

# Why Can I Read this?

## Dyslexia 101



Presented by Laura Rogan, MA, Med

© Jennifer Bloch Garcia, MA,  
Laura Rogan, MA, Med & Elizabeth Smith, PhD

# Definition

- Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. Lyon, 2003

# Dyslexia is...

- ...neurological in origin
- ...often unexpected
- ...difficulties with accurate and / or fluent word recognition
- ...a deficit in the phonological component of language
- ...a problem acquiring proficiency in spelling
- ... word level reading disability
- ... secondary comprehension and vocabulary difficulties

# Classroom-based Assessments

- Listen for errors of phonological processing
  - Speech perception
  - Phoneme representation in speech
- Assess phonological awareness skills
- Analyze word reading errors
- Analyze spelling errors
- Assess reading fluency
- Watch for secondary symptoms: attention, avoidance

© Jennifer Bloch Garcia, MA,  
Laura Rogan, MA, Med & Elizabeth Smith, PhD

# RED FLAGS: Phonological Awareness difficulties

## Pre K and K

- Difficulty with rhyming
- Trouble discriminating between speech sounds  
example: pin/pen
- Sound substitutions when speaking
- Subtle speech confusions  
Example: spupgetti

## Grades 1-4

- Sound mix ups while reading and spelling. (Gets sounds out of order, leaves sounds out or adds sounds in.)
- Persisting errors related to letter-sound association
- Persisting sound substitutions when speaking

# RED FLAGS: Phonological Memory difficulties

## Pre K and Kindergarten

- Difficulty learning temporal sequences: alphabet, days of the week, months of the year
- Trouble pronouncing, learning and remembering new words
- Difficulty learning number sequences

## Grades 1-4

- Trouble learning math facts
- Difficulty remembering how to pronounce new vocabulary words, though may remember the meanings well
- Persisting difficulty with sequencing



# RED FLAGS: Orthographic Coding Difficulties

## Pre K and Kindergarten

- Doesn't like to look at print; prefers pictures
- Not interested in the alphabet; difficulty recognizing letters/numbers
- Difficulty learning motor plans for letters (example: starts letters at the bottom.)
- Incorrect pencil grip

## Grades 1-4

- Continued difficulty learning the motor plans for letters
- Incorrect pencil grip
- Difficulty memorizing "unfair" words (would)
- Spells phonetically
- Spells the same word several ways on the same page (sometimes even if word is provided)

# RED FLAGS: Rapid Automatic Naming

## Pre K and Kindergarten

- Knows letter names but cannot recall them quickly
- May have difficulty naming objects and colors

## Grades 1-4

- Poor reading fluency
- Difficulty keeping up with volume of reading and writing work
- Mis-reads or leaves out grammar words (of, from, she, this) and drops or changes suffixes from words (example)



# RED FLAGS:

## Other signs of Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, and OWL LD

- Early talker vs. talking at the tail end of the normal range
- Difficulty with word finding
- Trouble with time, money, measurement concepts
- Poor word analysis
- Difficulty generalizing rules to new words
- Reading comprehension impacted
- Left-right confusion
- Secondary symptoms

# Dyslexic Students Need...

- Repetition, repetition, repetition... repetition
- Fluency
- Morphology
- Multi-sensory
- Reading – Writing – Spelling
- Word – Sentence – Passage
- Real literature experiences
- Intellectual challenges

# Good Reading Instruction includes...

- Phonological Awareness and the Alphabet
- Phonics
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension

# Research-based programs

- Orton-Gillingham-based
  - Barton
  - Slingerland
  - Spaulding
  - Wilson
- Linguistic-based
  - LETRS
  - Lindamood-Bell LiPS
  - Wired for Reading

# Myths

- Dyslexia affects more boys than girls
- Dyslexic people see things reversed
- Dyslexic people are less intelligent
- Dyslexia can be outgrown
- Treatments that don't involve reading can cure dyslexia