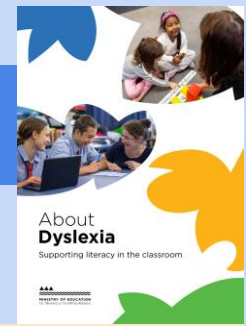


Screening and Assessment Tools

Setting up for success: identification of needs

Early identification (of dyslexia) followed by a systematic and sustained process of highly individualised, skilled teaching primarily focused on written language, with specialist support, is critical to enable learners to participate in the full range of social, academic and other learning opportunities across all areas of the curriculum

– From Ministry of Education draft definition
http://www.tki.org.nz/r/literacy_numeracy/lit_dyslexia_working_definition_e.php.



[About Dyslexia - Teacher Resource \(Ministry of Education\)](#)

Early identification

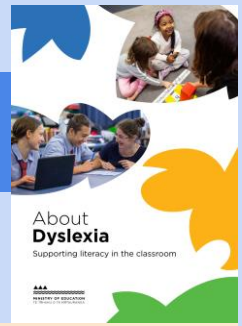
The longer students struggle to read and write, the more complex the difficulties they face may become. As the gap in achievement widens between these students and their peers this may also result in self-esteem, attitudinal and behavioural problems. Evidence suggests that students start to develop their self-concept as readers within the first six months at school, so close observation and clear teaching is needed to establish the early reading and writing concepts.

Discrepancies noticed at this stage can be owing to a variety of factors, not necessarily dyslexia, so teachers may also need to focus assessment on all areas of literacy learning.

Screening and Assessment Tools

Common misunderstandings

- ***Writing letters back-to-front is a symptom of dyslexia.*** Writing letters and even words backwards is common in the early stages of learning to read and write. It does not necessarily mean a child is dyslexic.
- ***People with dyslexia need special coloured lenses or texts.*** There is no strong research evidence that these kinds of interventions improve reading for people with dyslexia.
- ***More boys than girls have dyslexia.*** Research shows that girls and boys are equally affected by dyslexia. It is more likely that boys are identified more readily than girls because of behavioural differences.
- ***People with dyslexia will never learn to read.*** This is not true. The earlier children with dyslexia are identified and given appropriate support, the less severe their problems will be. Even older students with dyslexia can become readers if they are given suitable intensive, individualised instruction.
- ***People with dyslexia are often gifted.*** People with dyslexia are no more likely to be gifted than anyone else in the population.



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Screening and Assessment Tools



Indicators and characteristics of dyslexia

People who appear to have dyslexia can be found across the achievement spectrum and may experience a range of associated difficulties that affect all areas of their lives.

Dyslexia is often described in terms of particular characteristics or indicators because these can be helpful for initially identifying or screening students who may need further assessment. Taken together, the characteristics shown by a student help to build a picture in which patterns or significant differences can be seen.

All students with dyslexia have the same core characteristic: they have persistent problems with phonological processing. This means they will have difficulties with decoding (when reading) and spelling (when writing). The related features and indicators (often consequences) of this core characteristic can vary greatly from one student to another, however, and not all affected students will have issues in the same areas. Conversely (and importantly), not all students who display related characteristics will have dyslexia.

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Some of the characteristics of dyslexia are known as **persisting factors. These are factors that seem to continue over time.** They can appear from an early age and still be present when the person leaves secondary school. As well as the core phonological processing difficulties, persisting factors or consequential behaviours can include:

- variable performance (for example a student may be able to complete literacy tasks with little effort one day but will need to make a huge effort the next day)
- poor retention of previously learned reading and writing skills
- unexpectedly poor output for considerable effort (which may result in fatigue and loss of motivation)
- difficulty with word storage (for example retaining word patterns for spoken language)
- difficulty with sequencing and with retaining a sequence (such as the letters in a word) over time.



Screening and Assessment Tools (Using the Dyslexia Handbook)

[The New Zealand Dyslexia Handbook](#) - Part 3: Chapter 6 : Screening for Dyslexia *An educational psychologist would be the expert to screen for Dyslexia, however the classroom teacher can do some preliminary assessment. Testing is based on the simple view of reading and writing detailed in Chapter 5 of the handbook. According to the model, the best way to test for dyslexia is to check that the student has below average decoding, above average listening comprehension and below average reading comprehension.*

Diagnosing Decoding Skills:

The Bryant Test of Basic Decoding Skills (The Alien's Words Test)

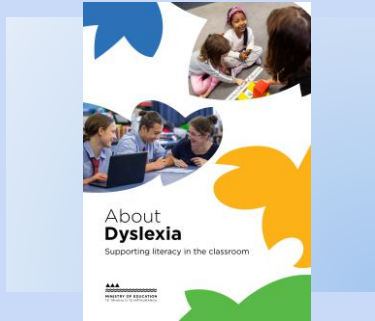


- | |
|-----------|
| 27. cho |
| 28. shi |
| 29. whe |
| 30. thade |

<p>Step 1 <i>Below?</i> <i>Yes, move to step 2.</i></p>	<p>Reading Comprehension</p>	<p><i>Informal:</i> Running Record / Probe <i>Standardised:</i> PAT Reading, STAR, NARA, YARC, WRAT</p>
<p>Step 2 <i>Average or above average?</i> <i>Yes, move to step 3.</i></p>	<p>Listening Comprehension</p>	<p><i>Informal:</i> Read out loud probe passages <i>Standardised:</i> PAT Listening, PPVT, BPVS</p>
<p>Step 3 <i>Below Average?</i> <i>Yes, likely to have dyslexia.</i></p>	<p>Word Skills - Decoding</p> <p>Further Testing : Pre Reading Skills</p>	<p><i>Standardised:</i> Burt Word Reading Test, STAR test, WRAT</p> <p>Alphabet Knowledge Test, Phonemic Awareness Test</p>

Screening and Assessment Tools (Using About Dyslexia)

[*About Dyslexia - Teacher Resource \(Ministry of Education\)*](#)

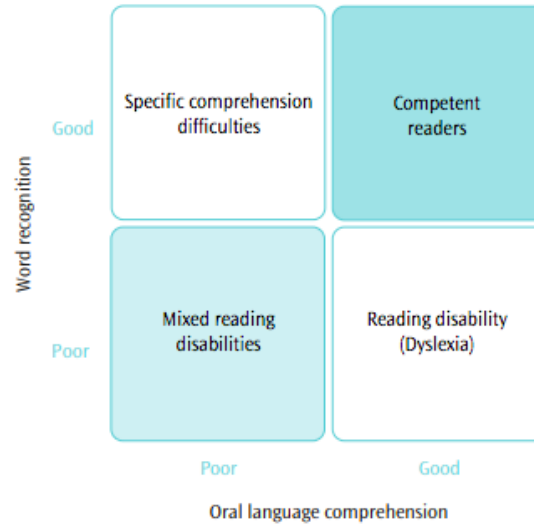


How teachers can use classroom assessments to support instruction

Refer to Classroom Assessment Tools- pages 12 - 13

Conceptualising reading difficulties

One model of viewing reading difficulties uses a quadrant chart to show how two factors can be compared in terms of their impact on reading. There is a continuum along both axes and it is a model that can be used to help clarify understanding rather than for defining dyslexia.



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In this model, dyslexia can be seen as a combination of good oral language comprehension and poor word recognition. Difficulties with writing follow a similar pattern.

Screening and Assessment Tools

A SPELD NZ diagnostic assessment

<https://www.speld.org.nz/our-services/diagnostic-assessment>



Free Dyslexia Test for Children -

<https://www.lexercise.com/ests/dyslexia-test>

Free online assessment - <https://www.testdyslexia.com/>



Is it Dyslexia? - <https://www.daviddyslexia.co.nz/online-assessment.html>



<https://www.nessy.com/us/screening-for-dyslexia/#dyslexia-screening>