.

NeuroLearning.

If finances are tight, but you'd like to go, sign up for a few "scholar have room.

SUPPORT

Huge shout-out of thanks for our sponsors, Premium subscribers, and donors for life-changing resources they provide.

This issue: https://joom.ag/FgNd

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 qualify for services such as Benetech's huge free library of e-books. Bulk discounts available for higher ed.

Thanks to Shelley Wear, Trish Seres, Michelle Wiliams, 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!



DYSLEXIC

ADVANTAGE

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.



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DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE ISSUE 93 SEPTEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER







MENTAL HEALTH AND DYSLEXIA





DYSLEXIA NEWS

BACK TO SCHOOL ONLINE Q & A

On September 23rd, 9 am PDT / 12 pm EDT, Dr Fernette Eide will be hold a webinar for parents of dyslexic children heading back to school. After a brief overview of dyslexia, she will cover the following topics (how dyslexia presents at different ages during the K-12 years, what "good remediation" looks like, what research says about the impact of intensive remediation, accommodations and self-advocacy, MIND strengths, what a letter to a teacher might look like, and the big picture of educating students with dyslexia.

After this, attendees can submit questions by chat.

The event will be free for Premium subscribers, but registration is required so that we can reserve an appropriate room size. For non-subscribers, the cost is \$30 to support Dyslexic Advantage. If you would like to attend, but finances are tight, sign up at the link, and say that you're interested if scholarships are available. We will email you with the link to join shortly before it starts if you are chosen.

SIGN UP FOR BACK TO SCHOOL WEBINAR AND Q & A HERE.

5 Things To Remember About Heading Back to School

- **1.CHECK-IN** Check-in with your student and see how they are feeling. It's common to feel anxious and talking things over (including plans to help them have a smooth start to their school year) can help.
- 2. PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME Encourage your student to start resetting their sleep-wake cycle a week before school begins. Go over school lists and visit the school grounds if your students are moving up to a different school.
- 3. "WRITE A LETTER" Whether or not your student has had a comprehensive assessment before, a short (1 page) letter introducing your student to his or her new teachers is usually a good idea. Realize the teacher is likely overloaded with learning new students at the beginning of the school year so take it easy.



The letter should contain the main points you think the teacher should know regarding needs and accommodations. You should also include your email address and cell phone for any questions and feedback about your students.

4. DISCUSS THE LETTER WITH YOUR STUDENT Both you and your student should realize that some of the supports they may need in school won't be known until the school year starts. The letter is just an introduction that a teacher can refer to if issues arise in classes or tests where accommodations are needed.

Students should be aware that some mistakes may be made even if a teacher knows about accommodations. There is a tremendous amount of paperwork for teachers and sometimes many students in a class will have different accommodations requests - so it may be hard to keep students' needs straight - especially at the beginning of the year.

5. PRACTICE SELF-ADVOCACY AND MAKE CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER PARENTS IF YOU ARE ABLE Young children will have trouble remembering everything you might want them to say to a teacher, so having a letter that you've discussed will help.

BACK TO SCHOOL

Older students may feel ambivalent about accommodations, and you should talk about this. Sometimes a disconnect happens between what a professional recommends and perhaps a parent supports and what the student asks from a teacher. The two videos below may help you begin a conversation about accommodations and how students can discover what strategies or helps may help them to succeed.

Failure to request accommodations in college may be a significant factor for students who don't complete their degrees within six years.







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DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE MOVIE

DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE THE MOVIE!

We're thrilled to share with you that filming has begun on "Dyslexic Advantage - The Movie." Actually we haven't named it yet, but it will include some of the people we interviewed in our book as well as dyslexic MIND strengths!

A generous donor provided the funds for the movie and also put us in touch with a talented filmmaker, <u>Josh Newman</u>. Originally from New Zealand, Josh is a wonderful storyteller who made films for National Geographic and REI.

We haven't seen the footage ourselves yet (and he's going to film us when he's back in Seattle), but here are some screenshots he's shared so far.

Krista Weltner, animator, puppeteer, children's book illustrator





Physician and inventor Chris Ford



Josh Newman interviewing Ocean Explorer Bob Ballard

DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE MOVIE

One of the most challenging things was trying to figure out who to interview - because there are so many amazing and interesting people we've met and have gotten to know through the years.

Josh finished filming teen filmmaker Lauren Havel this past week and as soon as he gets back and has a chance to recover he'll interview us.

This has long been a dream of ours, being able to share a different view of dyslexia through the people who make up this remarkable community.

So many times we've been asked, "Why did you choose to write a book about dyslexia..." a great question - printed pages do have their importance, but films can also take you to places where books can't really go - at least not in the same way.

At right, a screenshot from Josh and Ryan's filming with filmmaker Lauren Havel.



Naturalist, author, illustrator Jack Laws









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SCHWARZENEGGAR

THE TERMINATOR IS DYSLEXIC

SCHWARZENEGGAR ON HIS DYSLEXIA When you visualize something very clearly, you can believe

you can 100% get there." - Arnold Schwarzeneggar

Arnold Schwarzenegger, past California governor from 2003-2011, actor (past Terminator movies, Kindergarten Cop), businessman, and filmmaker, recently shared his experiences with dyslexia in an interview in his Pump Club newsletter.

"Here's my secret: I'm a terrible reader."

When Arnold had to read an audiobook for his recent memoir, Useful, he recalled his anxieties from school in Austria when he was asked to read aloud in class and was "smacked with a ruler."

"Now that I have found that I'm dyslexic, I have found ways to make sure it doesn't hold me back. It's why when I prepare for a movie, I read the script over and over in the months before until every line is memorized, and when I give a speech, I do at least 20 practice reps so I can get my brain around the words. Reps save me every time. But this was a whole book, over 200 pages. And they told me that most people record their books in 3 days in a studio. When I heard that, I just filled with dread. Reading for that long every day without time to practice was my nightmare. I could already see the teacher holding the ruler over my head. I gave myself a second to complain and ask myself what I had gotten myself into, then I told myself it was time to deal with it."

Arnold has a biopic out on Netflix. As a caution, he is complicated person who has had been involved in controversial events, some of which he discusses.



To listen to Arnold's experience with dyslexia in this magazine, scroll down over the box at left until you see the purple button to play the podcast or listen to his Pump Club newsletter #59 **here**.

SCHWARZENEGGAR

Arnold describes how he tackled the challenge of reading his audiobook. He created two recording sessions instead of one (morning practice), he enlisted help for people to correct him (teamwork and support), he did his reps (practiced) and broke down his tasks into managable bits.

"No one is self-made. We all need help. Celebrate your small wins because they build up into big victories. If you do the reps, you will feel more confident...they're the rules that make my life work every day."

It might be that Arnold's dyslexia is one missing puzzle piece that may help explain some of his drive and work ethic as well as ability to confront and overcome challenges like his serial career life - body builder, movie star, serial entrepreneur, and governor of California.

The documentary will not be for everyone. Arnold also does not discuss his dyslexia in the Netflix documentary - only in the podcast mentioned on the previous page. School issues were not discussed much in the film, instead he talks about his difficulty at home and the competition that his father drove between siblings.

Nevertheless, some may find this three-part movie to be an interesting view into person who seemed to have several career lives.

"The first step is to create a vision, because when you see the vision – the beautiful vision – that creates the want power." - Arnold Schwarzenegger







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- Education Specialist, California Charter School





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MENTAL HEALTH

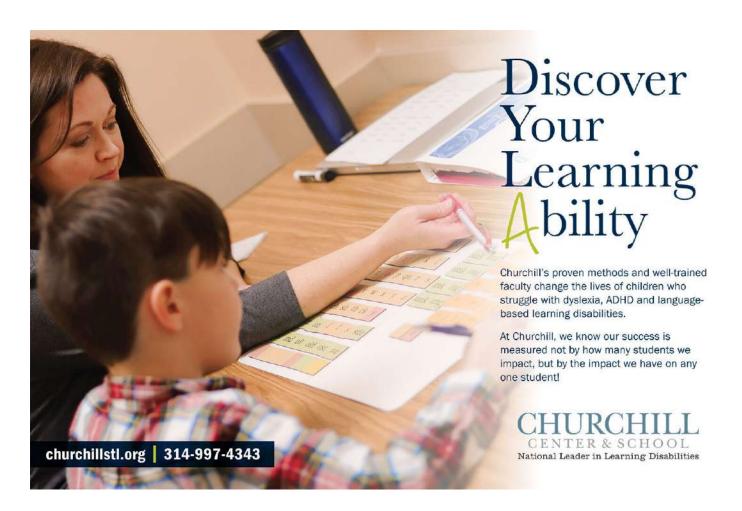
MENTAL HEALTH AND DYSLEXIA FILMMAKER ISLA MCDADE BROWN INTERVIEWS DR BROCK EIDE

On the campus of Cambridge University, young filmmaker Isla McDade Brown interviews Dr. Brock Eide about the broad issue of mental health and dyslexia. Next issue, I interview Isla to see what she's been up to working on film crews this summer after graduating with a film degree!



Isla's full interview with Brock can be seen in our August Premium issue.







INSPIRATION STEM

SPACE PHYSICS PIONEER MCCOMAS LEADS NASA-FUNDED IMAP MISSION DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE HONORED TO CONTRIBUTE

"If you got it, go with it. Let dyslexia set you free."

- Dr. David McComas

Congratulations to Dr. David McComas of Princeton University for completing a critical design review with NASA earlier this year that allows his Solar Terrestial Probe million IMAP (Interstellar Mapping and Acceleration Probe) space mission to proceed to the next steps that will lead to launch readiness in 2025.

Dave is a Board Member Emeritus of Dyslexic Advantage and we are thrilled that he's asked us to act as diversity advisors to the outreach component of his mission.

Dyslexic young people may not be aware that many of their personal strengths would allow them to succeed in fields like science, technology, and engineering. By contributing to the IMAP project and its outreach modules, we plan to increase awareness of dyslexia MIND strengths. Dr. McComas is an excellent example of putting MIND strengths to great use and encourages the next generation of innovative space scientists who have the super power of dyslexia.



Dr. David McComas Principal Investigator of NASA's IMAP mission and Professor of Astrophysical Sciences Princeton University





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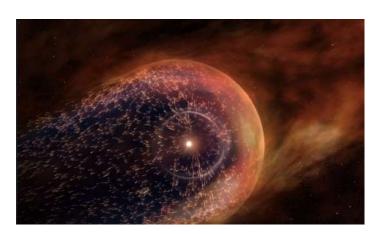


INSPIRATION STEM

Many dyslexic young people who excel in analytical and critical thinking, spatial reasoning, and invention may not be encouraged to pursue studies or careers in STEM because of early challenges in reading, writing, or spelling; but this pattern of strengths and challenges may still be well-suited to science and technology. The most important thing young people should learn is how they learn best and how they can leverage their strengths.

What is the IMAP mission?

IMAP is exploring our solar neightborhood - decoding the messages in particles from the Sun and beyond our cosmic shield. It studies the particles that stream out from the sun called the Solar Wind forming the heliosphere, a magnetic bubble that protects our solar system.

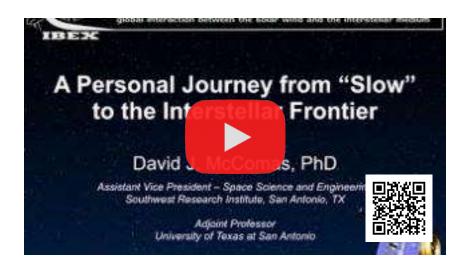


Visualization of the Heliosphere from NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center Conceptual Image Lab

Of course, all of the earth, all living things, and climate are influenced by the sun. The heliosphere shields us from cosmic radiation and understanding phenomena like solar wind is essential to protecting the world's electrical infrastructure, as well as satellites and telecommunications.

Congratulations Dave McComas! Dave has also recently won some of the most prestigious awards in science for his pioneering work. Dave shared his non-linear path in sciences in the talk. Watch it!

Follow IMAP's story.
IMAP outreach partners will host regular events starting in



late 2023. Follow the IMAP mission on Instagram and Facebook.



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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.

WRITING

DRAWING OUT THE WRITER WITHIN

Guest Post by Kat Dewees



After precisely placing the quarter-sized eyeballs at the tip-top of the circular face I was drawing, I positioned a backwards "J" for a nose right in the middle of my orb, crafted a near-perfect arc for a smile at the bottom and crowned the entire thing with a host of intense, thick lines that protruded from the rim. This was to indicate hair. I held out the drawing at a 5-year old arm's length and considered my likeness. It looked nothing like any human I had ever seen, much less like me. And I was really going for realism. I crumpled up the paper and in the same moment, tossed my aspirations of being an artist into the wasteland.

Had I known that there was actually a simple formula for drawing a face, I might have avoided having to sneak up on art well into my adulthood. I learned that a face shape is more of an oval with squared sides (not a bowling ball), the eyes are in the middle of the oval (not on the forehead), the edges of the nose line up with the inner edges of the eyes (there are actually 2 sides of a nose), the space between the eyes is an eye's width and the entire face is about 5 eye widths! It's not guesswork. The formula lies in knowing these proportions, and though you were born with a face, you were likely not born knowing these proportions. Writing is quite similar. There is a teachable formula that does not have to be known intuitively. I have seen young writers, similar to the frustrated artist of my youth, as they strive for authenticity but don't know the formula, and this crumples their identity as writers.

Dyslexic students, in particular, have incredible imaginations, vivid ideas, and splendid thoughts to share. They initially approach writing fortified with their armloads of creativity. They shake it all up (for good measure), dump it onto the page and proudly brush themselves off. A job well done! They turn in this colorful array of words with excited anticipation and are 'rewarded' with their returned writing resembling a crime scene. Every other word is coated in red. Circles, lines and arrows mark out and map an indecipherable code of where their words should be and what they should have said ...and that spelling! The disappointing feedback combined with all the cryptic corrections is too much, and the till-recent enthusiastic writer shuts down. The vehicle for transporting their stories and thoughts and words has derailed. They still have their colorful cargo of ideas, just no way to get them through.

WRITING

But what if they had started with a formula, a structured place to plug in those thoughts and ideas? This place is the strong and stable paragraph where ideas can be braced and supported. Just start by grabbing your readers' attention (the Hook). Then explicitly state what you are going to talk about (the Topic Sentence). Next, talk about it in several detailed sentences (Supporting Details). Finally, wrap it up by saying what you just talked about and why it matters(Conclusion Sentence). This is a common paragraph structure taught in schools nation-wide, but when it is presented as a formula, it becomes more accessible. The formula might look like this:

My Awesome Idea = Hook +Topic +Details +Conclusion

Once the foundational building block (of a paragraph) is practiced and mastered, the sky's the limit! Paragraph after paragraph can follow this formula and expand in depth and sophistication. When writers practice this formula, they become confident in their ability to convey their thoughts and can start taking some cheeky risks that highlight their unique voice. Take Pablo Picasso, (for another artistic analogy), who from a young age received formal training in traditional figure drawing and oil painting that required the discipline of copying masters. Only after mastering this formula did Picasso bust out the Cubism and put some eyeballs right up on the forehead! But he did this on purpose and with style. Learning and using formulas foundationally in writing (and art) can be a liberating launching pad that builds confidence and propels writers to new levels.

Beyond knowing the formulaic freedom of writing, there are some other tried and true strategies to help reluctant writers. From the get-go, students need to know that, quite frankly, writing is pretty darned hard. It's better they know what they are up against, that writing is not a skill they should naturally have. Natalie Wexler, the author of The Knowledge Gap, explains that writing is a highly complex skill that has an even higher cognitive load than reading. It is one of the most difficult tasks we ask our students to do. This is compounded for our dyslexic students as they must read, write and think all at the same time, and the struggle is real. Full transparency is needed here! They should know this information up front so that they 1.) know it's not just them 2.) know writing demands hard work and practice, and 3.) feel truly proud and accomplished when they do write something. When students receive this validation and know that when they are writing, their neurons are exploding like fireworks on the 4th of July, they have a license to struggle.

We should also be aware of the types of writing with which we are trying to engage our reticent writers. When teachers start out the gate with a run of dry expository prompts, the writers are often less fueled by the excitement of their own ideas. Sure, this type of writing is necessary and lends itself to formulaic structure, but there

is more than one way to skin a paragraph. Writers can learn the same types of foundational skills- structure, mechanics, word choice, transitions etc.., with relevant high-interest writing assignments. Some of the strongest writing I have seen from students is born of their own experiences. Prompt them to tell their stories. What was the worst injury/argument/illness/betrayal you have ever experienced? What was the best birthday/tree-climb/smell you can remember? I share my own experiences: I was held up at gunpoint at a children's book store, I knocked myself out by swinging from an untested vine. I ate a worm on a dare...and choked (They love this). I have everyone share in a group workshop. Stories begat stories. I dig really deep to get them to mine for their own stories (so much so that my students once accused me of creating a dossier on them to sell to the government).

I also have them write high interest literary responses- an ad campaign for a pill that doubles your IQ (Flowers for Algernon), a Eulogy for Simon (Lord of the Flies), a dating profile for Ponyboy (The Outsiders). I vary writing genres with poetry, monologues, recipes, reviews, texts, letters, speeches, satire, rap and articles. I have had high school students write the children's story version of Frankenstein and create a modern Canterbury Tale to act out. Whatever inspires you, will likely inspire them- Jimmy Fallon's Thank-you notes, a maligned villain's side of the story, a love letter to an inanimate object. Writing short amounts on varied topics and genres with more frequency provides some of the same benefits as writing long essays. The students gain practice, skills and confidence while staying engaged and inspired.

One additional truly beneficial strategy for writers is receiving feedback while they are in the process of writing. Instead of completing an assignment, turning it in, and getting it back a week later with corrections and suggestions, the student can conference with the teacher one-on-one and get direct feedback at specific stages of the writing process. In her book Lessons That Change Writers, Nancy Atwell explains that, "Helpful response comes during -- not after -- the composing. It comes from the writer's peers and from the teacher, who consistently models the kinds of restatements and questions that help writers reflect on the content of their writing." With practice, writers can begin making discerning revision and editing choices independently as they gain confidence with writing as a process.

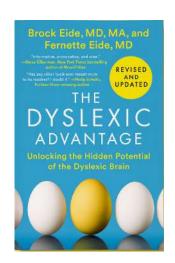
Writing is a beautiful and necessary art. It is both fantastical in form and functional in life. And writing is a skill that can be taught. When writers understand the difficult yet formulaic nature of writing, they can acquire the tools to chisel away at and free their ideas. When they write frequently about ideas which intrigue them and in ways that interest them, they have more motivation to choose writing as a means to express their creativity. With a solid foundation, some skills, and a healthy dose of desire, the writer, like Picasso, is liberated to place the nose right on the forehead of their work, on purpose and with style.



SEPTEMBER PROMOTION

DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE AT YOUR SCHOOL

Through the end of September, Dr. Brock Eide is offering a 50% off Fundraiser for Dyslexic Advantage



Book a Dyslexic Advantage MIND Strengths webinar with Dr. Eide before the end of September and get 50% off. All proceeds go to Dyslexic Advantage. You can schedule the event any time that's available before the end of the 23-24 school year.





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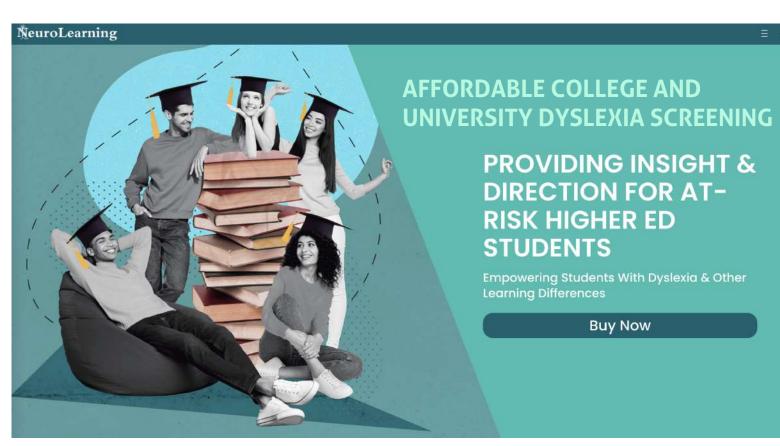
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DYSLEXIA NEWS



How to Be a Dyslexic Disruptor Sir Richard Branson

Youtube



What is the Dyslexic Advantage?

Dyslexia Explored Interviews the Eides Youtube



Idaho Passes Law to Train Teachers about Dyslexia

Idaho Statesman



Jamie Oliver on GCSE Results Day:
"School is just one part of your journey"

The Independent



Educating Students with Dyslexia Starts with Educating Teachers

Education Week



How Dyslexia Changes in Other Languages

BBC (free but registration required)



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