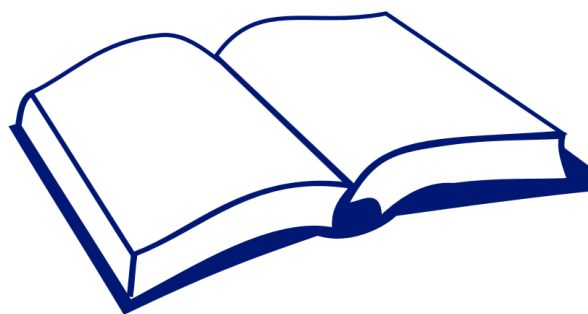


Tips on engaging with books¹

By an anonymous dyslexic adult



This article is aimed at anyone who...

- 1) is dyslexic, or thinks they might be
- 2) wishes to help dyslexic adults to engage with books
- 3) is interested in ways to engage with books

What are these tips?

- 7 things that help me to engage with *any* book;
- 3 things that help me to engage with *non-fiction* books; and
- 3 things that *motivate* me to engage with books

7 things that help me to engage with *any* book

- 1) Being aware that reading and comprehension are different things
 - Reading is decoding words; comprehension is taking in their meaning
- 2) Using self-help resources for reading print books
 - E.g. the reading and comprehension toolkits in the book 'Making Dyslexia Work for You'²
- 3) Addressing my visual conditions
 - By tracking print and using a coloured overlay.
 - Many dyslexic people have visual conditions as well as dyslexia.
- 4) Using alternative formats
 - These can be particularly helpful with certain genres.
 - E.g. I find audio good for classics, and graphic novels good for historical non-fiction

¹ By 'engaging' with books I mean using books in one or more format(s) e.g. print, audio, dramatization.

² Routledge, 2012 ISBN 978-0415597562

- 5) Using strategies
E.g. watching a [‘SparkNotes’ video](#) to gain the gist of a book before reading it in print
- 6) Quality narrative
- Good stories well told e.g. Charles Dickens’ novels
- 7) Dyslexia-friendly features
E.g. maps; chapter headings; and illustrated lists of characters, such as the one in A Christmas Carol: the graphic novel³

3 things that help me to engage with non-fiction books

- 1) Personalisation of history
- Telling the story from an individual’s perspective.
E.g. ‘Maus’⁴
- 2) Biography and autobiography
E.g. ‘Bridge Across my Sorrows’⁵
- 3) Contextualisation of abstract material
- Presenting subject matter within the context of a person’s life. E.g.
 - a) Bertrand Russell’s mathematical logic in ‘Logicomix’⁶
 - b) Marie Curie’s discovery of radioactivity in ‘Radioactive: Marie & Pierre Curie: a tale of love and fallout’⁷.

3 things that motivate me to engage with books

- 1) An awareness that engaging with books is doable and good for me
- 2) Self-motivation
- Succeeding with books makes me want to continue engaging with them
- 3) Engaging with books with or alongside other people
E.g. at drop-ins, gatherings, groups, spaces and story cafés

For more tips on engaging with books

- See [‘5 steps to engage with books - for dyslexic adults’](#)

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³ Classical Comics Ltd., 2008. ISBN 978-1906332174

⁴ Penguin, 2003. ISBN 978-0141014081

⁵ John Murray, 2013. ISBN 978-1848548404

⁶ Bloomsbury, 2009. ISBN 978-0747597209

⁷ HarperCollins, 2015. ISBN 978-0062416162