

Dyslexic Advantage

NEWSLETTER

DARKEST HOUR



6

ACADEMY AWARD
NOMINATIONS

BEST ACTOR
GARY OLDMAN

A DYSLEXIC TOUR DE
FORCE WITH ACTOR
GARY OLDMAN &
DIRECTOR JOE WRIGHT

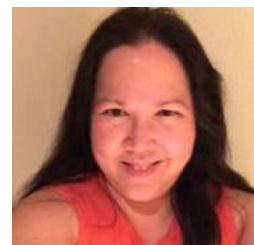
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
WINSTON'S GREAT
GRANDSON JACK
SCANNING PENS CEO
GREAT FOR EXAMS!

2 SCANNING PEN GIVEAWAYS!

IN THIS ISSUE:

- BEYOND ELEMENTARY: THE READING SNOWBALL
- WHAT IN A NAME? IS SAYING DYSLEXIC OK?
- SPELLING AS A SOURCE OF DYSGRAPHIA
- MATH PROBLEMS
- DYSLEXIA NEWS
- ARTSHARE

DOWNLOAD THIS
NEWSLETTER **HERE**.



Fernette Eide MD, Editor

Happy February!

This month we're happy to add two new sponsors - Scanning Pens - Jack Churchill's innovative pen reader and FastBridge Learning, an online assessment company that among other things, creates teacher assessments for reading, math, and other curriculum. Do check out the wonderful products and resources from our sponsors. Also remind your college students about our college scholarships!

LAST REMINDER: Apply [HERE](#) for Karina College Scholarships by MARCH 1st!

Check out our wonderful sponsors: **Winsor Learning / Sonday System All About Learning (Reading & Spelling), Scanning Pens, FastBridge, Summit Center, Churchill Center & School, Maths Explained, Visual Brand Learning, Recite Me, and The Writers Studio.**

To Gift a Premium Subscription for All Your Teachers at a school, dyslexia group or tutoring center, click **HERE**. Institutional Subscriptions are for Colleges, Literacy, & Tutor Groups.

Thank you to volunteers Trish Seres, Dayna Russell Freudenthal, Michelle Williams, and Shelley Wear for their tireless proofing and feedback. Thank you Lady Grace Belarmino for her beautiful design work and admin support by Sarah Macapobre.

GO PREMIUM

Editors' Note: to ensure that our dyslexic members are able to read our publication without difficulty, our editorial policy is to avoid the use of fonts or typefaces, such as italics, that can impede readability.

If you're reading a print copy of this issue, you can find the digital copy with all the interactive features [here: https://joom.ag/G20a](https://joom.ag/G20a)



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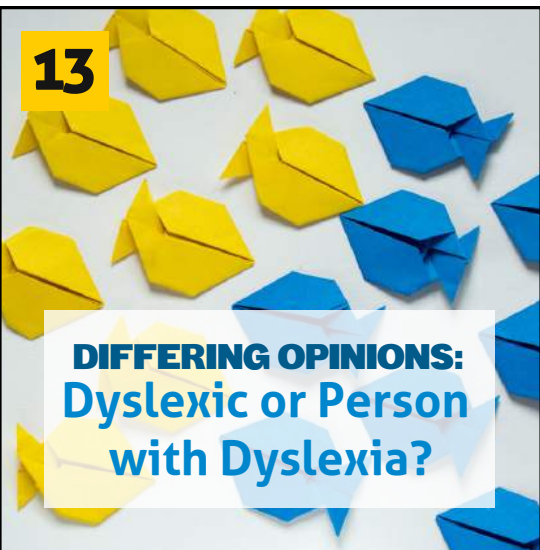
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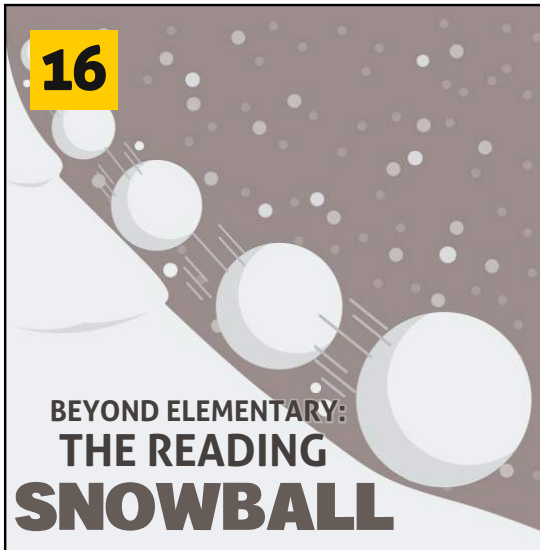
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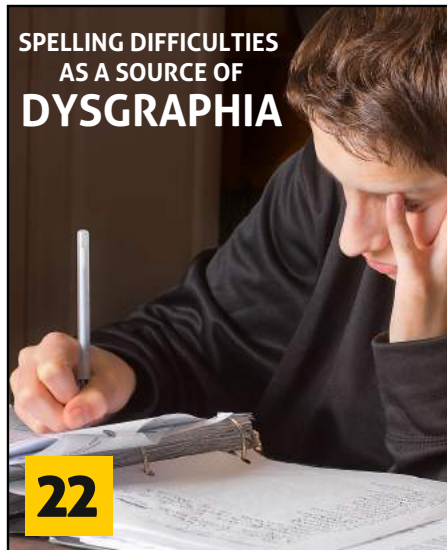
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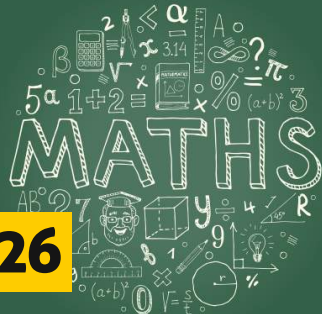
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DSYELXIA NEWS



THE DARKEST HOUR: A DYSLEXIC TOUR DE FORCE

WOW! Joe Wright's *The Darkest Hour* has rightly been nominated for 6 Academy Awards winning top Oscars for Gary Oldman (Best Actor) and Kazuhiro Tsuji, David Malinowski, and Lucy Sibbick for Best MakeUp and Hair Styling).

Look at Gary Oldman's transformation into Winston Churchill below.



Apparently, Gary only agreed to take the role if he could coax Kazuhiro Tsuji out of retirement from Hollywood. A side story is that Kazuhiro studied with Hollywood Monster Maker Rick Baker who is dyslexic himself as well as a 7-time Academy Award winner. In order to morph into Winston Churchill, he apparently had to step into a body suit like a corset as well as submit to over 3 hours of hair and makeup.



"I'm dyslexic. Yes that's true."
- Gary Oldman

For anyone who saw his performance, it's easy to see that his Best Actor Oscar was well-deserved.

In fact, many people believe that Gary Oldman is among the greatest actors of all time.

At [Debate.org](https://debate.org), 86% say yes. The breadth of his roles is truly remarkable. Could you guess that all of the people at right are Gary Oldman?

GARY OLDMAN





Check out Joe Wright's interview above from the Hollywood Reporter. He talks about how film is the best way he expresses himself and how every character in his movies in some way expresses himself as well. It is interesting too how he also worked with Gary to direct him with what he called the rhythm of the movie. For him, film is like music and he sees his role as conductor.

"If you're dyslexic at school and it's not diagnosed, as it wasn't with me, you get called stupid a lot and so I guess I'm always feeling like I'm stupid and at the same time I want to prove that I'm not," he says... "I think my dyslexia was a vital part of my development because my inability to read and write meant that I had to find knowledge elsewhere so I looked to the cinema," he says. "There I found patterns that made sense to me, unlike the written word, where the patterns made no sense whatever." Wright, 38, exudes self-confidence yet he occasionally speaks hesitantly, choosing his words carefully. "I'm still trying to catch up and I think it's one of the reasons why I often make literary adaptations, because it's an opportunity for me to learn, and I see my career as a continuation of my education." - Joe Wright



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Association[®]

 **National
Center for
Learning
Disabilities**

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.

CHAT WITH JACK CHURCHILL, WINSTON'S GREAT GRANDSON & CO-FOUNDER OF SCANNING PENS



Jack Churchill, Winston Churchill's great grandson also graciously took time out his busy schedule to talk with us about his wonderful scanning pens that are now taking the dyslexia world by storm. Scanning Pens is also one of Dyslexic Advantage newest sponsors - so he and his team are also helping support our kids programs and very newsletter you're reading now.

When Jack first got Scanning Pens rolling, there were all sorts of reading pens on the market, but they lacked essential features and usability characteristics that were necessary to allow people of all ages and backgrounds to use them. From his college years, he knew how helpful it would be to have a **pocket-sized device that could be taken anywhere without requiring Internet access or a computer and could convert text on a printed page to spoken words**. He knew the pen had to have a good voice and accuracy, and things came together with some technical advances and institutional changes where educational leaders recognized the importance of preparing students to be successful in the world and for instance, not dependent on human readers. The pens also solved another problem for schools - having enough readers on hand who could read tests to every student.

Jack also saw the possibility of allowing students to use it for exams by creating a specific exam reading pen that had the dictionary locked and no Internet access. Now the College Board, JCQ GCSE's in the UK allow students to use them on their exams! An even newer development is the UK allows students to access the reading pens whether or not they have formal accommodations requests on file. Assessors reasoned that people would only request the pens if they actually need it.

"Even the
College
Board,
allows you
to tick the
box "Other"
and then you
can use the
pen in their
exams."
- Jack Churchill

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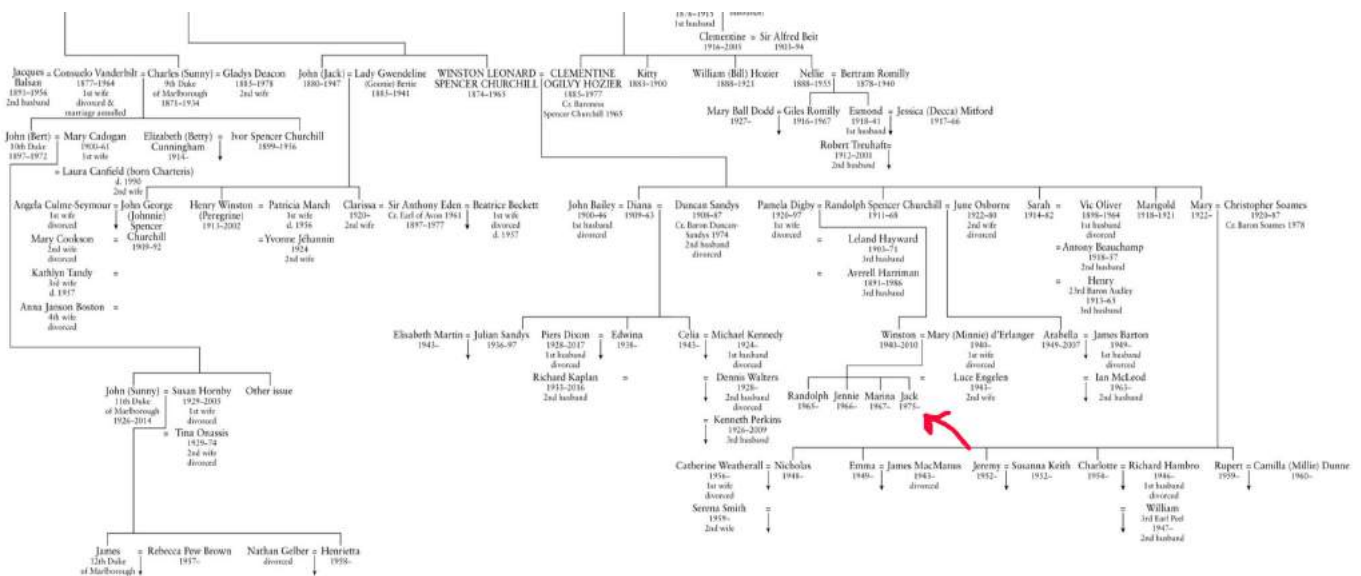
CLASSROOM SET

This brief case containing 10 Exam Reader™ is designed for easy storage and movement around the school premises.

#examreader

Package contents:

- 10 x Exam Reader™
- 10 x individual cases
- 10 x headphones
- 10 x USB cables
- 1 x attaché case



Here's Jack (red arrow) on the Churchill Family Tree!

INSPIRATION

This policy is a tremendous breakthrough for the dyslexic community - but because it's so new, be prepared to educate others about it as well as advocate or self-advocate for its use. The world is all too far from the goal of universal design - design of materials and environments that are accessible to the greatest number of people. As members of the dyslexic community are all too aware tests, classroom materials, employment and legal forms, performance evaluations, and all sorts of licensing exams are designed without dyslexic users in mind.

A critical feature of the Exam Pen is that it cannot be used to cheat because there is no Internet access, recorder, data capture, or dictionary. This also means the pen could be used in corporate situations that include proprietary documents that are not allowed to leave the premises.

At Amazon, for instance, one employee told us that his work group had a practice of meeting 20 minutes before the formal meeting to be able to silently read proprietary materials before the group discussion. Because this person couldn't read fast enough under those conditions, he bluff-read then listened to the discussion to figure out what was going on.

Having the option to use a corporate reading pen with headphones could completely alleviate this issue.

During my conversation with Jack, I learned about university-based study that found **greater** learning with the use of the pen. There's a common debate about whether assistive technology aids learning or minimizes it by providing a 'crutch'. This study suggest pen users learn more new words, persist and reading complex texts, boosting learning rather than discouraging it.

"Many of the participants did benefit from development of vocabulary, reading comprehension, confidence, and independence..."

- Professor T. Mortimore, Institute for Education Bath Spa University, UK



See the pen in action ---->

**REGISTER FOR A CHANCE
AT A FREE SCANNING PEN
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learning rather than acting merely as a support. Presumably, students advanced their skills in reading when working with the pen because they received ongoing feedback with words that they they might not have been able to decode. Over time, we would expect to see more students tackling more complex reading passages, with more opportunities to pick up new vocabulary, more complex ideas and themes, and complex grammar.



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DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES / 504 COORDINATOR
"We are very happy to be able to offer our students the C-Pen Reader Pens. We have found much success with the devices helping our students to access text, which has impacted every other area of their academic development. The pens have been a helpful tool for a wide range of users, from those with reading and learning difficulties (particularly dyslexia) to general students. Our students who have received the reader pen are feeling better about reading which is translating into better academic outcomes."

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 **ALL ABOUT** Reading

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DIFFERING OPINIONS: Dyslexic or Person with Dyslexia?

If you're not aware, there are new voices calling for changes in how we refer to individuals in groups such as ours. In the 1980's, various advocacy groups called for changes in how we refer to people in order to avoid stigmatizing or dehumanizing people. For instance, people suggested referring to a person who has diabetes rather than a diabetic person or person with alcoholism rather than an alcoholic. An obvious problem with this approach is that people-first was generally used in the context of describing a health problem - such as a person with a broken arm.

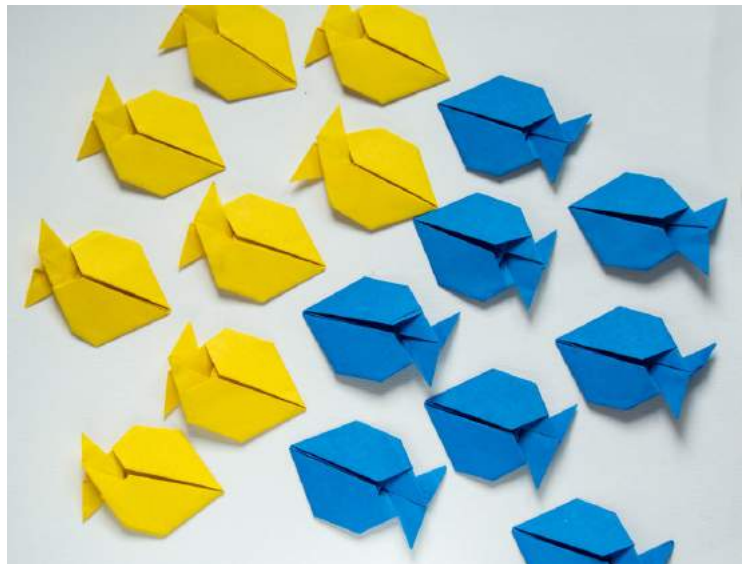
In the 1990's, a number of advocacy organizations began pushing back against the **'people-first'** language. The National Federation of the Blind adopted a resolution condemning people-first language. They stated that the practice of insisting that the word 'blind' not be used first was "totally unacceptable and pernicious" and resulting in the exact opposite of its purported aim because it is "overly defensive, implies shame instead of true equality, and portrays the blind as touchy and belligerent." Instead, the NFB supports **"identity-first"** language which means the word 'blind' is all right or even embraced.

Among members of the deaf community, person-first language has long been rejected because being culturally deaf is viewed as a source of positive identity and pride.

A very influential article from Jim Sinclair is his "Why I Dislike People First Language."

"I am not a "person with autism."
I am an autistic person. Why does this distinction matter to me?

1) Saying "person with autism" suggests that the autism can be separated from the person. But this



WHAT'S IN A NAME

is not the case. I can be separated from things that are not part of me, and I am still the same person. I am usually a “person with a purple shirt,” but I could also be a “person with a blue shirt” one day, and a “person with a yellow shirt” the next day, and I would still be the same person, because my clothing is not part of me. But autism is part of me. Autism is hard-wired into the ways my brain works. I am autistic because I cannot be separated from how my brain works.

2) Saying “person with autism” suggests that even if autism is part of the person, it isn’t a very important part. Characteristics that are recognized as central to a person’s identity are appropriately stated as adjectives, and may even be used as nouns to describe people...We describe important aspects of people’s social roles in terms such as “parent” or “worker,” not as “person with offspring” or “person who has a job.” We describe important aspects of people’s personalities in terms such as “generous” or “outgoing,” not person first language as “person with generosity” or “person with extroversion.”...

3) Saying “person with autism” suggests that autism is something bad—so bad that it isn’t even consistent with being a person. Nobody objects to using adjectives to refer to characteristics of a person that are considered positive or neutral. We talk about left-handed people, not “people with left-handedness,” and about athletic or musical people, not about “people with athleticism” or “people with musicality.”...

More recently, this topic has also been taken up by the neurodiversity and inclusivity advocates. [Think Inclusive](#): who share this point of view.

We recently decided to share this issue in our newsletter because a well-meaning writer who is strongly people-first thought we should change and we thought this might be worth sharing with you.

We see dyslexia as a positive identity and certainly nothing to be shamed about. It is, as we have tried to clearly state, [an advantage](#). No doubt the controversy will always exist at some level, but we are thankful that now more than at any other time, more people see dyslexia as an incredible strength and a trait found among the most innovative people in the world.



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BEYOND ELEMENTARY THE READING SNOWBALL

65% of adolescent struggling readers

have trouble with **word-level skills**.

Sources: [National Institute for Literacy](#) and [Hock et al. \(2009\)](#)

SREB

Because most decoding instruction for students ends after the 3rd grade, older dyslexic students are particularly susceptible to the reading snowball - a growing problem with reading that impacts more school subjects with time.

Older dyslexic readers who have 'cracked the code of reading' or at least cracked it enough to get by could find their knowledge gap widening the further they progress in their education.

The problems are several:

1. TEXTBOOKS ABOVE READING LEVEL - NO ALTERNATIVES Although reading for language arts may be chosen for reading level, textbooks in science and social studies are typically not offered in electronic or audiobook formats.

Students should be provided audio alternatives above reading level texts. These might include:

- **Electronic book formats or Text to Speech Software**
- **Bookshare (free with note identifying learning disability)**
- **Learning Ally**
- **Reading scanning pen**



maths explained

Video tutorials to help with dyscalculia and mathematical learning difficulties

Why Maths Explained?



Devised and delivered by an internationally regarded expert in the field of maths learning difficulties.



The structure of the programme and the principles that drive it are based on research from around the world on how people learn, and fail to learn, maths.



Each video uses carefully designed visual images, matched to the relevant maths vocabulary and concepts in order to enhance understanding.



The videos develop an understanding of maths by addressing and circumventing the barriers that handicap learning. They are about using that understanding to support memory.

Visual images and building understanding

Linking images to symbols/numbers

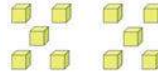


$$5 + 5 = 10$$

$$2 \times 5 = 10$$

$$10 \div 2 = 5$$

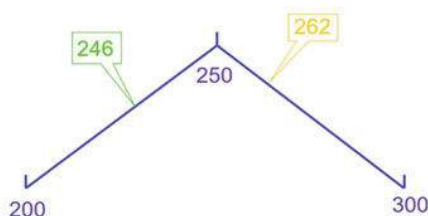
Reversing



$$10 - 1 = 9$$

$$9 + 1 = 10$$

Estimating: to the nearest hundred



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Churchill empowers students gain the strategies and confidence they need to succeed, becoming advocates for their future!

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READING

2. MISREADING TEST QUESTIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS Word substitutions, skips, and decoding problems lead students to underperform on tests despite mastery of material. Misreading instructions also leads to mistakes. The lack of context for test questions or instructions is what makes this type of reading especially difficult. Teachers should have a high index of suspicion that reading problems are contributing to low scores if they show a pattern of losing points because they've answered the wrong questions.

Give dyslexic students a chance to REDO QUESTIONS FOR CREDIT if their errors are due to reading. Students be allowed to test orally, use a reader, or use a scanning pen for tests instead of having their dyslexia-related reading challenges limit the demonstration of their knowledge on tests.

Accommodation Options During Tests include:

- Text to Speech
- Human Reader
- Reading Scanning Pen

3. READING ISSUES IN MATH AND SCIENCE CLASSES Dyslexic students can underperform on math and science paper and pencil work because they misread problems or skip or substitute words or numbers resulting in mistakes. In addition, errors also occur with problem copying as well as with any work involving pencil and paper number or symbol work.

With extra time, training, optimization of paperwork (e.g. customize graph paper, color-coded excel sheets) and visual computer displays, errors can be substantially reduced.

However, for overwhelming numbers of students, these problems are NOT RECOGNIZED. **Few math or science teachers receive training to recognize the accommodations or modifications they should be providing their dyslexic students.**

Common accommodations or modifications for dyslexic students in math and science include:

- Extended time for tests

(continued next page)



1 in 5 students struggles
with a language-based learning
disability like dyslexia.

Early screening with FAST™ will help them keep up with their peers.

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READING






- Extra time for tests
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- Options for text to speech, human reader, or reading scanning pen
- Calculator
- Formula card
- Fewer problems for math homework
- Digital Lab Notebook or writing buddy for Lab Notebook

4. DYSLEXIA AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES Many foreign language instructors don't receive training about the dyslexic students in their classes - as a result, many of these students can be at a significant disadvantage with learning as well as assessment. Because dyslexia is a language-based LD, **foreign language waivers or course substitutions** should be also considered.

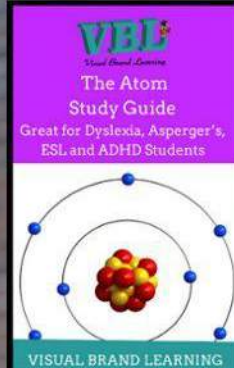
It's important that foreign language requirements should never be the cause of denying dyslexic students their degrees. Because foreign language demands compound student challenges with reading, writing, spelling, and working memory, a waiver or course substitution like foreign culture study should be permitted or the requirement waived all together.

Besides the burden of reading texts, instructions, and test prompts in a foreign language, dyslexic students with their auditory working memory and phonological challenges routinely have trouble with back-and-forth conversation, retrieving correct sounds and words from memory, as well as linguistic and rote difficulties that come with learning verb conjugations, declensions, and a non-native syntax.

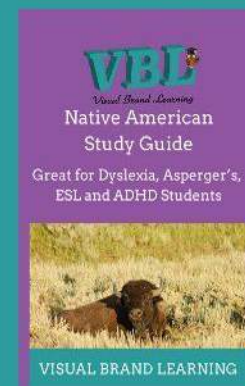
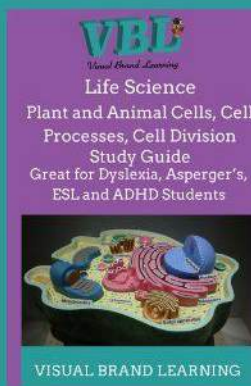
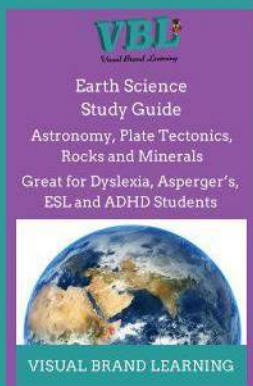
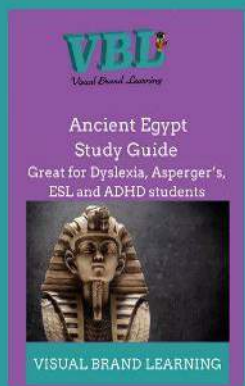
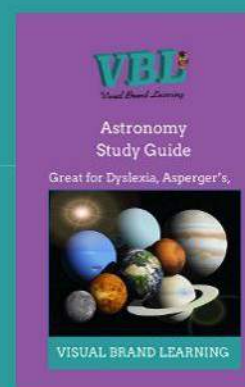
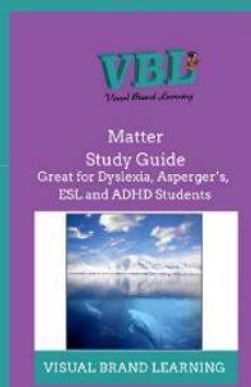
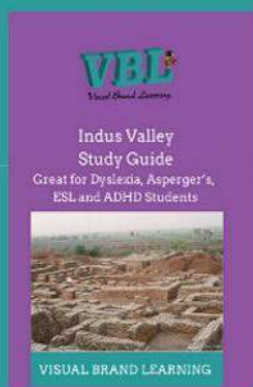
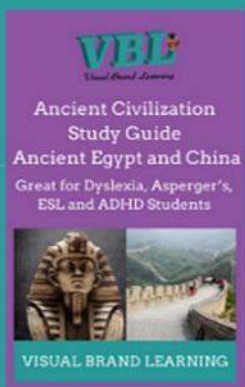
The biggest take home point when it comes to dyslexia and foreign language is to remember that **DYSLEXIC STUDENTS SHOULD HAVE ACCOMMODATIONS AND OR MODIFICATIONS FOR THEIR FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES.** All too often we see secondary students who have done well in remediation only to be stopped in their pursuit of higher education because foreign language stops them in their tracks. If a waiver isn't sought, then a plan should be in place to make sure adequate supports are present - and modifications may need to be extensive. We'll cover this issue in more detail for our premium issue.

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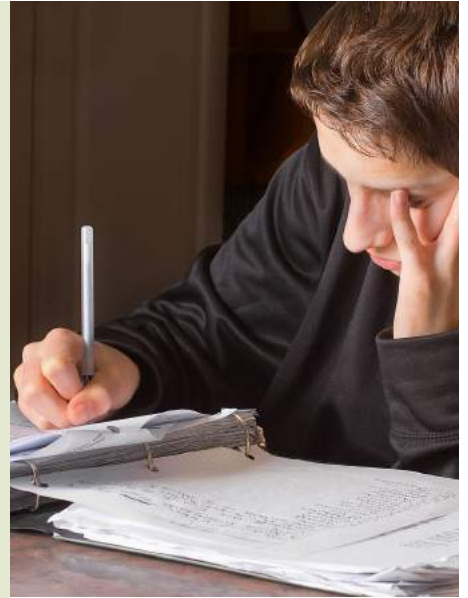
Great for Students with Dyslexia



Check us out on Amazon for a complete
list of our visual guides



SPELLING DIFFICULTIES AS A SOURCE OF DYSGRAPHIA



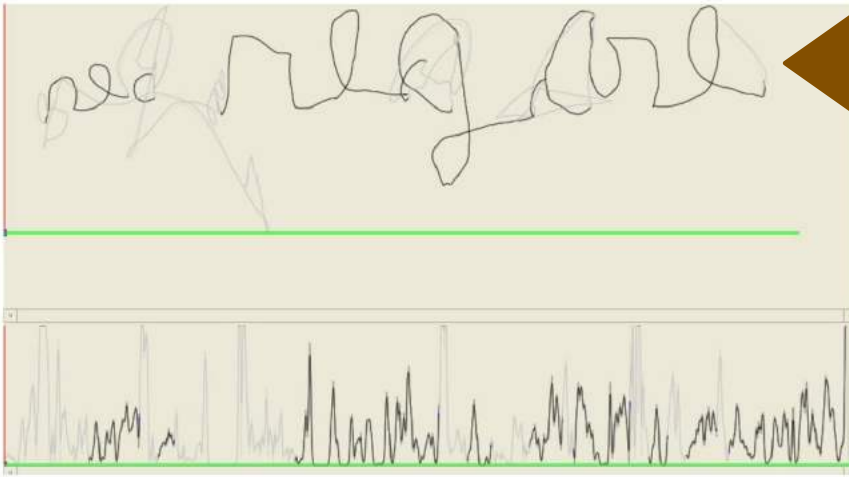
In an interesting study, researchers in France looked at the impact of spelling difficulty on the writing performance of students with dyslexia.

From the [study](#):

"Dyslexia weakens spelling skills, even when the child presents no motor problems. By varying the degree of difficulty in words to spell, researchers were able to analyse the impact of spelling process disorders on handwriting. Tests consisted in writing different categories of words: regular and irregular, common and rare, sensical (ex: futur) and pseudo, non-sensical words (ex: furut). To understand exactly how spelling affected handwriting, researchers recorded participants' writing gestures on digital tablets.

Analysis revealed that the act of writing irregular and pseudo words had a particularly noticeable impact on the hand movements of dyslexic children. Spelling became so difficult that it interfered with, and, in some cases, impaired their efforts to write. The children produced irregular, and sometimes, unreadable shapes. Often, such individuals are wrongly identified as "dysgraphic", a condition in which mechanical difficulties affect handwriting."

Clearly, it's important to distinguish the sources of a child's writing difficulties - and it may be that a child is dysgraphic both because of spelling difficulties as well as motor sequencing issues due to concomitant dysgraphia.



In this example, the student was writing the word "regard". The gap in the tracing at the bottom of the page showed when the student stopped writing to look back up at the board to check the spelling.

The word "regard" written by a child with dyslexia

Above: Black lines show what the child actually wrote on the page; grey lines, recorded by the tablet, show in-air movements when the child paused. This example shows that the child started to write; stopped, then continued. The result is an irregularly produced word which presents a spelling mistake at the end. Below: Evolution in speed over time. Grey lines show in-air movements recorded by the tablet.

We take the struggle out of Reading and Spelling



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SPELLING AS A SOURCE OF DYSGRAPHIA

ASSESSING VISUAL WORD SPAN BY WATCHING HOW OFTEN A STUDENT LOOKS UP IN SENTENCE COPYING TASK

Watching a student copying from a sentence can help provide an estimate of his or her visual memory span for letters or words. Students with severe limitations in visual memory for words will look up every letter or so compared to students who may look up every word. If a student is looking up every letter, it should also tell a teacher or parent that copying sentences will not be an effective strategy for learning spelling. The student is not 'seeing' an entire word at one time; what is needed is teaching word construction in meaningful units - for instance in phoneme groups which would reinforce sound-symbol correlations.

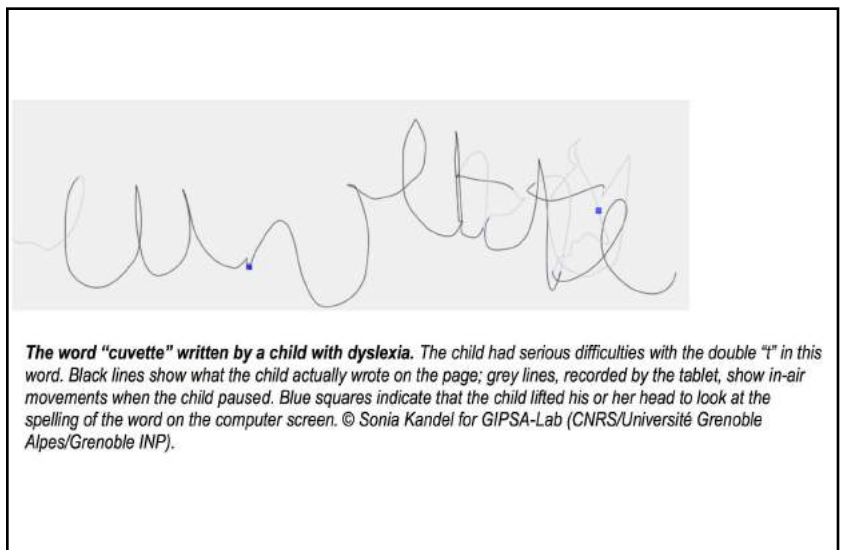
WEAK VISUAL WORD SPAN CONTRIBUTES TO SEVERE DIFFICULTIES COPYING FROM THE BOARD AND NOTE-TAKING

A limited visual memory word span can also make it impossible to take notes or copy from the board. The best practice will also be providing students with detailed handouts reducing the need to copy from the board, however, in lieu of this, having the option to record classes and take picture of the board or using a regular designated note-taker can help fill the gap.

In the example from the research paper below, see how the letter 'v' in 'cuvette' was distorted because it was written just after the student looked up at the board (small blue square).

If students' auditory span for letters is stronger than their visual span, then one strategy to improve writing fluency is to spell aloud words before writing them.

Another value of this study is how it serves as a good reminder how truly difficult the process of writing is for many dyslexic people.





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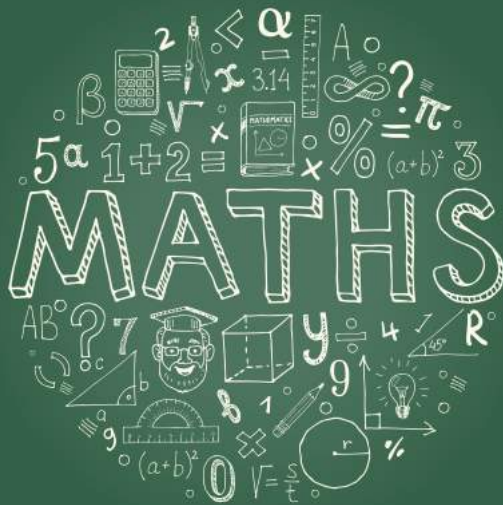
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THE PROBLEM WITH WORD PROBLEMS

For dyslexic students, the problem with word problems isn't just the fact that they have to be read without error - but that there are many aspects of the language commonly found in word problems that will frustrate many dyslexic students if they aren't explicitly taught where confusions arise.

Here are just a few language-based sources of difficulty that arise in the reading of math word problems:

#1. PASSIVE VOICE Many students need to be explicitly taught about passive voice in grammar.

Math problems frequently lapse into passive voice without any attention to the differences that may occur in meaning.

For example, consider the differences in 8 divided by 2, 8 is divided into halves, and 8 is divided by half. In the first case, the answer is 4, whereas in the last, the answer is 16.

#2. MULTIPLE WORD MEANINGS There are many examples of multiple word meanings that occur in mathematics, and the different situations as well as ambiguous uses are best taught explicitly.

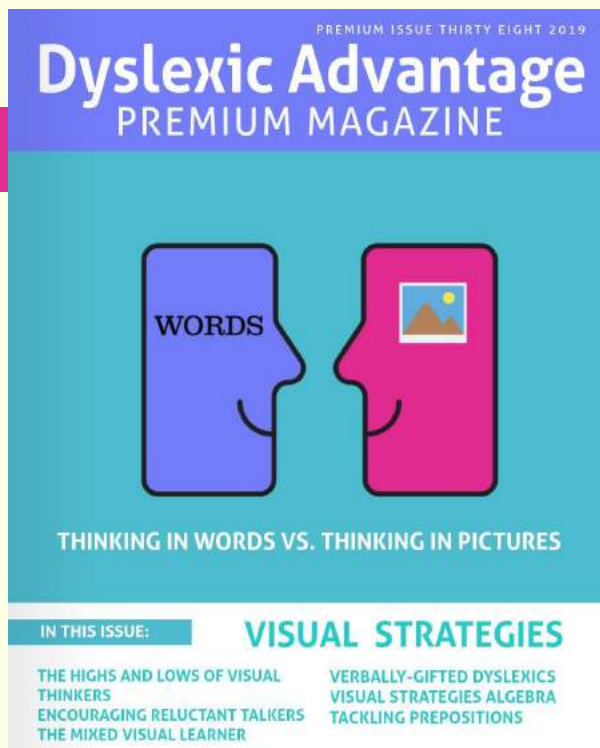
For example, words such as variable, function, plane, table, and even draw have different meanings in a mathematical context.

#3. KEY WORD APPROACHES CAN BE MISLEADING Although key word approaches can be helpful in some cases, zeroing in on certain key words in math problems can also lead students astray.

For example, "What must we add to 5 to obtain 13? With the key word approach, a student may circle the word "add" and then add 5 and 13 instead of subtracting.

Similarly: Jack has five dollars less than Jill. If Jack has seven dollars, how much does Jill have? The correct way to answer this problem is to add, but the key word approach might lead a student to subtract.

The list of possible difficulties goes on and on for dyslexic students. The most important point to remember with dyslexic students is that if problems arise with math word problems, it may not be the math, 'careless work', or even reading problems per se. Tutors working with students should look carefully for language-based sources of confusion and explicitly teach distinctions in similar words.



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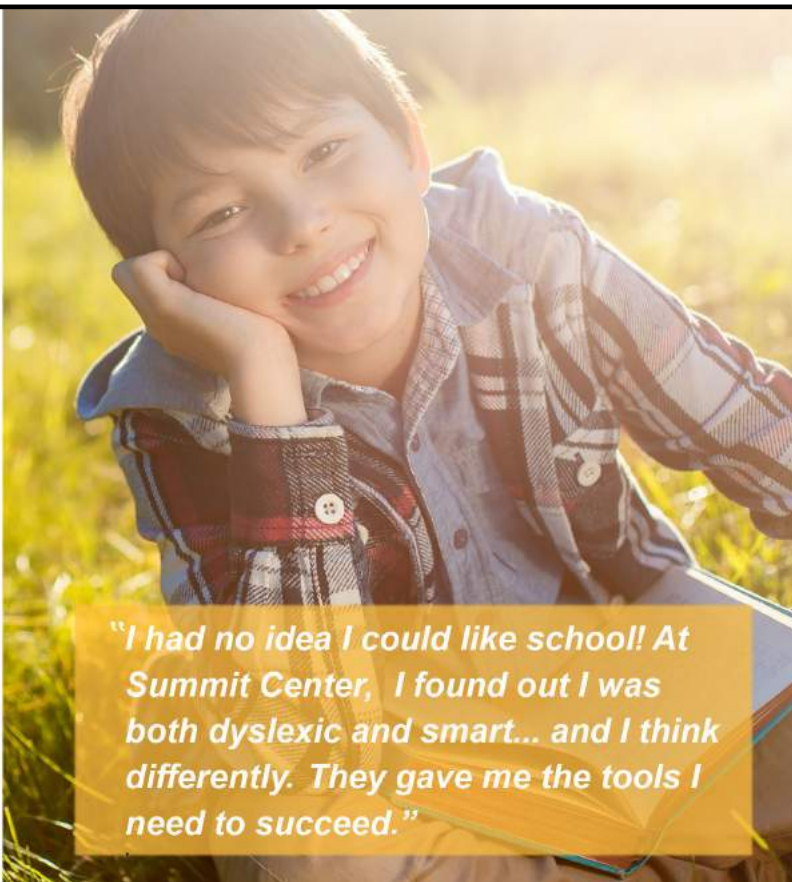
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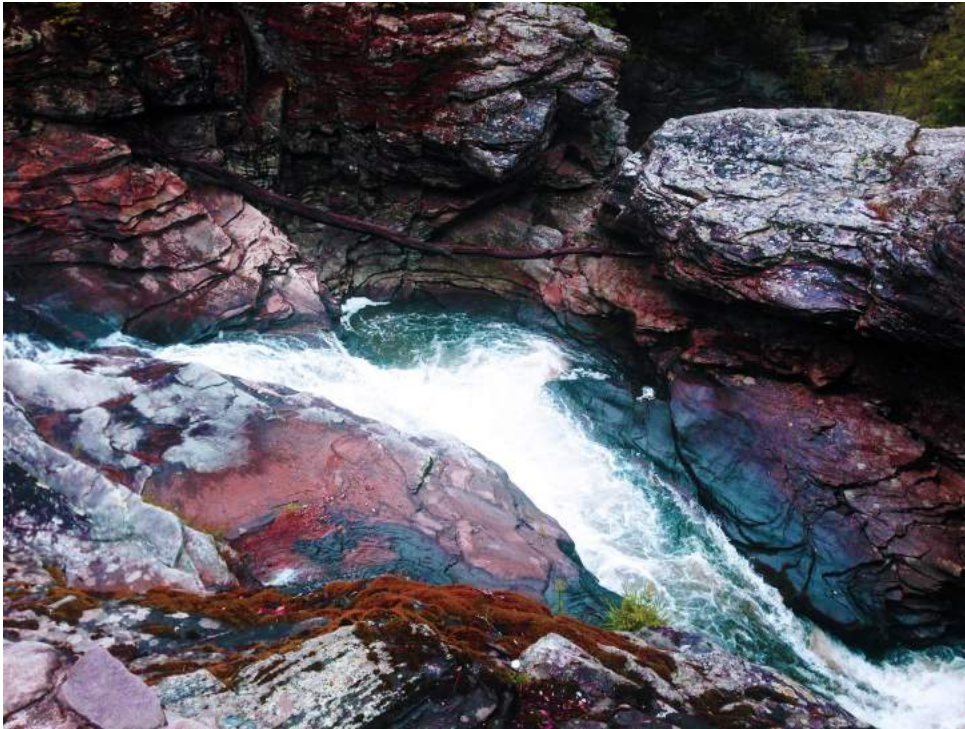
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Antonio, 17.
Miami FL.
 Miami Springs

I took this while on vacation in North Carolina and have enhanced the lighting and coloration; high lighting the texture of the red rocks to define the center swirl and movement of the water.



Latisha, 13. Bracknell, UK.
 Edgbarrow Academy.

Sniff, sniff. Although I am dyslexic there is no barrier of communication between me and my dog if I am sad about anything she understands me without even speaking. Pets are a massive asset to dyslexic children.



Braddock, 11. Minnetonka, MN.
 Homeschool. Cat sketch.

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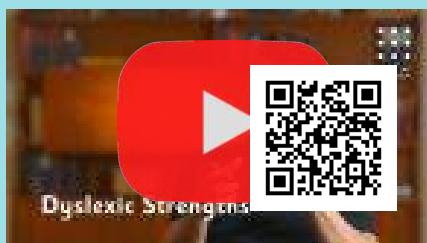
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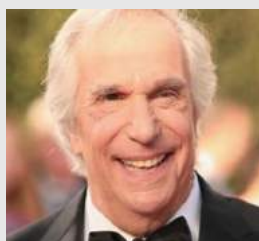
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CA Governor Gavin Newsom's struggles with dyslexia prompt a personal quest to fund early screening

Los Angeles Times



Getting into College with a Low GPA

US News



2019 - More Great Goodies in Microsoft One Note's Free Learning Tools

Tech Community - Microsoft



Retrospective of former Ottawa Mayor and MP Paul Dewar (includes his dyslexia)

CTV News



My parents were told I'd never amount to anything

Reddit



"Not Dyslexia, Dyspraxia" (it can be both also)

Melanie Jessica



Proposed Bill in WA state to Address SPED Funding

King 5



Beauty in the Scar: Unravelling My Struggle with Dyslexia as an Adult

Reading Horizons



I Took a Year Off Work To Learn About Dyslexia Because My Son's Teachers Couldn't Teach Him How to Read

Education Post



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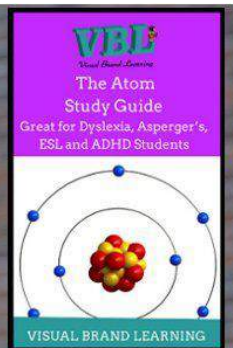
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- SCHOOL OPTIONS FOR THE EARLY YEARS & SECONDARY
- DYSLEXIA AND AUDITORY PROCESSING
- DYSLEXIA JOURNEY: BECOMING AN SLP & CONQUERING FRENCH
- 'OTHER' ACCOMMODATIONS FOR COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS
- THE DYSLEXIC PROFESSOR

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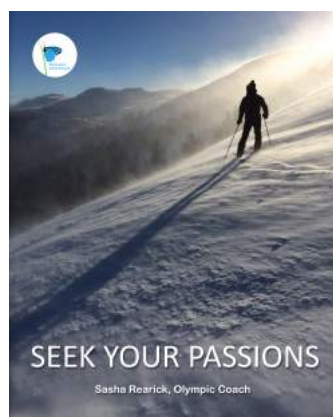
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