

STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING DYSLEXIC TENDENCIES (SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES IN LITERACY)

General	Keep instructions to one or two parts only. Chunk sequences of instructions – i.e. deliver one at a time vocally, print them one at a time on separate cards, model in numbered steps etc.
	Allow 1-2 minutes 'take up time' when giving instructions – this will allow the student to process fully what is required of them.
	Try teaching an active listening strategy – "Stop, Look and Listen" - every time the teacher speaks. By practising responding in this way students with dyslexic tendencies may find that they recall and understand more. Remember however, that they will not be able to take notes at the same time as listening.
	Avoid moving around too much when giving spoken instruction / information. Avoid standing in a place surrounded by 'clutter' such as shelving, posters, storage units etc. A classroom where students shout out or there is low-level noise will also act as 'clutter'.
	Always take time to model tasks and provide an example of the 'finished product' as a way of giving instructions without relying on words.
	Ask the student to repeat back instructions to you in their own words – establish a "tell me, show me" routine.
	Respond supportively when a student forgets routines – such as bringing a pen and pencil, books, PE kit, arriving at the right lesson at the right time etc. Try to use strategies such as checklists, reminder notes, visual timetables etc. to support the student. Students with dyslexic tendencies will forget obvious detail, remembering one day and not the next.
	Avoid sudden changes in routine without informing them beforehand. If there is a planned classroom change (such as students working in the library), ask a member of staff or student to check at the previous classroom to make sure they haven't forgotten.
	Write down homework instructions for them in numbered steps – to make this quicker and more discreet, write in on a post-it note and give it to them during the lesson (rather than at the end) so they can clarify what's required / ask any questions.
	Try to sit students near motivated, encouraging peers. Students with dyslexic tendencies typically find the school day stressful and are at risk of becoming disengaged and gravitating towards other disengaged students.
	Don't expect them to learn strings of facts automatically, e.g. multiplication tables, a timeline of dates (including days of the week, months of the year), French vocab lists etc.
	If the student has good vocabulary / speaking & listening skills, use classroom discussion, role-play, group work etc. as opportunities to build their self-esteem.
	Ensure that learning in every lesson is as multi-sensory as possible – auditory, visual, kinaesthetic. Students with dyslexic tendencies typically prefer 'seeing', 'feeling', 'discussing' and 'doing' rather than 'listening', 'reading' and 'writing'.

Reading	Avoid embarrassing students by asking them to read aloud. If they volunteer, devise a system of support such as tapping the desk / giving a hand sign whenever they need support with a word.
	Go that extra mile to praise students with dyslexic tendencies when they read out loud (but continue to be discreet) – ring their parents, provide an individual reward, speak to them 1-1 about their achievements etc.
	If you frequently use your smartboard / whiteboard to present written information, remove distracting 'clutter' from around it such as shelving, posters, storage units etc.
	Use a pastel coloured background on your smartboard and blue, green and red pens (rather than black) on your whiteboard to reduce stark contrasts and aid visual processing.
	Use font-types that resemble the handwritten alphabet as closely as possible - Courier New for older students and Comic Sans for younger students. Also, use size 14 fonts and 1.5 line spacing.
	Support reading by discreetly pairing them up with a 'reading buddy', by asking other students to read the text to the class or by discreetly assigning support staff to assist them.
	Break down extended reading by numbering paragraphs / lines.
	Encourage the student to 'line track' with a ruler. Provide this as advice to the whole class so as to be discreet.
Writing	Always look for alternatives to extended writing – PowerPoint presentations, making posters, making a picture gallery, oral presentations, dramatic reconstructions / role-play, mind maps, matching labels to pictures/diagrams/maps
	Scaffold writing with writing frames, VCOP grids, cloze procedure, word lists etc.
	Allow extra time for written tasks to be completed. Focus feedback on ideas content rather than on time spent, neatness, spelling etc.
	Minimise copying from the board. Provide pre-prepared information for them to have on their desks / stick in their books.
	When copying from the board is necessary, number or colour-mark the lines so they can keep track. To reduce the amount needed to be copied from the board, use a different colour for key parts then discreetly instruct them to "focus on the green" etc.
	Pair them up with other students during writing tasks. They will often have good ideas but poor handwriting and spelling so will work well with a student who can write fluently and spell but struggles with imagination / creativity.
	Use classroom displays to help with writing – display banks of sentence openers, connecting words, punctuation symbols etc.
	Constantly encourage students to practise spelling strategies – 1) breaking words down into syllables and/or 2) look, write, cover, check – reinforce this every time he asks for a spelling. Praise when he spells words correctly.