

# Dyslexic Advantage

## NEWSLETTER



- WHAT TO DO THIS SUMMER FINDING STRENGTHS AND CAREER SUCCESS

- MODERATE - SEVERE DYSLEXIA
- DYSLEXIA NEWS

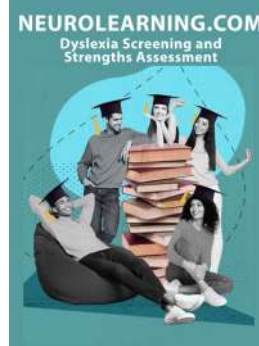
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Dr. Fernette Eide  
Editor-in-Chief

## SUMMER FUNDRAISER: DYSLEXIA AND HIGHER ED

In July, Dr. Joan Bisagno, Dyslexic Advantage Board member and past Director of the Schwab Learning Center at Stanford will be leading an exclusive event Dyslexia in the Real World for those who donate more than \$100 in this our Summer Fundraising Campaign **HERE**.

The link for this issue is: <https://joom.ag/fUkd>

This issue will only be on Joomag for about 6 months. A our **Newsletter Archives at DyslexicAdvantage.org**. Keep **donating** or becoming a **Premium subscriber!**

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

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PRIVATE EVENT in JULY  
with DR JOAN BISAGNO  
PAST STANFORD DIRECTOR

PREMIUM

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

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

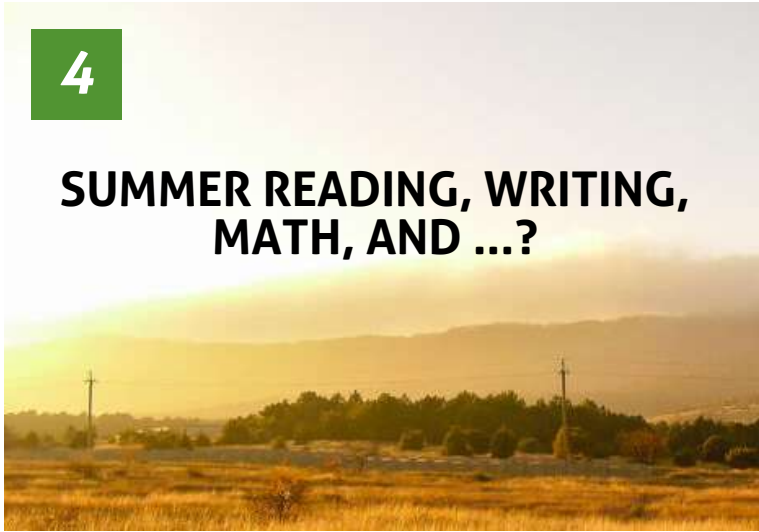


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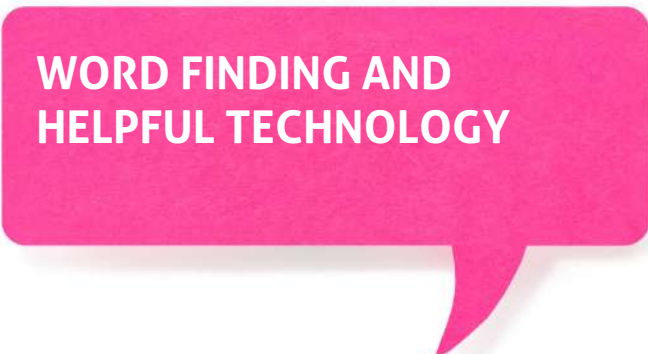
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# SUMMER READING, WRITING, MATH AND .....?

First of all, remember to decompress.

Students need to drift into the vacation mode - especially if this past year has been a difficult one.

How long may vary and also depend on whether they have some vacation or recreational time scheduled.

## EVERYONE'S SUMMER LOOKS DIFFERENT

Everyone's summer will look different - some students will be doing summer school over the summer - to be in a good place for the fall; others may need to work, while still others may need to adjust their schedule around a working parent or parents.

Still, there are ways to try to keep reading, writing, and even math alive in addition to having a great summer.

## SNEAKY WAYS TO KEEP READING, WRITING, AND MATH ALIVE

Some students will be doing summer school or tutoring over the summer, but if not, if possible, finding some ways to keep reading, writing, and math going over the summer will make the the start of the coming school year easier.

The best ways usually involve building on a student's interests and also adding in technology if it helps with some of the heavy lifting and working memory demands.

## NICHE READING, MAGAZINES, GRAPHIC NOVELS, BOOKS WITH FILM ADAPTATIONS BOOK SERIES

Summer is a great time to get kids hooked on books. Sometimes this might mean niche reading, like a video game manual or comic series, or graphic novel. It might mean a humorous book or books with film adaptations or series that your student already knows and enjoys. Some students love manga, others love sports or nonfiction. Summer is a great time to find something to fall in love with.

Look for ways to lighten the heavy work of sustained reading - for every student it may be a little different. Some may have an easier time with magazines and comics, while others might prefer to mainly listen, then occasionally read by eye.

If audiobooks never caught on, then see if it's easier to listen while moving and doing something like exercising. Also try speeding up the audio to see if its easier to stay with a story or book.

If your student doesn't have a Bookshare or Audible account, then check out ebooks and audiobooks through the [Libbyapp](#).



If you're going on a driving vacation over the summer, check out audiobooks from your library and try listening to them in the car.

It doesn't matter what the reading material is - what you're trying to do is find something that's enjoyable that makes them look forward to reading or read-listening more.

What about writing? Writing is very different for most dyslexic children, so take small steps forward wherever your student finds him or herself.

Let them dictate, 2 finger type, or text with word prediction. Encourage them to write for fun - whether it's to a friend or family member, post a review of a game or movie or write poetry or fanfiction. If they haven't worked with word prediction software before, summer is a good time to try.

## KEEPING UP OVER THE SUMMER

If you have a Windows computer, [Lightkey](#) is an AI-powered word prediction software that has free and paid programs.

For Mac (or Word) there's [WordTune](#) or [Ginger Software](#), both of which have free trials.

Texthelp's [Read And Write](#) is available for all platforms, including Android.

What about Math? Develop a regular practice of card games or board games that require math. Simple card games can range from Blackjack, War, or [Multiplication war](#). A nice list of card games that involve math can be found [here](#). A free e-book called Acing Math with a huge list of math games can also be found [here](#).

Cooking, baking, and managing a budget are all additional ways to maintain math skills over the summer. If you're going to be traveling, involve your kids in the planning. Have them figure out distances and times and itineraries if they're old enough. If they will have summer jobs, then they can also manage their finances and expenses if they buy things with money they've made.

Do your kids have to do something with reading, writing, and math over summer break? No, but there is a thing called summer slide - and without some intermittent activity over the summer months, its possible that they may lose some progress they made over the previous school year. A little bit once a week may be all that's needed - but also also look for activities that they may really learn to enjoy. Finding enjoyable activities might lead to breakthroughs in their levels of achievement.





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Differently*

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*Teaching  
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# FINDING STRENGTHS AND CAREER SUCCESS



"There are many ways to enter a house. You can go in the window, the back door, the front door, the side door. Ok, so if I couldn't go in the front door, I'll get in the house some other way. "

- Louise, independent global line producer for film and video

The world needs more stories from dyslexic adults about how they found their niche in life.

Research overwhelmingly focuses on dyslexia in childhood, but that is only the earliest part of the journey.

Sometimes the best advice to young people entering the workforce, or adults looking to pivot in their careers comes from those who have "been-there-done-that."

A few excerpts from Dr. Bonnie Blake's [research](#):

One woman interviewed, "Hayden" was a design coordinator for a global media giant. She came from a family of dyslexics, including her father who was part of the early "Why Johnny Can't Read" study.

Hayden, age 40, admitted that she doesn't sound out words, but instead sees them as little silhouette picture that she learns to recognize by shape.

Hayden knew that her father struggled a great deal in school, but ultimately went on to be very successful as director of a large company; a large training facility was named after him.

About her brother, Hayden said that he was held back twice in high school. She helped write papers for him, but he dropped out anyway. He did get his GED, went into the military and was very successful. He trained on a special team that trained with the Navy Seals and works with "red collar" dogs that are unlikely to be rehabilitated. She said, "Wherever there's a disaster, they would send him because he had military and Navy seal training, you know earthquakes and stuff like that. He goes into those areas after natural disasters and gets abandoned animals. He has training and talent to be able to solve a problem in chaotic and dangerous situations. He also has now trained to be a vet there, so like doctor stuff. And...he never graduated while in high school."

Because Hayden's father and brother had more trouble with reading and writing, she didn't think she was dyslexic, but a college professor (who was dyslexic) suggested she might be evaluated for dyslexia when she was in her junior year because of a discrepancy between her intelligence and underperformance in some academic work, so she learned she was dyslexic when she was 28 years old.

"Hayden commented that her career rise and success was based on learning how to think differently to solve problems, confidence in her visual talents, working with highly intelligent team members, and respect for the talents of others. Hayden said, "I work at being willing to work with people, being good at collaboration, and curious and seeing and anticipating problems."

Hayden went on to join a small collaborative team that worked with engineers to create the first mobile device for her global company that had many print magazine properties. She earned a Master's degree while advancing in her career. Her advice to fellow dyslexics was to "keep absorbing and learning new things. Use (dyslexia) to your advantage."

Both Bonnie and her brother really started blossoming in their careers when they had to use creative problem solving in their every day work and collaborate with team members who had a diverse talent set. Their jobs were not routine or from any preset job description.


From the MIND strengths framework we described in [The Dyslexic Advantage](#), they seem to have built their careers on all 4: Material Reasoning, Interconnected Reasoning, Narrative Reasoning, and Dynamic Reasoning.

Hayden, as a designer, works with visual materials when she creates layouts and prides herself on being able to communicate her design ideas to others in her company so that they can understand.

Her brother also works with materials - for example existing resources in an area that may have been hit by a natural catastrophe. His story reminded me of a dyslexic designer who told us about his dyslexic father who worked in the military with FEMA and came up with the idea of repurposing Home Depot garden centers to hold dogs and other animals that had been left homeless after Hurricane Katrina had struck. Work in disaster scenarios requires creativity and ingenuity as well as an ability to see into the future and consider various scenarios (Dynamic Reasoning).

Interconnected and Narrative Reasoning strengths also appeared in Hayden's career path when she talked about her ability to work well in teams and craft presentations that others from very different backgrounds will understand and support.

Check out all of the interviews in Bonnie's dissertation for more pearls. Her interview with Louise also shared her creativity and flexibility and emotional intelligence: "have reinvented myself so many times over the last 30 years, as far as who I am and what I do. What makes you happy? Start from there." Louise discovered her career while working in theater where she enjoyed director actors who were coming into events or situations all from different angles. Once she began working with companies, she found she enjoyed working with team members who had different skills that complemented each other. She shared, "The key to a really good dyslexic, successful dyslexic is being able to delegate...I don't really know what my IQ is, but I know I have a high emotional IQ." At 59, Louise also added that "a lot of people by the time they get to the point I'm at, my age, there's a little bit of jadedness; my success comes from not being jaded... I see the broad, the bigger picture." Today, Louise also shared that she enjoys being a mentor to kids in her community.








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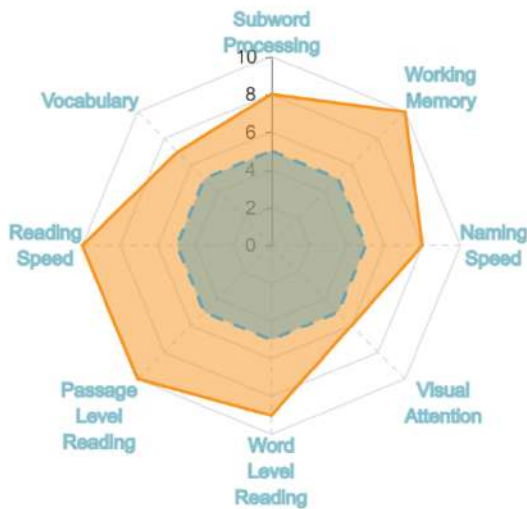


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## Understanding Your Dyslexia Subscale Score:

**ALL SCORE RANGES ARE 1-10. SCORES 7+ INDICATE GREATER DYSLEXIA RISK OR READING CHALLENGES.**



YOUR SCORE

AVERAGE SUBSCALE

The radar graph of your scores provides a quick overview of your Dyslexia Subscale Scores.

The further a particular score is from the center of the graph, the greater the likelihood it represents a dyslexia-associated processing trait.

### Foundation Scores

These are low-level processing skills underlying reading and spelling



#### Subword Processing: 8

Measures your brain's ability to break apart, identify, and manipulate sound components that make up words.



#### Working Memory: 10

Measures the amount of auditory-verbal info your brain can actively process at one time.



#### Naming Speed: 8

Measures the speed at which your brain can recall words from memory in response to visual symbols.



#### Visual Attention: 6

Measures how well your eyes and brain cooperate to gather accurate information about printed symbols.

### Achievement Scores

These are learned reading skills.



#### Word-Level Reading: 9

Measures your ability to recognize (or "sight read") and decode words.



#### Passage-Level Reading: 10

Measures your ability to read and understand longer passages of text.



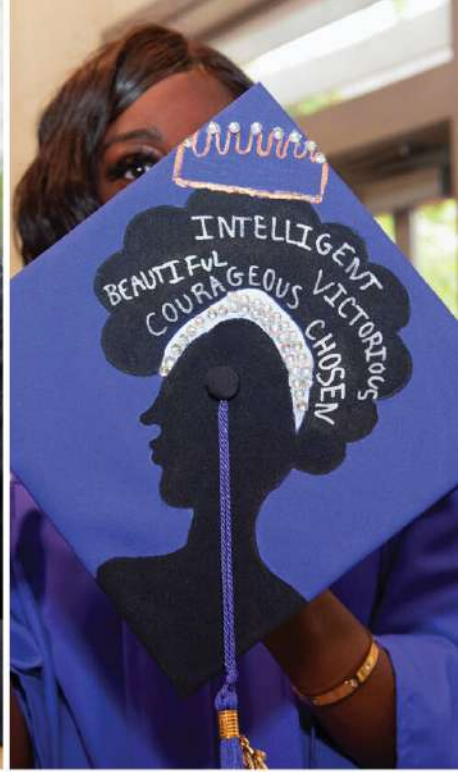
#### Reading Speed: 10

Measures the speed which you read sentences and paragraphs.



#### Vocabulary: 7

Scores 7 and higher can increase reading problems.



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# COLORADO SCHOOLS STRUGGLE WITH DYSLEXIA

Denver administrators say this year's screening process flags students who are reading below grade level, pinpoints their weak skills, and provides specially tailored reading instruction to help them improve. The process doesn't focus on communicating explicitly to families about whether their children have signs of dyslexia.

But some parents wonder why, if the district claims to screen for dyslexia, it's shying away from the term.

Denver parent Kirsten Hansen, whose two children have dyslexia, said families are notified about other kinds of screenings --for scoliosis or gifted programming, for example--and dyslexia should be no different.

'If you're not going to tell people about it, why not?', she said. 'Information is power.' " [-Colorado Chalkbeat](#)

Denver district officials launched a dyslexia screening. Just don't say dyslexia.

It's a pity that some schools and school administrators continue to be unpredictable when it comes to dyslexia.

In the report, Jennifer Begley was quoted as saying, ""The teachers you talked to would not refer to our guidance as a dyslexia screener," she said by email. "Rather, it is our district guidance for screening, identification, and intervention in reading."

With the wealth of scientific information over the past century, this head-in-the-sand approach to dyslexia bodes poorly for the 15-20% of the student body that is likely to be dyslexic . By their own admission, their tests only identify less than 5% of students as having a "specific learning disability" and even so, parents and students are not provided with documentation that allows them to access individualized education plans, accommodations, modifications, and specific information about what to expect.

Schools may point fingers at health systems to identify developmental disabilities, while health insurance programs may point to schools to meet remediation or education needs - as a result definitive information for particular children may fall into the gap.

Denver parent Kirsten Hansen raises an important point...dyslexia should be no different. Information is power.

From Education Week's article on [Universal Screening for Dyslexia Isn't Enough:](#)

"The dyslexia screening that takes place within a school setting is not intended to actually diagnose dyslexia. Most states' public schools are screening for risk indicators of dyslexia and other reading problems, explains Mary Wennersten, the accreditation chair of the International Dyslexia Association.

She added that most public school systems do not employ personnel qualified to diagnose dyslexia; typically, an educational psychologist will provide the diagnosis after an extensive evaluation process.

Many schools adopt a 'wait-and-see' approach in the earliest grades"

From Laura Schulz, co-founder of Decoding Dyslexia Maryland:

"By the time my daughter was in 7th grade, her teachers were like: 'We like her a lot, but she's not going to amount to much,'" said Schultz, who ended up hiring private tutors to support her daughter's reading needs. "These are well-meaning people, they just didn't know what to do."






# ORGANIZE YOUR AWESOME IDEAS

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## SCHOOL

Within this context came the additional bad news this spring that a promising program for older students with dyslexia in Lakewood, CO is getting cut.

From [Chalkbeat](#) again:

"A Jeffco school will dramatically scale back a program for older students with dyslexia next year, upsetting parents who say the unique offering has made a profound difference for their children.

Bright MINDS launched at Alameda International Junior/Senior High School in Lakewood three years ago. It's on the chopping block now because of "inadequate funding and staffing shortages" and will "be dissolved" after this school year, according to a letter sent to participating families last week.

For participating families, including some who commute from outside the district, the news means the end of what's been a golden needle in a haystack: a comprehensive public school program for students in middle and high school who have dyslexia."

The reason stated by the district was budgeting and staff shortages.

The news is tragic for families - and may be repeated at districts throughout the country suffering budget losses and inadequate manpower.

The middle and high school years are often neglected by schools when it comes to dyslexia. Students in mainstream classes may be overlooked for accommodations and modifications when it comes to timed tests, quantity of homework, and reading without audio options.

Parents should be alert to changes that will be impacting students in the coming school year. The trend of declining public school attendance is expected to continue in 2024 and individual supports through tutoring and advocacy may be necessary.

# MODERATE TO SEVERE DYSLEXIA

What about students with severe dyslexia?

Some transitional schools for dyslexia aim to return students to general education after 2 or sometimes 3 years of intervention.

But dyslexia can vary widely and students with moderate or severe dyslexia may take years to remediate - and even so, reading fluency may remain slow even into adulthood.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO NON-READERS?

It's difficult to answer that question based on research studies. Most adults above a certain age weren't formally identified - and even today, dyslexia identification remains spotty at best.

Many leave formal education. That doesn't mean the end of learning. Some may find jobs that suit their strengths - and use others or technology to help when reading and writing are required on the job.

Over the years, we've talked to hundreds if not thousands of people who managed to get by without reading and writing - it wasn't optimal and sometimes it put an end to certain career dreams - but others not. Through ingenuity, flexibility, and an ability to find the right supports, they were able to find their ways learning through people, first-hand experience, and strong personal qualities.

When Margaret Rawson followed a small group of students at a private school over the course of 55 years (she lived to the age of 102!), she found that these student were remarkably accomplished with many acquiring advanced degrees - although at times it took them longer compared to their non-dyslexic peers.

From [Dyslexia Over the Lifespan](#):

"...for whatever reasons, the boys who were early diagnosed as having severe to moderate specific language disabilities (dyslexia) have achieved at least as high levels of education and socioeconomic status as their more linguistically facile schoolmates...several individuals still find that some of the residuals of their language problems are sources of difficulty in their current lives (but) they have not been stopped in their careers..."

When the lowest language group was surveyed around age 35, Margaret was surprised that group included: 2 medical doctors (both research scientists, one also with a Ph.D.), 1 lawyer (partner), 2 college professors (one department head), 2 research scientists (other than medical), 3 medium-sized business owners, 3 business executives, 1 school principal, 3 secondary school teachers (one with an MA), 1 actor, 1 factory foreman, 1 skilled laborer.

One student was not included in the low language group because of a low IQ that was thought to be a low estimate because of "emotional problems."

Some decades later, Mark visited Margaret, announcing that "I'm one of you're dyslexics!" He left to attend another school, but had regular multisensory phonological tutoring like was taught at Margaret's school - he did "OK" in public school, went to Swarthmore as a Physics major, then graduate school in engineering. He told Margaret, "I still have some difficulty reading. Sometimes I swap the order of the letters and so misread the words. I am still a 'slow' reader and have trouble spelling, so I always use the spell checker on my computer."



## DYSLEXIA

These were students at a private school, so families were likely higher socioeconomic backgrounds with some privilege - but it also points to the importance of not underestimating ability. Often men and women with severe dyslexia may struggle mightily in their childhood and even 20's, but many additional abilities (including a larger working memory span) mature in their 20's so that you may be able to see more strengths and advantages at 30, where their appearances were rarer in K-12 education.

Some of the adults in Margaret's study said they never opened a book after leaving school, but some mentioned they discovered reading for pleasure in middle age.

### IS LATE REMEDIATION POSSIBLE?

Late remediation is possible - but it's not as easy or quick as remediation for children.

Studies in adults are rare, but Guinevere Eden and her group [showed](#) that 3 hours a day structured multisensory phonological training for 8 weeks showed significant improvements in single word decoding and reading accuracy, although reading speed was still quite slow.

I would expect that reading fluency might take longer - months for instance, but the good news is that there is not an age where reading can't be improved. With improvements in AI-summarization of texts, it will become easier for people to read shorter bits of information with full comprehension.

### RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR ADULTS

If you live in the US, the free or low cost tutoring may be available from [Proliteracy](#) or a program listed in the [National Literacy Directory](#). See more information here: <https://www.proliteracy.org/Resources-Publications/Find-a-Program>

Other tutoring resources may be available in your city from small non-profit literacy groups or a community college or university or neighborhood public library. U.S. resources are also available through [AskJan.org](#) and in the UK, [Access to Work](#).

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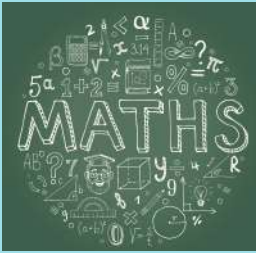
## Q: My teen son is not able to use speech-to-text because he has trouble finding the right word. What can help at school?

A: Word-finding difficulties are not uncommon difficulties found in the setting of dyslexia. The best way to word-finding is through regular practice retrieving words in non-stressful environments - like home or in 1:1 therapy situations. Too often children or adults who have difficulty speaking, avoid speaking or let others speak for them, leading them to become farther behind their peers in speaking.

That being said, it might be helpful for your son to first get ideas down on a page. It might be overwhelming thinking that you may have to dictate an essay into a program, but see if he can try first naming some bullet points or even rambling a bit about what he wants to say. It's possible that [Vnote.ai](#) may help with this. The program allows a person to ramble about a topic. The program listens, asks a question or two for clarification, then drafts a version based on that content. The program is designed for working adults; but it can be an important scaffold for a student who otherwise is demoralized by not being able to write essays like his peers.

Dictation to a family member or program as well as typing with word prediction software like [Co:Writer](#) or [SpellBetter](#) for the iPad can get a student to a starting point for writing more. Microsoft programs like Word and Powerpoint and Google Docs all have dictation options, too. Tell your student to take his time - and initially just work on listing ideas that can be expanded upon in a later step.

Usually trouble with using speech-to-text is due to more than retrieving words; it may also reflect difficulties constructing sentences, as well as issues organization, elaboration, and cohesion. Use technology in parallel with language remediation - things will come together in the future.



## Science of Reading Boosts Math Word Problem Solving, Math Comprehension - U Kansas

Science Daily



## Harnessing Dyslexia: Unleashing Innovation in the Cognitive Diversity Era

Forbes Business Council



## After Outcry, District Vows Dyslexia Program for Older Students Will Continue - Colorado

Chalkbeat



## Being Diagnosed with Dyslexia Has Made Me Happier

Guardian



## Michigan Dyslexia Bill a Step Closer to Becoming Law

Chalkbeat



## Dancing Through the World of Dyslexia - UK Aakash Odedra

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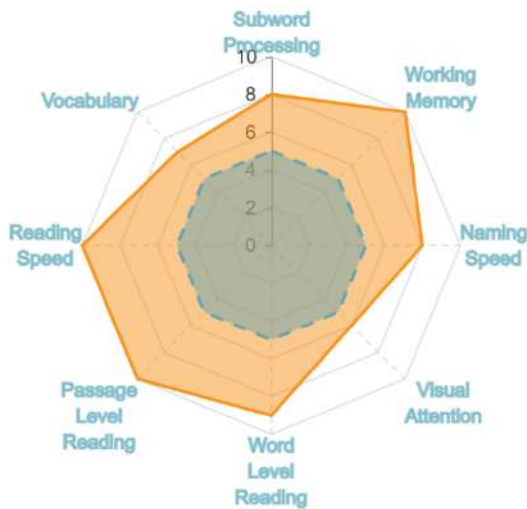
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**ALL SCORE RANGES ARE 1-10.  
SCORES 7+ INDICATE GREATER  
DYSLEXIA RISK OR READING  
CHALLENGES.**



**YOUR SCORE**

**AVERAGE SUBSCALE**

The radar graph of your scores provides a quick overview of your Dyslexia Subscale Scores.

The further a particular score is from the center of the graph, the greater the likelihood it represents a dyslexia-associated processing trait.

**Foundation Scores**

These are low-level processing skills underlying reading and spelling



**Subword Processing: 8**

Measures your brain's ability to break apart, identify, and manipulate sound components that make up words.



**Working Memory: 10**

Measures the amount of auditory-verbal info your brain can actively process at one time.



**Naming Speed: 8**

Measures the speed at which your brain can recall words from memory in response to visual symbols.



**Visual Attention: 6**

Measures how well your eyes and brain cooperate to gather accurate information about printed symbols.

**Achievement Scores**

These are learned reading skills.



**Word-Level Reading: 9**

Measures your ability to recognize (or "sight read") and decode words.



**Passage-Level Reading: 10**

Measures your ability to read and understand longer passages of text.



**Reading Speed: 10**

Measures the speed which you read sentences and paragraphs.



**Vocabulary: 7**

Scores 7 and higher can increase reading problems.

# DYSLEXIA IN THE REAL WORLD

## Life Beyond High School



College? Gap Year? Work?  
Interactive Online Meeting with  
Drs. Joan Bisagno and Fernette Eide

Summer  
Fundraiser  
for  
Dyslexic  
Advantage

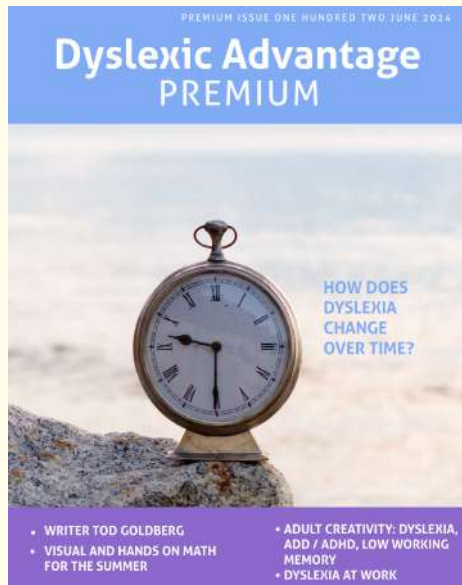
**JULY 25 2024**



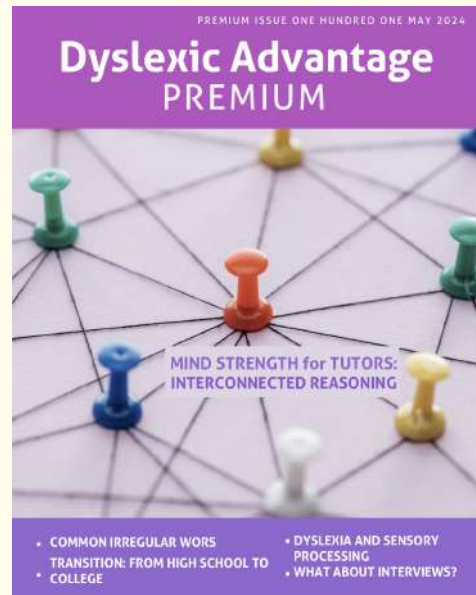
<https://omella.com/x654r>



Limited to 50.



Harness Dyslexic Strengths



GO PREMIUM



"I always felt that if I worked hard enough and continued to refine my craft, while staying curious about our times and our world, I just might have something to contribute."

- Caldecott Winner and Author-Illustrator Jerry Pinkney