Dyslexic Advantage NEWSLETTER

ALL TYPES OF

Photo: Gift Pundits

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Dear Friends,

As this year comes to a close, I want to share how much you all have meant to us. From the first feelings Brock and I had when we felt that dyslexia was being misunderstood, to today with 100,000 Dyslexic Advantage books in the hands of parents, students, educators, and other professionals, and dyslexia laws and positive dyslexia events popping up all over the world, the messages of Dyslexic Advantage are taking flight. Thank you for helping change the world together!

Warmest Wishes for You This Holiday!

- Fernette Eide

Visit our wonderful sponsors: Winsor Learning / Sonday System All About Learning (Reading & Spelling), Scanning Pens, FastBridge, Summit Center, Churchill Center & School, Touch-type, Read & Spell, Recite Me, and The Writers Studio.

NeuroLearning

We're happy to announce that our partner **NEUROLEARNING** has launched their iPad-based Dyslexia app for adults and ages 7 & up! The app provides a dyslexia score as well as a report with weak areas and strengths. 3% of profits are donated to Dyslexic Advantage.

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/7Xye







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DYSLEXIA NEWS





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DYSLEXIA and ITS GIFTS

When I was in school I wondered why I didn't understand; now I wonder why "they" don't understand. My life and my viewpoint are distinct, and I love it this way. Dyslexies are often the inventors, the artists, and the creators. We are the different people who make a difference."

- Colin Poole

If you really took time to look at the dizzying diversity of creative professionals that make up the dyslexic community, it's simply amazing. There's a lot of nitty gritty details getting students through the long educational process, but we shouldn't lose track of the breadth of gifts that exist in this remarkable group.

In our last Premium issue, we did a story on Steven Spielberg and his lifelong passion for telling stories through moviemaking. Artist Colin Poole also tells powerful stories in his paintings and sculptures and this year was honored with designing the top awards in fantasy arts, the Spectrum Muse.

Then there are real-life dream problem solvers like Bill Lishman who was an early ultralight inventor and flier who also co-founded Operation Migration, a non-profit that used aircraft to guide endangered species and entrain the birds to develop a new and safer migratory route.







INSPIRATION



And don't forget the design genius behind Steve Job's Apple devices, Jony Ive. The Mac Airbook, iOS 7, and early watch. Apple Park was also designed with Jony's clear eye for minimalist beauty and function. There's recent Nobel Prize winnig inventor John Goodenough who powered the mobile device revolution with his lithium batteries and James Russell who created the first workable compact disk / DVD.







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Recently, I had a chance to talk with Ida Benedetto, experience designer. I didn't really know what an experience designer was - but after I learned more I could see how well-suited such a profession was to those who possess dyslexic MIND strengths.

Check out Ida's wonderful talk below for a creativity conference at the Museum of Contemporary Art. Through her work at SYPartners, she's been involved in such diverse experiences as retraining all US Starbucks store employees following the arrest of two young African American entrepreneurs at a Starbucks after not placing an order and designing cooperative experiences for organizations as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the International Federation of Red Cross to help them learn how to work together and problem solve during real complex crisis situations.

What a perfect example of finding one's place in a career that may not have existed when she was in school.



Jorn Utzon, the dyslexic architect of one of the world's most distinctive and iconic buildings is celebrated for his innovation and creative vision by today's leading architects.

The list goes on and on. Dyslexic creation is creativity without boundaries.





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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.

SCHOOL TESTING

Q&A: MAP TESTING

Across the United States, millions of K-12 school children take the NWEA MAP or Measures of Academic Progress tests. Using a computerized adaptive test it assesses math and reading in the early grades, and language usage and science for older students. By having students take the exams in the fall, winter, and sprint, schools can see if a student is showing progress in his or her classroom.

Q: My child hasn't been formally identified as being dyslexic, but struggles in reading. How can MAP testing help my student?

MAP tests are intended to inform schools and districts about how a student is progressing in regard to specific skills, like reading, in class. The test is adaptive, so pre-readers will be tested with picture-based questions like listening and vocabulary, while early readers will identify letters and sounds and decode and spell single syllable words. Students who can read longer bits of text can be tested on how they read into a microphone. A comprehension test is also given at the end of reading (for more details, look <u>HERE</u>).

The goals of testing are good - to show whether your student is making progress. If your student scores below the 30th percentile in reading, you and your student's teachers should be trying to figure out why.

School districts will vary in how they use MAP testing so you may have to do some research to see if any changes are being made to your students educational plan.



SCHOOL TESTING

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Some districts use MAP scores to determine whether a student would benefit from a change in RTI (Response to Intervention) tier, for instance, so that can also be an important outcome of the test results.

If your school proposes using test results to suggest holding back your student, then take caution. You might want to pursue specific testing to formally identify dyslexia.

From NASP (National Association of School Psychologists) Online:

"Research indicates that neither grade retention nor social promotion (the practice of promoting students with their same age-peers although they have not mastered current grade level content) is likely to enhance a child's learning. Research and common sense both indicate that simply having a child repeat a grade is unlikely to address the problems a child is experiencing. Likewise, simply promoting a student who is experiencing academic or behavioral problems to the next grade without additional support is not likely to be an effective solution either.

When faced with a recommendation to retain a child, the real task is not to decide to retain or not to retain but, rather, to identify specific intervention strategies to enhance the cognitive and social development of the child and promote his or her learning and success at school.

Given the evidence indicating that grade retention, when compared with social promotion of similar children, is an ineffective and possibly harmful intervention, "promotion plus" (i.e., combining grade promotion and effective, evidence-based interventions) is most likely to benefit children with low achievement or behavior problems."





Because dyslexic students by definition have average or above-average intelligence, holding them back a grade will force them to repeat intellectual content that they have already mastered in addition to having them repeat an educational program that has already failed them in the area of reading.

Q: My student's doing fine in school (A's and B's) but received a low score on MAP reading? Could it be a test problem?

It could be an individual test problem, like having an 'off' day, test anxiety, or trouble reading test questions, but it could also mean that your student has a reading problem that is being overlooked in the classroom. Because bright students can 'fill in' information by higher order thinking and educated guesses, dyslexia and single word decoding impairment can be easily missed.

Your student should be assessed in a one-on-one situation preferably by a teacher or professional experienced with dyslexia. Some students can 'get by' in class for many years by figuring out what their reading passages say, but their individual word decoding may be weak and problems only seen on standardized tests.



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SCHOOL TESTING

Q: My student's dyslexia is documented on an IEP. She took the test without any accommodations. Was this a mistake?

A: Our understanding is that very specific accommodations can be employed on MAP testing in regard to dyslexia. For example, as detailed **on the NWEA site**, K-2 tests have embedded audio for students who want to use it - and it is possible to limit text-to-speech to answer choices only.

What is also true is that custom settings can also add to the confusion that students experience with the test - for instance, when text-to-speech is enabled, the highlighter and eraser are disabled.

If accommodations such as text-to-speech and on-screen calculator will be required, we recommend that students been given a chance to <u>practice</u> with the tools and ask questions about their use.

Regarding calculator use, some students fare better using a physical calculator rather than an on-screen one because of the touch feedback of the keys and their familiarity with using in regular classroom use.

Using Text-to-Speech Tools



If Text-to-Speech tools are enabled in the testing session Accommodations settings, students can use them to hear questions read aloud.

Students use either the first tool (ear) to begin at the top of the page or the second tool (finger) to select the starting point. Pause and Volume operate like most audio controls.

Students can become familiar with the tools using the MAP Practice Tests.

To return to your question, accommodations may or may not be necessary for your student- it depends. To see if your students has difficulty reading (and therefore should get higher tier support, the program should give your student appropriately-leveled reading passages. If she had trouble with reading the instructions or problems reading the different possible answers on the multiple choice tests, then she should have those accommodations in place. The goal of testing is to have the most accurate reflection of knowledge and academic skills for the areas tested; if accommodations are necessary to achieve that goal, she should have them.

[WHITEPAPER]

Understanding Dyslexia: Identifying, Evaluating and Teaching Students at Risk

Dyslexia is top-of-mind among educators as more and more states pass legislation to provide early screening and support for students with symptoms of dyslexia.

Read this whitepaper to better understand, identify and help these young students overcome their learning difficulties and be successful in school.

Read the whitepaper to learn:

- How to define dyslexia
- Common myths surrounding dyslexia
- The importance of early screening for dyslexia
- Steps for effective diagnostic evaluation
- Effective teaching methods for dyslexic students



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MATH

THE ARITHMETIC-ALGEBRA GAP

Unfortunately for many, Algebra really matters...and that's not a good thing for many dyslexic students.

Algebra can be a gate to higher education and necessary for careers in science, technology, and engineering, and some 20 states require Algebra II for high school graduation, although more states are beginning to drop the requirement.

Common Core standards (adopted in 45 states) expect students to master at least some skills taught in Algebra II.

"Why Algebra?

Employers often expect their employees to translate work-related problems into general mathematical models, from calculating discounts for merchandise to operating technology-based equipment and machinery. Many careers in the fields of science and technology demand high levels of mathematics competence to solve complex problems, such as chemical equations involved in the study of drug interactions. Algebra is also helpful in daily life, from applying formulas for calculating miles per gallon of gasoline to using functions to determine the profit of a business venture." Geller et al., Educational Leadership

So why unfortunately for so many dyslexics?





I say 'unfortunate' because having to pass Algebra blocks many dyslexic students from reaching their dreams of higher education. A sad fact, too, is that far too many teachers aren't given specific strategies to help reach dyslexic students.

"Algebra is the single most failed course in high school, the most failed course in community college, and, along with English language for nonnative speakers, the single biggest academic reason that community colleges have a high dropout rate. Although 60 percent of students enrolled at community colleges must take at least one course in math, about eighty percent of students never fulfill the requirement. They leave without graduating...Algebra is foundational to formal mathematics, but it is not necessary for many important and useful forms of mathematical literacy. Statistics and data analysis, for example, often come easily to many who cannot fathom abstract algebraic thinking. Over the years, I've worked with many superb professional computer programmers who hated algebra, some of whom dropped out of college or even high school because of it...."

- Professor Cathy Davidson, City University of New York

MATH

Algebra is challenging for many dyslexic students because of its demands on working memory and memorized algorithms, procedural learning and math fact retrieval, confusion with symbols and notation, crowded pencil work, and a sea of variables and word problems.

On the plus side, dyslexic students are good at reasoning and problem solving, so the question is - can Algebra be taught to dyslexic students' strengths while minimizing challenges? For many, the answer is YES.

If your children are young or at least not yet in high school, learning math through multisensory strategies like unifix cubes, tiles, or groups of popsicle sticks can lay the groundwork for Algebra later.

In general dyslexic students seem to learn well with the CRA or Concrete-Representational-Abstract approach to mathematics learning. In this system, students progress from using real-life physical materials, to drawing simple representations, to performing math problem solving with abstract symbols.

For example, from Metz (2011):

Example: Solve 2x + 3 = x + 7

Begin by using concrete objects:



Represent the concrete objects:

 $\Box \Box \circ \circ = \Box \circ \circ \circ \circ$ A = 200 = 000

20 MATH

After mastering problem solving with concrete and representation supports, students can work problems at an abstract level really understanding what the steps represent.

Abstract notation:

2x	+ 3	=	x	+7
-x		=	-X	
x	+3	=		+7
	- 3	=		-3
x		=		4

Programs Using CRA Approach

Many math curricula use the CRA approach. Here are names of a few --->

- Applied Math Made Easy
- Solving Equations: An Algebra Intervention
- Hands On Equations
- Singapore Math
- Math-U-See
- Algebra Tiles



Video showing simple equation problem solving with Hands On Equations

The CRA approach to Algebra will also work with older students, but because of procedural memory challenges, the earlier the start with number sense (fluidity and flexibility with numbers), the better.

Some high school Algebra instruction may administer instruction almost entirely in abstract symbols, causing students to fall behind right at the start of a school year if the basics are not known well.

Dyslexic students benefit by:

- Prelearning concepts by watching Khan Academy or other videos before new topics are introduced in class
- Explicit instruction and time to learn new Algebra vocabulary
- Color coding like terms in equations
- Color coding x coordinates in one color and y coordinates in another
- Assign different colors to positive and negative terms in an equation
- Release class notes before lecture to allow previewing notes
- Show step-by-step problem solving in handouts
- Digital flashcards (e.g. Quizlet) for math vocabulary terms
- Teach with mnemonics and allow learning with formula cards and "cheat sheet" reviews
- Explicitly teach and model word problems
- Use of graphic organizers with scaffolds whenever possible (next page).

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learning disabilities gain the strategies and confidence they need to succeed, becoming advocates for their future!



Dyslexic Advantage PREMIUM MAGAZINE

EXPLORERS

Brando Yelavich

IN THIS ISSUE:

- DYSLEXIC AS EXPLORERS
- CORRECTING READING
 DIGITAL PORTFOLIOS FOR DYSLEXIC
- STUDENTS PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

 HOW AN SLP HELPED COLLEGE STUDENT FULFILL HER FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT
 PROPORTIONAL REASONING

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MATH



For Algebra, graphic organizers can be used for many purposes for dyslexic students as well as their non-dyslexic peers.

At left, the graphic organizer provides prompts for the procedural steps involved in problem solving.

Allow students to work with a correctly solved model before working problems on their own.

The figure below shows several types of graphic organizers that can be used solving different types of problems.

Reference

Schema and Definition	Equations and Graphic Organizers	Examples			Variations
Combine (Total; Part- part-whole) Parts combined for a sum	P1 + P2 = T (part + part = total) (total) (part) (part)	Sum unknown: Lyle has 11 red apples and 18 green apples. How many apples does Lyle have altogether?	Part unknown: Lyle has 29 red and green apples. If 11 of the apples are red, how many green apples does Lyle have?		More than two parts: Lyle has 34 apples. Of the apples, 11 are red, 18 are green, and the rest are yellow. How many yellow apples does Lyle have?
Compare (Difference) Sets compared for a difference	$ \begin{array}{ c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c$	Difference unknown: Sasha wrote 85 words in her essay, and Tabitha wrote 110 words. How many fewer words did Sasha write than Tabitha?	Bigger/greater unknown: Tabitha wrote 25 more words than Sasha. If Sasha wrote 85 words, how many words did Tabitha write?	Smaller/lesser unknown: Tabitha wrote 110 words in her essay. Sasha wrote 25 words fewer than Tabitha. How many words did Sasha write?	(None)
Change (Join; Separate) An amount that increases or decreases	ST +/- C = E (start +/- change = end) (start) (change) (end) (change)	End (increase) unknown: Jorge had \$52. Then, he earned \$16 babysitting. How much money does Jorge have now?	Change (increase) unknown: Jorge had \$52. Then, he earned some money babysitting. Now, Jorge has \$68. How much did Jorge earn babysitting?	Start (increase) unknown: Jorge has some money, and then he earned \$16 for babysitting. Now, Jorge has \$68. How much money did he have to start with?	Multiple changes: Jorge had \$78. He stopped and bought a pair of shoes for \$42 and then he spent \$12 at the grocery. How much money does Jorge have now?
	(beginning) (iend)	End (decrease) unknown: Jorge had \$52. Then, he spent \$29 at the ballpark. How much money does Jorge have now?	Change (decrease) unknown: Jorge had \$52 but spent some money when he went to the ballpark. Now, Jorge has \$23. How much did Jorge spend at the ballpark?	Start (decrease) unknown: Jorge had some money. Then, he spent \$29 at the ballpark and has \$23 left. How much money did Jorge have before going to the ballpark?	

Material collected from: Griffin & Jitendra, 2009; Fuchs et al., 2014; Fuchs, Seethaler, et al., 2008; Fuchs et al., 2010; Jitendra, 2002; Kintsch & Greeno, 1985; Van de Walle, Karp, & Bay-Williams, 2013.

Reference

²⁴ COMICS

READING WITH COMICS

"Dyslexics like myself can't learn anything without a narrative to hold on to. Why am I being given this information? What does it do? What is it relevant to? What similar thing should I store it next to in my head?" - Jay Stringer, Book Riot

Jay Stringer has a a great post on Dyslexia and Comics and they are good reminders that for many, the gateway to reading for pleasure is a plot that hooks you, intriguing characters, and graphics that pair well with text.

Now, we've talked about <u>wordless</u> <u>picture books</u> before - they definitely can be amazing and stimulate a love for books, but comics also have their place for many children and adults, and that's what Jay captures in his post:

"There is a simple thing you could do for all children as they learn to read, but for a dyslexic it could be life changing; put a comic in their hands.

Comics as a medium rely on clarity and context. They are pictures and words being used in small panels to tell a story. Essentially they are hieroglyphs. It's a form of storytelling that is as old as written communication. The real art of telling a story in a comic is in giving the illusion of movement between the panels. Things happen, your eye moves





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GIFTED AND DYSLEXIC



IN THIS ISSUE:

- CREATIVITY & COGNITIVE CONTROL
- **SPELLING: TEACHING TO** STRENGTHS OR WEAKNESSES?
- DYSGRAPHIA UNRECOGNIZED CAUSE OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT • KNOWING WHAT TO ASK FOR: **COLLEGE ACCOMMODATIONS** DYSLEXIA & HIGHER MATH

PREMIUM **PREVIOUS ISSUE**

Gifted and Dyslexic Prepping to Disclose in Interviews Creativity & Cognitive Control Spelling: Teaching to Strengths or Weaknesses **Dysgraphia: Unrecognized Cause of** Underachivement **Knowing What to Ask for in College Dyslexia and Higher Math**



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DYSLEXIC DVANTAGE

How Much Do You Really Know About Dyslexia?

There are some common misconceptions about what dyslexia is — and what it isn't. Test your understanding (and maybe learn something new) in this quiz.





TAKE THE QUIZ

go.fastbridge.org/decda2

COMICS

from one image to the next and your brain builds a structure to carry the information. It's the perfect medium for learning to read."

Jay argues that even today, as an adult, looking at a text on a page does nothing for him unless he can connect it to an image or a memory. At the other extreme, films do too much - giving you everything, all the talking, movement, and emotion. Comics and graphic novels can hit the sweet spot, making you want to read to understand the full meaning of the pictures and to get the clever turns of phrase, the jokes, even sarcasm. He has a point!

From Jay again:

"A comic book trains your brain. It works the right muscles and, if you're struggling, they can teach you to read. You see images for context, you see the words that go with them, and your mind learns to fill in the blanks. You learn to build the narrative as you go.

As a child, I suddenly got it. I had a structure, a guide for processing the information I was taking in, and where to store it. I had a reason to keep moving through the pages.

If you know someone who is a struggling reader, give them a comic. Give them the best comic in your collection. You might change their life."

N.B. Not all dyslexics will enjoy reading comics due to visual crowding, potential distraction, and clutter.

Want to try reading some comics for free? Check out the free samples here:

<u>Marvel</u>

DC Kids

Comixology Free (Amazon)



28 COMMUNITY

Q: My 15 year old daughter was recently found to be severely dyslexic. Her public high school has set her to enroll her in an online high school because her local school can't meet her needs. We've been told that her vocabulary is weak. What program would you recommend?

A. The answer to your question may depend on what structured literacy program she begins and what ways she learns best.

Most structured literacy programs have a vocabulary component which is interwoven with phonemic awareness instruction in the forms of multisensory practice and books based on vocabulary and letter / letter-blend instruction that they've received.

Because non-dyslexic students acquire words as they read, over time if she doesn't listen to audiobooks regularly, her gap in word knowledge will fall increasingly behind non-dyslexic peers. Some students (and even more adults) have difficulty reading along while listening to audiobooks.

Before giving up on that combination, she should try optimizing her ebook reader choosing a book or books series that she already knows well, slowing down the rate, increasing the font size, and limiting the number of words per lines to see if listening along with reading becomes easier.



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³⁰ COMMUNITY

On Voice Dream Reader's site, app creator Winston Chen <u>shared</u> how dyslexic scientist Matt Schneps was able to optimize his e-book settings to listen while reading along.

See his settings at right:

On an iPad - Portrait Mode Dark Avenir Next 36 Line Spacing 1 Character Spacing 5 Side Margins 180 Voice Amy

One additional tip - instead of reading the word when it's highlighted, Matt found it easier to read along looking just before the highlight.

The reason for mentioning this is that over time, if she can be trained to listen while reading to audiobooks, she can acquire many more words and words especially from her interests in reading.



For that matter, it's also a good idea to encourage her to look up words as she is reading independently. When reading physical books, she could use a <u>scanning</u> <u>pen</u> that has an audio dictionary; also, some e-book readers have a look-up dictionary. In Kindle Paperwhites, there are vocabulary functions which allow you to look up and store, and make flashcards from words that you come across in reading that you don't know (read more <u>HERE</u>).

Developing a regular practice of reading with an audio dictionary app like <u>this</u> <u>one</u> will also help in her learning new words. She may need to have an app or dictionary that reads the full definition aloud.

DYSLEXIA FOR TEACHERS ONLINE

CLOCK HOURS & GRADUATE CREDITS

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need to succeed."

32 COMMUNITY

In terms of specific vocabulary apps, there are a wide variety of options available, and they may be easy and even fun to add onto her existing school curriculum. Try out free or lite versions whenever possible at first so she can choose which apps will help her learn best.

<u>Knowji</u>

Knowji is organized into convenient lists, including a list for academic vocabulary.

Pictures accompany the learning of new words as well as examples of the use of the word in sentences, relevant word parts, and related words.

iPad & iPhone



Knowji Vocab Lite Audi... Education



Knowji Vocab 7-10, SAT... Education

With Siri, the definitions can also be read aloud, but integration this late could be frustrating depending on the level of her reading ability.

<u>Anki</u> is another useful vocabulary learning app which uses spaced repetition as an efficient way to learn words. It is available in all platforms for flashcard learning and is also free.

To be useful, lists of words, including audio, definitions, phonetic pronunciation, and pictures are uploaded into the app. At right is an example of a <u>free 4000 English word</u> <u>pack</u> (option to donate) that include pictures and audio descriptions of the word meaning and example of the word use in a sentence.

Word	confidence
Image	
Sound	Play
Sound_Meaning	Play
Sound_Example	Play
Meaning	Confidence is a feeling of certainty or ability
Example	I have confidence that I did well on the test.



Deadline for Karina Eide Young Writers Awards is <u>JAN 21st</u>. STEM / STEAM Ingenuity Awards deadline is <u>MAY 1st</u>.



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No dictionary or storage, making it ideal for exams and testing. See examreader.com for more information *Add to IEP or 504 Plan as Text to Speech*

SCHOOL DISTRICT DYSLEXIA THERAPIST

"With the help of the C-Pen Reader, my students can now go to the library and choose a book of interest that they truly enjoy reading. This has broadened their interest levels, vocabulary and exposure to fiction and nonfiction books. Before the ReaderPen, my students were limited to books at lower lexile and independent reading levels. For this reason many of them were bored by the content or frustrated by the sheer act of reading."



DYSLEXIA NEWS

	Dyslexia is a Different Brain, Not Disease KQED Mind Shift
	The Most Popular Reading Programs Aren't Backed by Science Education Week
Eng-lish / in langua clear the	Judging a Person More on Spelling and Grammar Reveals More About You Than Them The Independent (UK)
	Board of Education Unanimously Passes New Dyslexia Requirements for Teachers (Kansas) KSNT.com (NBC)
	Turn Read Aloud on for your Computer Dyslexic Advantage
R,	What I Wish People Knew About My Son's Dyslexia

Yahoo Lifestyle

36 DYSLEXIA NEWS



How to Recognize Dyslexia in Children, Including English Language Learners



Patrick Dempsey, Actor and Entrepreneur Talks About His Dyslexia at Bowdoin

Bowdoin Orient



More Reading Wars - we'll discuss in a future issue.

Lucy Calkins: No one gets to own the term "science of reading"

Response to Lucy: This is why we don't have better readers Reading Matters Blog



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"There's no learning without trying lots of ideas and failing lots of times...."

- Sir Jony Ive, Chief Designer Officer, Apple

