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for children**

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Dyslexia Review

Volume 29, Number 2. Autumn 2019

The Journal of The Dyslexia Guild

Celebrating **25 years** of The Dyslexia Guild



#**IGuildConf2019**





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The professional body for specialist teachers, assessors and support staff

The Dyslexia Guild is a membership organisation for specialist teachers, assessors and practitioners. We welcome all interested professionals to join us. Guild members benefit from letters after their name as either Fellow (FDG), Member (MDG) or Associate (ADG). There is also an Affiliate grade for any individual who shares the interests of the Guild and for student members as well as a group membership rate.

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- Guild Gallery: our bi-monthly topical e-newsletter
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Welcome

Welcome to the Autumn edition of *Dyslexia Review*.

This issue continues our celebrations for 25 years of the Dyslexia Guild and 50 years of *Dyslexia Review*. Our Summer Conference took place in London in June and was a great opportunity for us to meet members and celebrate our double happy birthday. We hope that those of you who attended enjoyed the event and look forward to meeting more of you at next year's conference which will be held at Bath University, a 2020 event for your diary.

Dr Robert Savage and his team of researchers present their findings on promising interventions for children with dyslexia; interesting international research that investigates the impact of carefully evaluated theory-driven interventions for persistent poor readers. We also present an accessibility and inclusivity follow-on feature from Arran Smith, who presented at the conference, with highlights and further details for you to explore on this topic. This year's conference slides can be found on the Guild Members' website.

The Department for Education has now advised that from February 2019, a dyslexia/SpLD assessment, conducted at any age, will be accepted as evidence for a Disabled Student Allowance. Where such an assessment is produced by a specialist teacher assessor, they should however hold a current Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) at the time of assessment. Many of our assessors already hold a current APC and in our article on this topic, Dr Anna Smith, our Lead Assessor for APC applications, advises on current topical questions for those with an APC or who are now seeking to gain one.

The Autumn issue also has guest features on widening participation in STEM subjects and English as a second language, as well as a good selection of book reviews from our members and colleagues. We hope you enjoy our 2019 anniversary editions of *Dyslexia Review* and look forward to meeting and networking with you at conference and through our Guild members' online forums in 2020.

Kathryn Benzine
Editor



Fellows of the Dyslexia Guild:
From the left Laura Carey FDG
and Louise Van der Valk FDG.

50
years of *Dyslexia Review*

25
years of the
Dyslexia Guild

1,500+
Guild Members, UK
and International

700
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our library collection

1,600
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online collection



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Supporting people with specific learning difficulties



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Book reviews



Membership news

Jan Beechey, Dyslexia Guild Administrator and Librarian, provides an update for Guild members.

Summer Conference 2019

This year's annual Summer Conference took place in London and was a wonderful celebration of the Dyslexia Guild (25 years of membership) and Dyslexia Review (50 years of publication). We were pleased to have the support of so many of our members and to hear about their stories and successes. Our celebrations also highlighted the pioneering achievements of many individuals who have helped to destigmatise dyslexia and specific learning difficulties. See our Spring 2019 edition for a tribute to the history of dyslexia support in the UK and the Dyslexia Guild website for further details of our forthcoming event in 2020. Guild Members can access the 2019 conference papers on the Guild Members' website.



Results from our Summer Conference survey June 2019

Those of you who joined us in London to celebrate our 25th Anniversary of The Dyslexia Guild, will know what a vibrant and enjoyable event it was. We surveyed delegates to rank the membership benefits most important to them, which were as follows:

1. Annual Summer Conference
2. Dyslexia Review journal
3. Library Services – National Dyslexia Resource Centre (NDRC)
4. Discounts at Dyslexia Action Shop
5. Designatory Letters for professional membership grades
6. Directory of Members
7. Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) applications
8. Guild Gallery electronic newsletter
9. Indemnity Insurance.

Suggested improvements

Some of you requested a forum for those working within the Adult and FE/HE sectors and we have now made this available so you can ask questions, network and find advice. Our FE/HE specialist tutor Alison Barbour MDG moderates this forum and there is also a moderated forum for Exam Access specialists moderated by Janet Desmet MDG, APC.

Others had asked that the website design and accessibility be improved and we will be exploring how we can address this within our software. Julie Trisnan works on the development of the website and is always happy to hear suggestions. Contact her at: trainingcourses@dyslexiaaction.org.uk

Some people asked if we could reduce the price of training courses; they might like to note that we already offer discounts on Specialist CPD courses and a discounted rate for Guild Members on our conference event.

And finally, some unsolicited positive comments!

I wanted to tick them all! (in relation to benefits on the list)

Just to say the CPD training courses are excellent and so helpful for my practice. Thank you.

The library service and training have been exceptional.

MUCH more approachable and energetic than my experience of ... (other professional body).

Membership news

Dyslexia Guild membership benefits

Are you getting the most out of your membership benefits? Many Guild Members are happy to read the Dyslexia Review and Guild Gallery but may be unaware of some of the other useful resources available to them online.

Step 1: Log in to the Members' Area

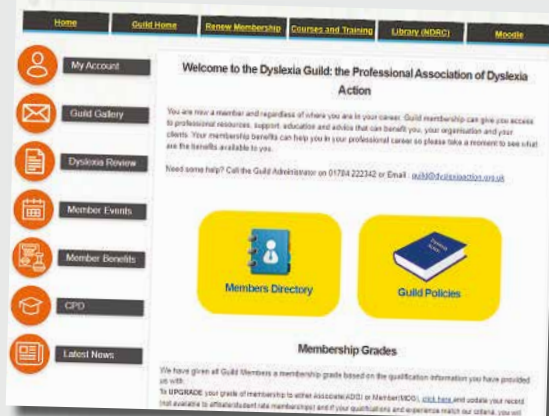
<https://dyslexiaguild.org.uk/> and go to Member Login

If you do not remember your username, try using your email address and request a new password if you have forgotten it.

Once logged in you will see many options down the left-hand side.

The Member Benefits tab will list everything that is available to you but I would like to draw your attention to a few here:

Guild Forums, there are five different threads which relate to assessment, Access Arrangements, Dyslexia Action Literacy Programme (DALP), and a brand-new forum for Adult, Further and Higher Education Specialists. So, there should be something relevant to



all Members and the general discussion thread can be used for anything else. It is here that you can ask questions of other members and experts within Dyslexia Action. Depending on how you set up your preferences, you can be alerted to new posts by email so you never miss a thing!

Another area you may not be aware of is the **Latest News** section. Here you will find vacancies from selected providers and requests to participate in research studies or surveys around dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties (SpLD).

Step 2: Update your details

If you click **My Account** on the left-hand side, you see an area

called **Qualifications Update**; it is here that you can upload details of your SpLD qualifications. Our membership grades are awarded according to specialist qualifications and you can then use designatory letters after your name.

This is valuable if you wish to appear in the **Directory of Members**, a searchable list where those seeking a

specialist tutor or assessor will be able to find you by geographic area or by type of service you provide. We can add your contact details such as email, telephone number and website address, so that they can contact you directly. If you would like these details to appear, just email the contact details you want to appear to us, guild@dyslexiaaction.org.uk.

There are still more benefits to explore such as a **10% discount on our Dyslexia Action Shop** products <https://dyslexiaactionsshop.co.uk/>. Just create an account and contact the Shop to set up your discount. If you have any questions about benefits please contact us.





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Annual Summer Conference Save the Date

Thursday 25 June 2020*

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**For all those
with a professional
interest in dyslexia
and Specific Learning
Difficulties (SpLDs)**

*A networking dinner, accommodation
and leisure facilities are available on
Wednesday 24th June

- Hear expert speakers talk about research and current topics
- Network with others from around the world of SpLD
- See the most up-to-date assessment tests and resources from our Dyslexia Action Shop
- Attend seminar sessions and learn about specific topics
- Take home an attendance certificate for your Continuing Professional Development (CPD) 5 hours



www.dyslexiaguild.org.uk



Researchers

Dr Robert Savage from Department of Psychology and Human Development, Institute of Education, University College London, UK;

Kristy Dunn and George Georgiou, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada;

Rauno Parrila, Department of Educational Studies, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia;

Kristina Maiorino, Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, McGill University, Montreal, Canada;

Giovani Burgos, Department of Sociology, Adelphi University, Garden City, USA.

Promising new interventions for children who are at risk of dyslexia

An international group of university researchers reports on three intervention studies focused on advancing our understanding of optimal instruction for at-risk readers.

There has been much research on how best to support children who are at risk of dyslexia. We report on three intervention studies that have sought to advance our understanding of optimal instruction for at-risk readers. Study 1 focuses on optimizing the teaching of basic letter-to-sound correspondences and mental flexibility in using phonics. Study 2 focuses on teaching more complex letter-to-sound correspondences. Finally, Study 3 contrasts morphological and phonological approaches to teaching

struggling readers. Trained university students delivered these interventions, working with small groups of 'at-risk' poor readers, typically for 30 minutes, three times a week.

Study 1: Optimizing the teaching of letter-to-sound correspondences and mental flexibility in using phonics

We know from existing research that both systematic phonics instruction and shared book reading are important for poor readers (e.g., Hatcher, Hulme and Ellis, 1994). A new idea is that for any

given grapheme (letter(s) to phoneme (speech sound) correspondence (GPC) taught, children should read a text *on that day* that richly embodies the taught GPCs. We call this 'Direct Mapping' of GPCs and argue that 'Direct Mapping' will consolidate GPCs within accurate word reading. Chen and Savage (2014) ran an intervention with 38 'at-risk' Grade 1 and 2 children in Canada ('Grade' is roughly equivalent to 'Year' in England). GPCs were first taught and children then shared book reading with adults using texts with a high density of taught GPCs. Results showed

advantages for the Direct Mapping intervention over the controls on word reading and spelling. Intriguingly, the intervention improved a specific aspect of children's reading motivation – perception of task difficulty. We sought to replicate this small study in a much larger Study 1.

Study 1 also investigated a new process called 'Set-for-Variability' (SfV). To understand SfV, consider popular synthetic phonics programmes. Here children are taught to blend GPCs. Children thus create *spelling pronunciations* that are strings of phonemes, e.g., spoken sounds 'c'- 'a'- 't' for the printed word 'cat'.

Children then have to match these *spelling pronunciations* of 'c'- 'a'- 't' to the conventional pronunciation for the word 'cat' already stored in their lexicon. This is quite an impressive ability because there is quite a distance between *spelling pronunciations* and conventional pronunciations of words. *Spelling pronunciations* are a linear set of phonemes, whereas conventional pronunciations of words 'co-articulate' (i.e., overlap) the individual phonemes. *Spelling pronunciations* can contain 'schwas' whereas conventional pronunciations of words do not. Schwas are the vowel attachments that exist in some articulated consonants within phoneme strings: In reality, 'c'- 'a'- 't' is pronounced more like 'cuh' – 'ahh' – 'tuh' due to the presence of schwas after the 'c' and 't' phonemes. Even these challenges, however, are modest compared with contexts where the GPCs vary across words (e.g., consider the 'i' in 'pin' and 'find'), or where children attempt to use phonic rules to decode exception words that contain GPCs that break the common rules (e.g., 'two', 'above', 'some', 'your' etc). In all these cases, matching of spelling pronunciations to conventional pronunciations of words requires children to have a flexible mental SfV (Elbro, de Jong, Houter and Nielsen, 2012; Tunmer and Chapman, 2012).

Existing evidence shows that explicitly teaching children about variable vowels improves reading of words containing variant vowels compared with a control group that learned about GPCs but did not learn such strategies (Steady et al., 2016). SfV has been incorporated into some established intervention programmes in North America (Lovett, Lacerenza and Borden, 2000). Furthermore, Dyson et al.'s (2018) brief experimental intervention with typical readers in England showed that training in 'self-correction' of spelling pronunciations of exception words, along with instruction in word meanings, helped them to self-correct their pronunciation of exception words. This work suggests that teaching SfV has the potential to improve reading acquisition. However, existing work does not provide clear evidence that teaching SfV improves the reading performance of at-risk children. We therefore undertook a sustained SfV intervention to answer this issue.

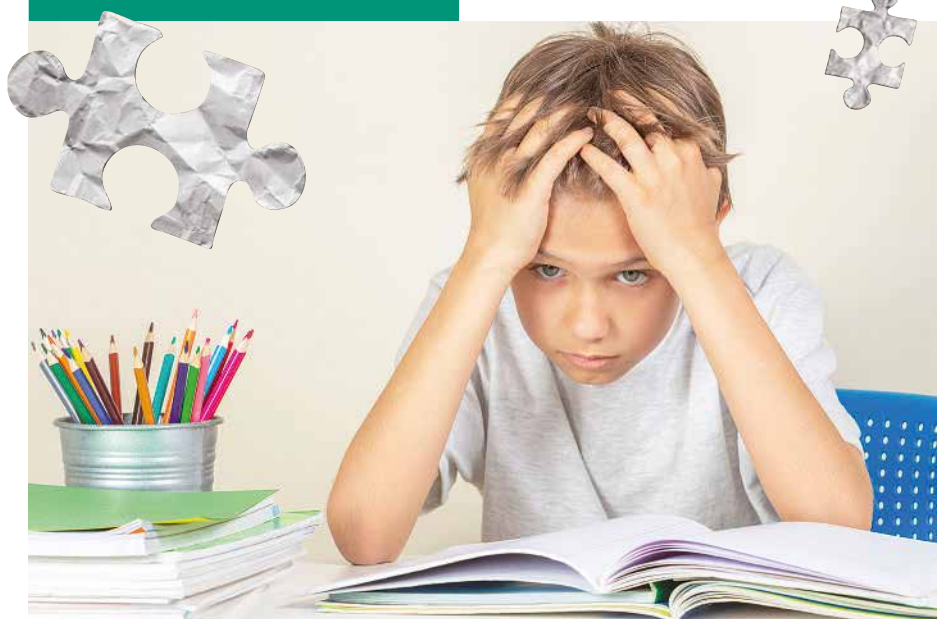
Our intervention study (Savage, Georgiou, Parrila and Maiorino, 2018)

Funding

This work was supported by the Max Bell Foundation, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (Grant no: 435-2012-0614).

involved Grade 1 children in Canada. We randomly allocated schools to Direct Mapping and Set for Variability (DMSfV) or Current Best Practice (CBP) control conditions. All children scoring below the 30th percentile on a standardised word reading measure were considered 'at risk' and were allocated to an intervention group. There were 201 'at-risk' participants (119 and 82 in the DMSfV and CBP schools respectively).

What did we teach? In the DMSfV programme children received intense systematic phonics with a focus on variable vowel pronunciations. In each lesson we linked the taught GPC to real books containing a high density of exemplars of that GPC. Thus, when children were taught the 'ou' GPC, children then read a text such as *The Gruffalo* that contained many words with 'ou' (e.g., 'mouse', 'house'). Once children could decode GPCs, they were taught SfV to map phoneme strings to stored pronunciations of words. Children played 'Simon says...' games where for example, 'Simon says.. touch your 'ar'- 'm' or 'k'- 'n'- 'ee' or 'l'- 'i'- 'p'. We carefully differentiated the curriculum to children's ability levels and delivered it with a sense of fun and playfulness. We taught 'self-correction' of spelling pronunciations of exception words. Children in the CBP programme also received lively differentiated synthetic phonics.



They were taught common sight words pronunciations and read books but in CBP there was *no* close linkage between GPCs taught and shared reading of real books. They were also not taught SfV.

Results showed significant advantages for the DMSfV programme over CBP on word reading, and spelling at post-test at the end of Grade 1 and on word reading and sentence comprehension at a delayed post-test in Grade 2 some 5 months after the intervention had finished.

Study 2: The Simplicity Principle in Grade 2

While we know a lot about phonics, we know much less about the optimal *content* of phonics programmes. Study 2 thus explored the optimal type and number of GPCs that should be taught to at-risk readers in Grade 2. Vousden, Ellefson, Solity and Chater (2011) developed a database of all words found in 685 popular contemporary children's books read by children aged 5–7 years in the United Kingdom. Vousden et al. (2011) extracted GPCs from texts and coded them by frequency of

occurrence. This frequency-coded GPC list was then used to model the percentage of all words across children's texts rendered readable. Results suggested that 60–70 GPCs were optimal. This optimality is the *Simplicity Principle* for reading.

Chen and Savage's (2014) study above used the most frequently occurring complex GPCs. In the Simplicity programme, children were taught complex GPCs such as 'a_e', 'pp', 'tch', 'igh', 'ed', delivered by their frequency of occurrence in children's texts. Children in Direct Mapping condition read texts that richly embodied the taught GPCs. In a control programme, children were taught about target word spellings and meanings but their attention was not drawn to GPCs in words. As already noted, the Simplicity group performed significantly better than the control group on measures of spelling, word recognition, and reading motivation.

Study 2 (Savage et al., 2019) sought to replicate Chen and Savage (2014) among 149 'at-risk' poor readers in Grade 2. There exists strong evidence that decoding is based upon the dual foundation of phoneme awareness and

GPC knowledge (National Reading Panel, 2000). We thus predicted that teaching Simplicity principle-derived GPCs will be most effective for children with stronger phonological awareness skills.

What did we teach? A 'word of the day' was introduced, defined and spelled. Children searched for that word in authentic children's books selected to richly represent these words. Children were then introduced to the 'sound of the day' – a GPC within the word of the day explicitly articulated by the RA. Children then both said and wrote this grapheme and identified it in researcher-written texts designed to incorporate a high density of taught GPCs. Children wrote a sentence using this grapheme in their notebook sounding out the GPC as they wrote. Tasks were differentiated. For weaker readers, if the GPC of the day was /sh/, this child would be asked to read the word 'she'. Stronger students were asked to read words such as 'seashell'. The control intervention programme mirrored the Simplicity intervention with the sole exception that children were introduced to the



‘special spelling’, not the sound, of the day.

The main results showed a significant Intervention x Phonological Awareness interaction effect for Word Reading, Word Attack, Spelling, and Sentence Comprehension at post-test. In each case, improvements were greater for the Simplicity over control conditions at post-test, but only for children with stronger phonological awareness.

Study 3: The Simplicity Principle versus Structured Word Inquiry

Our third study contrasted the effects of two intervention approaches: Simplicity Principle (SP) and Structured Word Inquiry (SWI) on the reading and spelling ability of Grade 3 persistent poor readers. SWI focuses on children’s understanding of the morphological



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the staff and students of the Edmonton Public School Board, Edmonton, Alberta, and the English Montreal, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Lester B. Pearson, and Riverside School Boards, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

aspects of English spelling – analysis of the structure of meanings within and across words using an ‘explorative mode of learning’ (A detailed review of SWI is provided by Bowers in the Summer 2018 edition of *Dyslexia Review*). Essentially, we formally evaluated the statement articulated there by Bowers that:

“The role of morphology and etymology in literacy learning have been underestimated and that the use of morphological and etymological approaches are not as widely used as they should be” (Cochrane, 2018, page 9).

We randomly assigned 48 English-speaking children with reading difficulties to three conditions: SP, SWI, and waiting list control. Results showed that for a Morphological Relatedness task where children read and analysed morphological structures of words, both SWI and SP were superior to controls at post-test. There was a trend for the same outcome measure at a delayed post-test (this time favouring SWI over controls and SP). There were also clearly discernible

effects (as measured by ‘effect sizes’) for both interventions compared with controls on word reading. These findings suggest that SWI that focuses on teaching the morphological structure of English can be at least as effective as a Simplicity programme in grade 3 persistent poor readers.

Conclusions

We report the results of three carefully evaluated theory-driven interventions. The results of all show some promise in improving the reading of at-risk children. The findings need replication¹, and it should be noted that none were ‘magic bullets’ that cured reading difficulties. They nevertheless represent promising alternative approaches that may optimize interventions for the community of at-risk readers.

¹ The authors are currently replicating the Grade 1 study in Alberta (Canada) and in an Education Endowment Foundation funded trial in England. Savage and collaborators have replicated the Grade 2 paper among students with English as an additional language in Hong Kong (Authors, 2019, Paper under revision).

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Accessibility and inclusivity

Microsoft's declared aim is to empower every student to achieve their potential within an inclusive classroom. Alison Thomas attended Arran Smith's talk to find out more.

Now in his mid-thirties, Arran Smith has a reading age of nine and a spelling age of eight. In addition to being severely dyslexic, he has tendencies of dyspraxia, ADHD and ASD. He received specialist support at school and has taught dyslexic children himself one to one as an adult. He believes that the single most transformative influence on his life, however, has been the power of assistive technology.

"At the age of 14, I realised that, while dyslexia is my disability, it is also my strength," he says. "I know that lots of people with dyslexia find life very difficult, but if you understand your difficulty, find your strengths and build on that positivity, you can really succeed. And for me, technology is the way forward."



A child shares his learning with Microsoft Principal Product Manager for Education, Mike Tholfsen

CREDIT: MICROSOFT

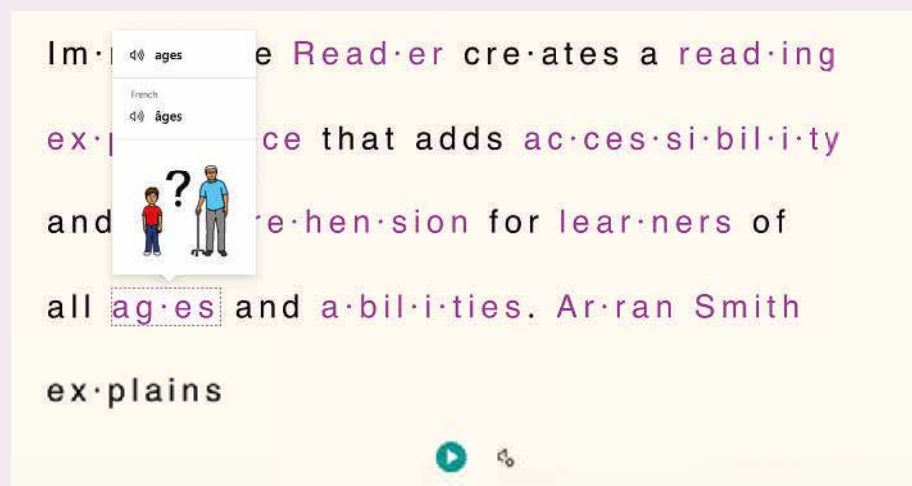
With over 15 years' experience in the fields of dyslexia, education and assistive technology, he now owns his own consultancy, SEND

Group Ltd. But it was his role as Microsoft's UK Dyslexia and SEND Consultant that brought him to the Dyslexia Guild Annual Conference, where he introduced us to some of the many accessible features built into Microsoft products and available for free.

Inclusive design

In the past, Microsoft used to design products first and address an "accessibility checklist" after the event. With the arrival of CEO Satya Nadella, himself the father of a child with cerebral palsy and another with severe learning difficulties, the culture changed and today people with different disabilities and talents are employed at every level of the organisation to foster a climate of empathy, inspire innovation and generate solutions that will improve the learner experiences of all.

Dyslexia is no exception and the suite of Learning Tools initially designed as an add-on for OneNote came out of the 2015 Hackathon, an annual event when employees spend a week on any topic they wish, forming virtual teams to explore ideas and come up with solutions. Since then, the range of tools has been extended and refined, and built into other products available on a variety of platforms and devices (see chart p14).



Immersive Reader

A key feature of Learning Tools is Immersive Reader, which allows students to access a text in the way that best suits their individual needs. They can listen to paragraphs being read aloud while they follow the words, broken up into syllables. They can increase text size and spacing, change the font and background colour, or narrow the field of view to focus on one, three or five lines at a time. They can alter the speed, turn on Parts of Speech to reveal nouns, adjectives, adverbs or verbs, or use the Picture Dictionary with images from Boardmaker to clarify the meaning of a word while simultaneously listening to it, a multisensory technique that has been proven to aid reading and comprehension. They can also type in their own content, or dictate it and listen to the software reading it back, a highly effective tool.

A recent addition is the facility to translate a word or a whole document into one of a long list of languages, switching between English and the foreign language to compare and contrast. The benefits for EAL students are evident, but it is also a boon for dyslexic learners, who often struggle in the MFL classroom. In addition, with Office Lens on an iPad, iPhone or Android device, students can take a picture of their textbook or any other resource and send it to OneNote Windows 10 or OneNote online to access it in Immersive Reader, enabling them to translate it into the language they need and hear it read aloud and, in the case of some languages, take advantage of the other features Immersive Reader offers.

Immersive Reader for maths

Another new feature combines the functionality of the OneNote maths tool with the capabilities of Immersive Reader. This is still a work in progress, so it's not perfect, Mr Smith explained, as he demonstrated how students could generate the solution to a problem, then click Explain to see all the steps laid out. For more advanced



problems, the result is inevitably a dense piece of text, but by launching Immersive Reader, students can de-clutter the layout, focus on one line at a time or use Read Aloud to support their understanding.

Co-authoring in Word

Learning Tools are now available in other places besides OneNote, including Outlook, Edge (the browser that comes with Windows 10), Microsoft Teams, Flipgrid and most recently Minecraft. They are also built into Word Online (available for free) and the desktop version of Word in Office 365.

One of the benefits of Learning Tools in Word is that students are able to collaborate on a document, tailoring how they view it to suit their individual needs. So while one person might be working in conventional layout, another might have changed the background colour and split the text into columns,

or be using line focus to follow the highlighted words as they are read aloud. What each person chooses is entirely up to them, removing the stigma attached to using additional software, not to mention the cost. For teachers, it reduces time spent differentiating resources; for students it increases independence and facilitates inclusive learning.

And that, in a nutshell, is what this is all about. To quote Jordan Shapiro, an expert in education technology and game-based learning, when Learning Tools first came out: "This is truly an example of universal design... Instead of creating specialised or adapted solutions for different users, a practice which inevitably creates a privileged norm and an underserved 'other', universal design, or 'design for all', creates one solution that works for everyone." <https://bit.ly/2VmqrT0>

Find out more

A webinar from Arran Smith with links to abundant resources and training materials: <https://dyslexiaguild.org.uk/2019-guild-annual-conference-presentations/>
@arrandyslexia #MicrosoftEDU

Microsoft Learning Tools Availability

Read Aloud & word/line highlighting	OneNote Desktop	OneNote Online	OneNote App	OneNote iOS	OneNote Mac	Word Online	Word Desktop	Word Mac	Word iPad	Outlook Web	Outlook Desktop	Teams	Flipgrid	Flipgrid iOS	Flipgrid Android	Office Lens	Edge browser
Spacing and Font Size	OneNote Desktop	OneNote Online	OneNote App	OneNote iOS	OneNote Mac	Word Online	Word Desktop	Word Mac	Word iPad	Outlook Web	Outlook Desktop	Teams	Flipgrid	Flipgrid iOS	Flipgrid Android	Office Lens	Edge browser
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Syllables	OneNote Desktop	OneNote Online	OneNote App	OneNote iOS	OneNote Mac	Word Online	Word Desktop	Outlook Web	Teams	Flipgrid	Flipgrid iOS	Flipgrid Android	Edge Browser				
Line Focus	OneNote Desktop	OneNote Online	OneNote App	OneNote iOS	OneNote Mac	Word Online	Word Desktop	Outlook Web	Teams	Flipgrid	Flipgrid iOS	Flipgrid Android	Edge Browser				
Parts of Speech	OneNote Desktop	OneNote Online	OneNote App	OneNote iOS	OneNote Mac	Word Online	Outlook Web	Teams	Flipgrid	Flipgrid iOS	Flipgrid Android	Edge Browser					
Translation	OneNote Online	OneNote App	OneNote iOS	OneNote Mac	Word Online	Outlook Web	Teams	Flipgrid	Flipgrid iOS	Flipgrid Android							
Picture Dictionary	OneNote Online	OneNote App	OneNote iOS	OneNote Mac	Word Online	Outlook Web	Teams	Flipgrid	Flipgrid iOS	Flipgrid Android							
Dictation	OneNote Desktop	OneNote App	OneNote Online	Word Online	Word Desktop	Outlook Desktop	PPT Desktop	Windows 10									
Math & Equations	OneNote Online	OneNote App	OneNote iOS	OneNote Mac	Word Online	Word Desktop	PPT Desktop										

Learning Tools Flyer for PD: <http://aka.ms/LearningToolsFlyer>

Assessment Practising Certificate:



recognition of your competence to undertake assessments for dyslexia and specific learning difficulties

Dr Anna Smith MDG answers some common questions regarding gaining or renewing an Assessment Practising Certificate (APC).

Why should I apply for an Assessment Practising Certificate (APC)?

The APC is effectively a licence to practise. It confirms that you have the appropriate qualifications to undertake full diagnostic assessments **and** that your professional practice is up-to-date and has been externally verified as continuing to meet defined competence standards. Only APC holders can undertake diagnostic assessment reports for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) applications.

The APC Certificate is issued for three years and confirms that you have the knowledge, skills and competences to assess the detailed requirements of individuals with dyslexia/SpLD. The Department for Education requires that those who undertake specialist assessments in post-16 schools, colleges, universities, workplace training establishments and local authority assessment centres are competent to do so.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) also recognises that for the purposes of Examination Access Arrangements a specialist assessor is "... a specialist teacher with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate."

Changes to legislation this year mean that any diagnostic report written at any time by an APC holder can be used to apply for DSA. This means that reports now have a longer lifespan and those commissioning a report may expect to use this report over a longer period and for several purposes.

What does SASC do?

The SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) was first set up in 2005 by the principal organisations involved in the assessment of individuals with dyslexia/SpLD including Dyslexia Action, Patoss and the British Dyslexia Association (BDA). This followed concern about the standards of some reports issued by specialist assessors and the evident need for advice and guidance on suitable tests and the continuing professional development (CPD) required in this area.

The SASC Steering Committee provides the rules and regulations governing the Assessment Practising Certificate and approves the awarding bodies who issue the licensing certificates. SASC also provides information about changes in practice that are likely to impact upon assessors. A recent example of this is a change

in approach concerning visual stress, where SASC recommends that rather than assessing this issue themselves, assessors should refer their clients on to optometrists for further advice.

Who is allowed to issue APCs?

There are currently three APC issuing bodies, the Dyslexia Guild, Patoss, and the British Dyslexia Association. All three organisations attend SASC meetings alongside other representative bodies and are also involved in cross-standardisation meetings to ensure that their advice is consistent and follows the same procedures to ensure fairness to all applicants.

Why are APCs only valid for three years?

An Assessment Practising Certificate is a licence to practise and so it is important that assessors not only undertake relevant CPD but also apprise themselves of the suitability of tests for professional practice. SASC provides a list of *Suitable Tests for the Assessment of Specific Learning Difficulties in Higher Education*, which is regularly updated and can be found on their website:

www.sasc.org.uk. This is soon to be added to, with a list of suitable tests for lower age groups.



When sampling reports, SASC has noted that often those who fail have not undertaken regular professional updating, are using out-of-date assessment tests or are failing to refer to current advice. The SASC Committee determined that three years constitutes a representative period of time for specialist assessors to demonstrate their professional commitment to maintaining their APC appropriately.

I have heard that getting or renewing an APC is challenging and some people fail. What are the most common mistakes people make?

SASC produces a guide for assessing assessors to ensure consistency across issuing bodies who evaluate APC applications. This is currently being simplified and changes are expected to take place in November 2019. The system will be fully explained on the Dyslexia Action website, so it is worth keeping an eye out for this. Nevertheless, important practices to consider when renewing have not changed and are still, maintaining accuracy of scores, using tests appropriately and producing accurate diagnostic conclusions. The majority of people pass first time or are able to successfully resubmit their application with advice and guidance from the reviewing panel.

I obtained my postgraduate assessment qualification some while ago. Can I still apply for an APC?

Recent changes mean that up until March 2020, anyone with an appropriate postgraduate assessment qualification, and who has not previously held an APC, can apply for one following a relatively straightforward procedure. This change

was in response to a recent decision by the Government that any report written by an APC holder at any time should be valid for a DSA application.

In order to ensure that all practising assessors were given the opportunity to hold this qualification, it was thought fair that they should be granted an APC under a 'grand-parenting scheme'. If you are considering this action, it is certainly worth considering some continuing professional development (CPD) as you may be unfamiliar with SASC updates and changes. See the book list at the end of the article and the next question for other CPD ideas.

My test knowledge is a bit rusty; what sort of CPD should I undertake?

SASC has a list of approved CPD courses on their website. These courses have been validated by them as appropriate for those undertaking diagnostic assessment testing to refresh and improve their knowledge and understanding. These

courses will count towards the five hours of required SASC-approved CPD, out of the minimum 30 hours of CPD for those renewing their APC for the first time and 20 hours for others renewing. See the SASC Continuing Professional Development requirements at: [https://dyslexiaaction.org.uk/assessment-practising-certificate/\(Requirements\)](https://dyslexiaaction.org.uk/assessment-practising-certificate/(Requirements)).

Dyslexia Action and Real Training also have a number of courses available to assist professionals in the updating of their professional practice. These include:

- Applying for and Renewing an Assessment Practising Certificate
- Examining TOMAL2 Refresher Course
- Real Training Access Arrangements Course (AAC)

See: <https://dyslexiaaction.org.uk/courses-for-qualified-spld-professionals/>.

There is also a free updating course for those conducting Access Arrangements at: <https://realtraining.co.uk/free-access-arrangements-update-course>.



I am about to renew my APC. Do I have to submit a report written in the 'new style' that I have heard about?

You are right that the way we are expected to write a report for DSA purposes has changed. This was in an effort to make things simpler and clearer for the typical reader of these reports. Templates for reports that describe assessments for both younger and older individuals are available on the SASC website, under downloads, along with guidance and presentations from the SASC conference in June 2019 that provides a great deal of background. However, if you are renewing before 1 July 2020, you can still submit an 'old style' report for renewal of your APC.

How much does it cost to apply for, or renew, an APC?

Fees for APC application and renewal

are agreed at the SASC meetings and are the same across all awarding bodies. It is best to apply for your APC as soon as you are qualified (Route 1) and renew your APC on a regular basis (Renewal). Both of these routes currently cost £180. If you qualified over five years ago, then it is now £255 to apply for an APC, however there is the special amnesty/grand-parenting route available until March 2020 which is £180.

Individuals with non-accredited qualifications or seeking accreditation of prior learning can apply through Route 2. This route costs £555 and requires a significant portfolio to be submitted.

Where can I find out more about applying for, or renewing, an APC?

Dyslexia Action provides a wealth of information for Guild Members which can assist you with your application for an APC. See: <https://dyslexiaaction.org.uk/assessment-practising-certificate/>.

Download the following guides from the website:

Obtaining or Renewing an Assessment Practising Certificate Our regularly updated brochure
An example diagnostic assessment report template
A Renewal Checklist
A CPD Log

Attend training courses for an APC submission

Dyslexia Action also offers a preparatory course for those wishing to apply for, or renew, an APC. Available as either an online course or a one-day attendance course, this training programme covers current best practice in report writing and preparation for the submission of an APC application. See the CPD question for further details.

Are there any book resources that you recommend for practising assessors?

Yes, there are a number of very good book resources that assessors should be familiar with. In particular the National Dyslexia Resource Centre has the following books on the library catalogue:

Available in Hard Copy

Johnson, B. and G. Hagger-Johnson, (2013) **Psychometric Assessment, Statistics and Report Writing: an introduction for psychologists, teachers and health professionals**, London:

Pearson Assessment

Jones, A. and K. Kindersley, (2013) **Dyslexia Assessing and Reporting: The Patoss Guide**

London: Hodder Education

Reid, G., Elbheri, G. and Everatt, J. (2016) **Assessing Children with Specific Learning Difficulties: A Teacher's Practical Guide**

Abingdon: NASEN/Routledge

Available as Electronic-Books

directly from the catalogue

Adams, Wayne and Reynolds, Cecil R. (2009) **Essentials of WRAML2 and TOMAL-2 assessment**.

Hoboken, N.J.: Chichester: Wiley.

Boyle, James and Fisher, Stephen. (2007). **Educational testing**.

Oxford: Blackwell BPS

Homack, Susan R and Reynolds, Cecil R. (2007) **Essentials of assessment with brief intelligence tests**

Hoboken, N.J.: Chichester: Wiley.

Mather, N. and Wendling, B. J. (2012) **Essentials of dyslexia assessment and intervention**.

Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley.

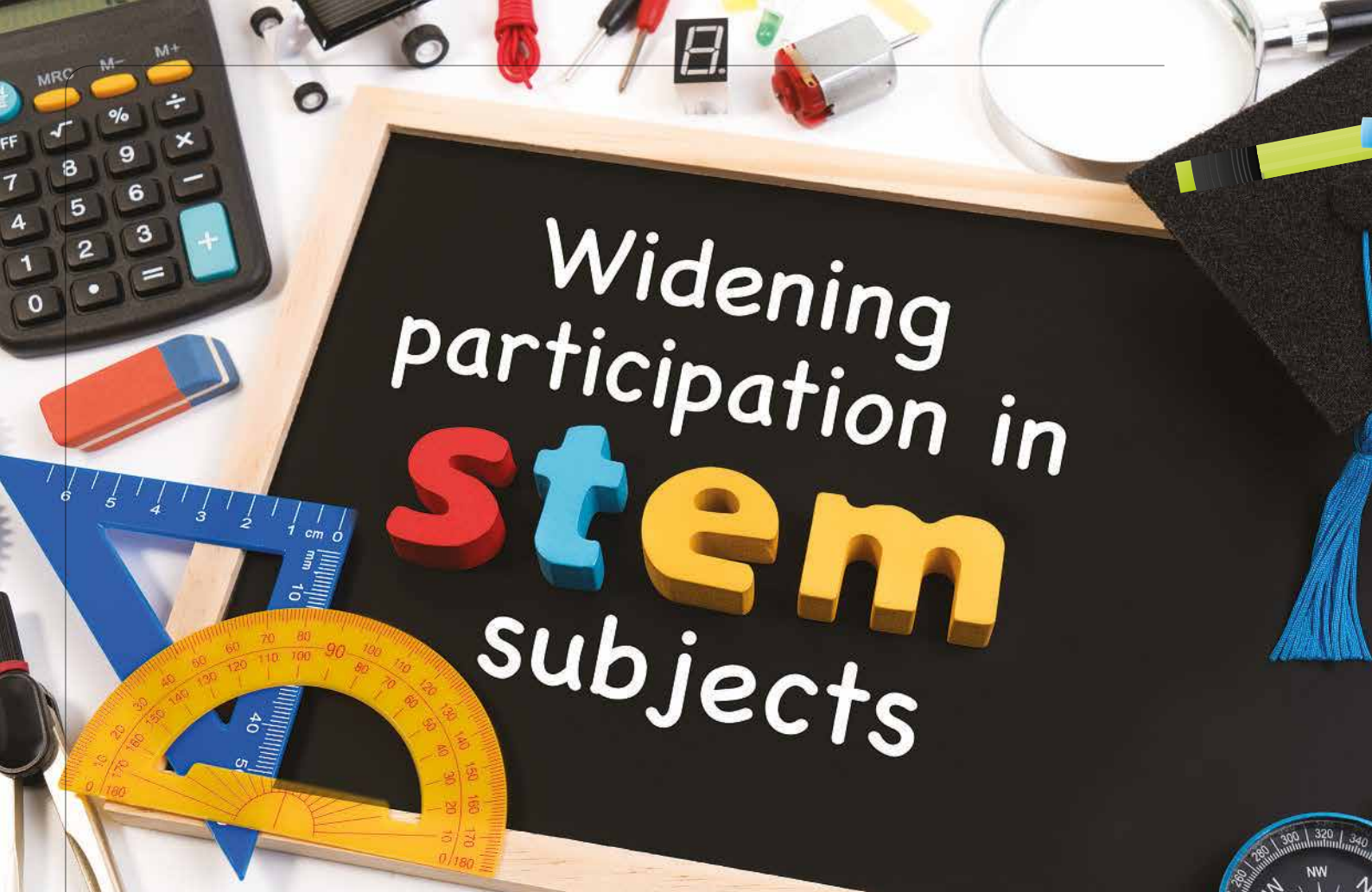
Schneider, W.J., Lichtenberger, E.O., Mather, N. and Kaufman, N.L. (2018)

Essentials of assessment report writing Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley

Reminder: Are you making the most of your Guild Membership? You can access the Guild Members' website and library login at: <https://dyslexiaguild.org.uk/>.

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Widening participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects has been and continues to be an area of focus within education. CBH Education is a company that works in a very specific area of the STEM sector. It was founded in 2018 with a vision to support students with dyslexia who are studying biology and chemistry programmes wishing to pursue a career in healthcare. Its founder and Director of Education, Adam Ali, has had a wide range of roles within the healthcare sector including working in sales at the research-based bio-pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca, as a medical manager in Bioavexia (a bio-tech company) and as a pharmacist for Medicines Management Solutions.

Ali's own challenges throughout his education and professional life inspired him to set up CBH Education as a means to dismantle the barriers he found to exist for students with dyslexia wanting to enter healthcare professions:

"When you drill down there are some very, very motivated students who are more than capable of working in

healthcare jobs ... they present a unique palette of skills ... the main thing is to nurture understanding in them ... giving them the confidence that they are able to flourish in their chosen careers...."

Ali reports that so many young people are being turned away because they are not getting the sort of specialist teacher/tutor support they need at the crucial academic junctures. He states:

"The fundamental problem is that students are not able to link scientific concepts together... if they are able to grasp the basic concepts and to link them, they can flourish."

So, what is the exact nature of specialist support required by students with dyslexia hoping to pursue healthcare careers? There are three strands to the life-long learning support required, which will be familiar to many of us:

1. Teaching (whether in school, in private tuition, or at university) must focus on promoting relational understanding (Skemp, 1976, Mellin-Olsen, 1981), that is, creating frameworks of understanding so that learners have conceptual, schematic

understanding to the extent that they can spot connections between strands of learning and benefit from the exploration of links between aspects of factual knowledge.

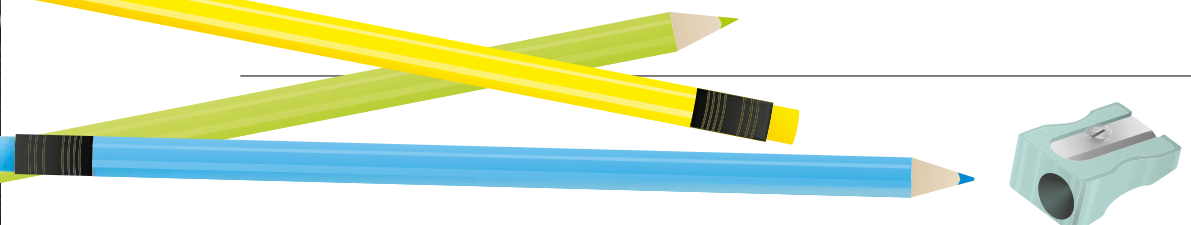
2. The applying of knowledge needs to be explicitly supported in sitting examinations as well as in work-based roles.

3. Careers advice is crucial to ensure that there is a good fit between the potential employee and the demands of the role.

Understanding and exploration

There is a tension in education between what we might call content-driven and enquiry-driven approaches. The former tends to see the curriculum as a set of facts that need to be amassed (with the amassing being the focus), whereas the latter tends to emphasise the value

of academic exploration for its own sake (or for the benefits that are accrued by students and by teachers who undertake more exploratory learning experiences). Ali emphasises the role of relational understanding using practical examples wherever possible. In this he echoes Lindeman's ideas (1926) about



the need to create learning 'situations' which understanding emerges from and about the need to draw understanding out from explorations that create insight. The approach advocated by CBH Education embraces the 'discovery learning' model described by Hammer (1997): at CBH Education the online learning space is viewed 'as an arena, not only for student exploration but also for teacher exploration, of the students' understanding and reasoning, of the subject matter, of what constitutes progress toward expertise and how to facilitate that progress'. As Ali puts it:

"Learning should be fun and linked to real-life examples, young children can have deep scientific insights and this needs to be capitalised upon rather than limited (by the demands of a set curriculum). Some kids will grasp things quickly, some are factual learners, our approach is about embedding the model of what type of learner they are into the lesson plan structures... some lessons I am mixing solutions, some are factual, but many are very practical... you can learn a lot about the nature of forces from just making a cup of tea and discussing the processes involved."

I never understood what buffer solutions were throughout 'A' Level or university. Now I understand them and the physiological effects they have in the body because I was able to link it to a professional course that I was undertaking. I gained an insight into how the body regulates acid-base systems and the biological changes associated especially within the kidneys, blood cells and the respiratory system.

Adam Ali

This type of learning situation creates far greater demands upon the teacher/tutor because the success of the teaching is not measured as easily as by the amassing of a particular set of facts. It is a more open-ended, insight-oriented type of understanding. As Hammer (1997) puts it: '... successful instruction depends on teachers' often unanticipated perceptions and insights. One might call this discovery teaching' (p. 485).

Applying knowledge

Ali discussed the extent to which a breakdown in the career trajectory of students can occur in examination halls during the teenage years. Many of the students he is working with have previously experienced difficulties demonstrating their potential in traditional examination settings. A constellation of challenges is at play in examination situations, that can perhaps be reduced to two essential areas:

There is the requirement to reproduce facts in a tight time period; retaining and reproducing factual information that is not understood is reported (anecdotally) to be a challenge for people with dyslexia.

To gain the higher grades in science subjects (as in most academic disciplines) it is important to demonstrate an understanding of links between key concepts. As Ali puts it: "If you look at organic chemistry, look at periodic trends, look at giant structures, students are often not able to link these concepts together. This is where the difference lies between gaining a C grade or an A* grade."

Ali states that healthcare careers for some students with dyslexia become blocked because of the lack of availability of specialist scientific

support. He argues that currently the system may block the belief in students that success is possible in science subjects, as the effort it takes to succeed without structured support can be daunting. The solution that he has developed is enquiry and discovery-oriented, done via the use of mindmaps, by the deconstruction of concepts and by investing time in dialogue that supports the creation of relational understanding.

Careers advice and professional development

Beyond the tutoring aspect of the organisation, CBH Education offers free career advice to support those seeking careers in academic research and both private and public sector applied science and healthcare roles; this is seen as another aspect of supporting students to have the confidence to succeed. The company offers courses to support individuals aspiring to pursue a career in healthcare. CBH Education is also beginning to develop an academy structure to offer peer-support. The vision is that academy members will be able to share ideas and share experiences about how they have progressed into healthcare careers.

Although the company is recently founded, the principles of education it espouses and the challenges it outlines for learners with dyslexia will be familiar to all of us. It will be interesting to track the contribution it makes to training and supporting healthcare professionals in the years ahead.

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- **Mellin-Olson, S. (1981)** Instrumentalism as an educational concept. *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, 12, 351 – 67
- **Skemp, R.R. (1976)** *Mathematics Teaching*, 77, 20-26

Dyslexia Action

Training and Professional Development

Specialist SpLD teacher/ practitioner training

**Level 5 Diploma in Strategic Teaching
Support for Dyslexia and Literacy (DADIP61)***

CPD Pathway Route

- For teachers, teaching and learning support assistants
- UK, Adults and International pathways

Fast Track Route

- For graduates only with at least two years recent and relevant teaching or learning support experience in a dyslexia/literacy support setting

**Level 7 Professional Certificate in Structured
Teaching Intervention for Dyslexia and Literacy**

Postgraduate

- For graduates only with at least two years recent and relevant teaching or learning support experience in a dyslexia/literacy support setting

*Please note: you do not have to study the Level 5 Pathway or Fast Track route before the Level 7 route as long as you meet the entry requirements for Level 7



dyslexiaaction.org.uk

☎ 01784-222304 ✉ trainingcourses@dyslexiaaction.org.uk

Fellowship of The Dyslexia Guild

Fellowship confers the status - Fellow of the Dyslexia Guild FDG and is the recognition of a significant achievement and contribution in the field of Dyslexia/SpLD. It is encouraged for those who demonstrate an outstanding level of commitment to advancing standards and best practice. Fellows (FDG) are professional members and specialist teacher assessors with a level 7 specialist teacher/ assessor qualification in dyslexia/SpLD.

If you wish to upgrade to this level of membership, which brings additional member benefits, you must also have:

- a minimum of 7 years specialist teaching and 4 years specialist assessment experience in dyslexia/SpLD
- held professional Guild membership as a Member (MDG) grade for at least one year



See: <https://dyslexiaguild.org.uk/membership-grades/> for further information.

**Council for the Registration of
Schools Teaching Dyslexic pupils**

We give you
Information & Choice

Our advice is independent
but well informed

Choosing a school is one of the
biggest decisions you make for
your child and it is not easy

You need all the help you can get

Our Register is available to
download from our website:
www.crested.org.uk

All the information you need is right there.

Contact CReSTeD via email: admin@crestted.org.uk
www.crestted.org.uk

Registered charity no. 1052103

Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexic Pupils



Researchers

Dr Nigel Rodenhurst ADG FE/HE, a university study skills support tutor,

Amani Darwish, a psychology lecturer,

Janet Roland, a learning support co-ordinator,

Lesley Stevens, a specialist assessor.

English as a second language:

the challenges for learners with dyslexia

UK universities continue to face new challenges to accommodate students with dyslexia and co-occurring difficulties and international students. As UK institutions feel the consequences of Brexit in terms of applications from EU students, the numbers of students from Arab countries continues to rise. Times Higher Education reported a 26% drop in EU applications in the

past year, while Arab News reported a substantial increase in applications from Arab countries, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in particular, using data from UCAS.

Being aware of the context of education within the 25 Arab nations but the UAE in particular, it is of considerable concern that many students with undiagnosed dyslexia as well as second language difficulties will

be entering UK higher education without established strategies and mechanisms for diagnosis and support.

Within the UAE there is little provision for special educational needs although federal law does promote a 'School for All' education policy. However, this is applied unequally across schools with some private schools still refusing to admit students on the basis that there is no support available to them,

or charging fees for support. Whilst British and American schools have raised awareness of dyslexia as a condition as such, there is still no testing mechanism in place that is seen as 'culturally fair' (Rakhlin, Aljughaiman, and Grigorenko, 2019). As a result, there is evidence that many students with dyslexia and co-occurring difficulties enter and complete higher education without ever being diagnosed. Despite this, one study has claimed that 17.6% of female students had reading difficulties consistent with a diagnosis of dyslexia in relation to both Arabic and English (Aboudan, Eapen, Bayshak, Al-Mansouri, and Al-Shamsi, 2011).

In the light of this, it follows that UK education providers will be called upon to provide more support to second language learners with dyslexia and co-occurring difficulties, although at present screening and diagnostic assessment still relies heavily on out of date tests which merely pay lip service to any English language literacy issues that may relate to the student's first language. Assessors often take into account whether or not a language is phonetic or has many irregular spellings in terms of strain on working memory and barriers to automaticity. Assessors also simply ask the question, 'do you struggle in the same way in your own language?'

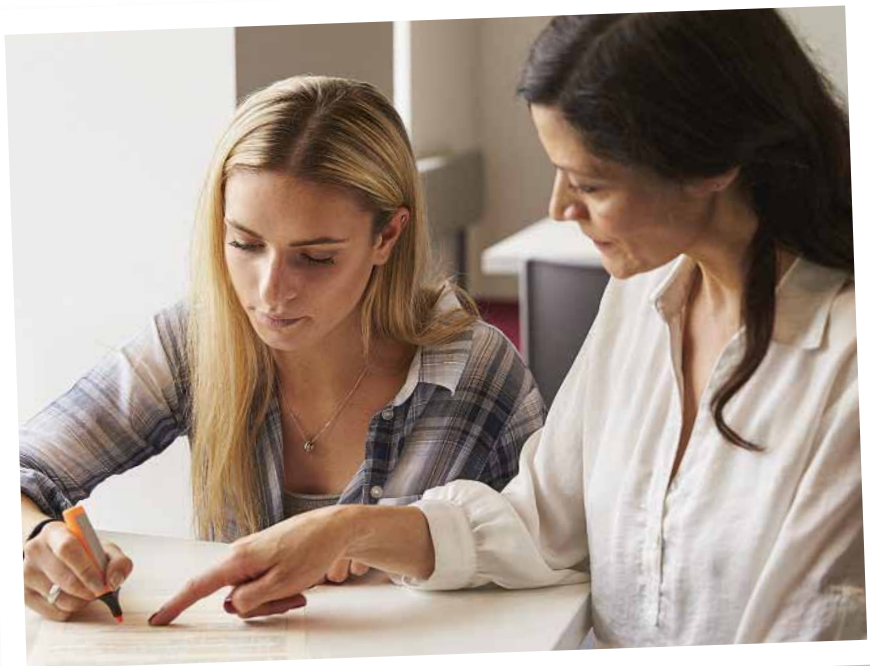
Students whose first language is Arabic encounter specific challenges when learning in English because Arabic orthography is a cursive system that runs from right to left (Swan and Smith, 2011). Students must first learn a new alphabet, and cannot reasonably be expected to read or write at the

same level as European students, regardless of literacy barriers such as dyslexia. In Arabic, there are fewer subtly different vowel sounds and far fewer consonant clusters than in English. Common errors made by Arab learners in reading and writing English (which overlap with those faced by first language English dyslexic students) include misreading letters with 'mirror' shapes, misreading letters within words by right to left eye movements.

If Arab students present with problems reading and writing in English and undergo a formal screening and diagnosis process as it is currently actioned at UK universities, the difficulties outlined above may manifest themselves in rapid naming tests such as CTOPP2, but without a clear indication of whether the cause of a low score is related to the acknowledged weaknesses associated with dyslexia

or an issue related to the student's first language. If tests were repeated in the student's own language for comparison, even if this was designed and undertaken in Arabic in order to test the same aspects of reading and spelling, because of the differences between Arabic and English this could not be completely standardised and therefore could only provide qualitative information upon which assessors could make observations.

It is therefore clear that further research and consideration of dyslexia and co-occurring difficulties among Arab students entering UK higher education is absolutely vital, both to avoid confusing second language issues with dyslexia and co-occurring difficulties, but also to ensure that appropriate support strategies can be put in place for this potentially expanding demographic.



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Supporting people with specific learning difficulties

People with dyslexia may have other conditions, including difficulties with numeracy, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder (ADD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Learning disabilities are neurologically-based processing problems, that can often interfere with higher level skills such as organisation, time management, abstract reasoning, and long or short-term memory.

What can we do to help?

When writing for print or online, write in plain English and break up content with headings and lists, putting the most important information at the top.

Allow users to change the contrast between background and text on websites as they can make the best choice for themselves.

Avoid bright colours or colour combinations and fast-moving banners as this is distracting.

Avoid using justified text and italics – all those straight edges do not give

visual clues to the eye about where to start and finish.

When designing online forms, allow **Save and Return** options and ensure ‘time out’ is reasonable, at least 20 seconds.

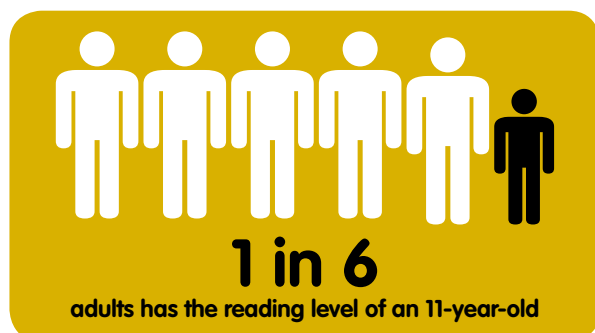
How can employers or education providers help?

They can make ‘reasonable adjustments’ such as:

- Introducing some changes to work organisation and/or deadlines
- Providing personal training and support
- Making use of assistive technologies.

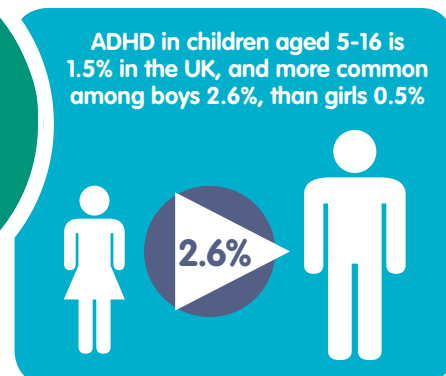
Useful resources and information sources

- **Gov.UK (no date) Understanding disabilities and impairments: user profiles.** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding-disabilities-and-impairments-user-profiles> (Accessed: 8 October 2019).
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- **Understood for learning & attention issues (2019) School Learning: For educators** <https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/for-educators> (Accessed 8 October 2019).
- **AbilityNet (no date) My Computer My Way** <https://mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk/> (Accessed 8 October 2019).
- **Dyspraxia Foundation (2019) Information Sheets from the Dyspraxia Foundation** <https://dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk/about-dyspraxia/information-sheets/> (Accessed 8 October 2019).
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Dyspraxia in children is usually diagnosed between ages 6 and 12

Around 3% of the adult population are thought to have dyspraxia but a third of adults seeking an assessment for dyspraxia were told their GP could not help



Language at the Speed of Sight: How we read, why so many can't, and what can be done about it

(2017) Mark Seidenberg: New York, NY: Basic Books.

Reviewed by Dr Catherine Marshall MDG, Postgraduate Tutor, Dyslexia Action Training

The key message of Seidenberg's book is that it is crucial to address the 'profound disconnection between the science of reading and educational practice'. Teachers must be given a better understanding of the theory and research behind how children learn to read. Delving into this fascinating and informative book is a good place to start. It pulls together evidence from contemporary research and discusses this within a context of current educational practices (albeit from a largely North American perspective).

How we read

Reading is a highly complex skill drawing on multiple cognitive processes. However, for skilled readers these processes are largely subconscious, so it is easily taken for granted. Seidenberg reminds us that reading and writing are very recent inventions, indeed 'one of the greatest achievements in human history'. Various approaches, models and theories of how children learn to read are discussed in a clear and integrative way, with a consistent emphasis on the links between written and spoken language. A current area of interest in the field is the role of morphological awareness in reading acquisition which is touched upon; hopefully future models will be able to address the role of morphology more directly as our understanding advances (see Castles, Rastle and Nation, 2018).

Why so many can't

Seidenberg is clear that there are likely to be myriad reasons why some individuals struggle with reading, and that we should give attention

to all children who are poor readers, regardless of the cause. He discusses the thorny issues surrounding definitions of dyslexia thoughtfully, concluding that the aim should always be to identify and support children who have reading difficulties. The complexity of underlying interacting factors and co-occurring conditions are addressed in an accessible way.

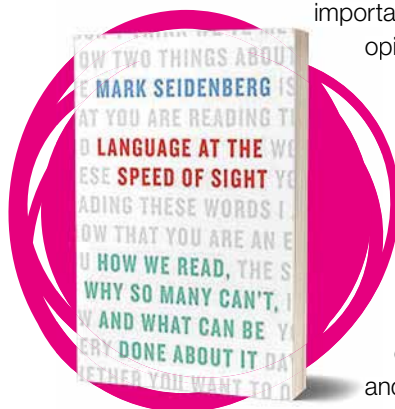
What can be done about it

This section of the book emphasises the importance of considering evidence over opinion. It is clear that there have been great advances in our understanding of reading in last 30 years, but that there is a gulf between the reading scientists and educational practitioners which needs to be bridged so that struggling readers can benefit. This fits well with the aims of Dyslexia Action; we emphasise evidence-based practice and believe that robust links between theory and practice are crucial to developing and implementing effective support for individuals with literacy difficulties.

Language at the Speed of Sight pulls together contemporary perspectives on reading development and dyslexia. Arguably, it would have benefited from more consideration of children learning to read in languages other than English for a broader cultural view. However, it is passionately written and will certainly contribute to bridging the gap between reading researchers and practitioners.

References

Castles, A., Rastle, K. and Nation, K. Ending the Reading Wars: Reading Acquisition from Novice to Expert. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*. Vol. 19(1), pp.5-51.



Why the Brain Matters: A teacher explores neuroscience

(2019) Jon Tibke, London: Corwin/Sage

Reviewed by Jan Beechey MCILIP, Dyslexia Guild Librarian

Whether you are a teacher, parent or just someone interested in neuroscience and the brain, this is a really well-thought-out book. Jon Tibke explores what scientific research is truly relevant for the classroom, and looks into some of the grand claims that are sometimes made in the press. In Chapter 1, he considers the current knowledge of the brain that is of potential value to teachers, usefully drawing attention to the strengths of some resources such as online programmes, websites and books whilst not overlooking their shortcomings. There is a glossary at the end of each chapter so you can easily recap on some of the technical terms such as hippocampus or Broca's area. The following two chapters offer reasons why you, as an educator, can benefit from being aware of knowledge about the brain, consider resources to support teaching about the brain, suggest what aspects of current information might be health

knowledge for children and how you might introduce them to it.

Chapter 4 looks at neuromyths and Chapter 5 builds upon this and explores how to keep up with the constantly expanding knowledge, examining a selection of reliable and accurate sources of information. A really useful skill in this age of fake news. There is some information about how schools can become involved in and influence research and also some personal histories of famous people like Mary Temple Grandin (autism) and Barbara Arrowsmith-Young (learning difficulties). Those with an interest in autism or neuroplasticity (the capacity of the brain to continually make new connections and reorganise existing connections) will find this particularly fascinating.

The chapter which will probably be most relevant to all teachers is Chapter 9: Skills, Learning Needs and the Brain.

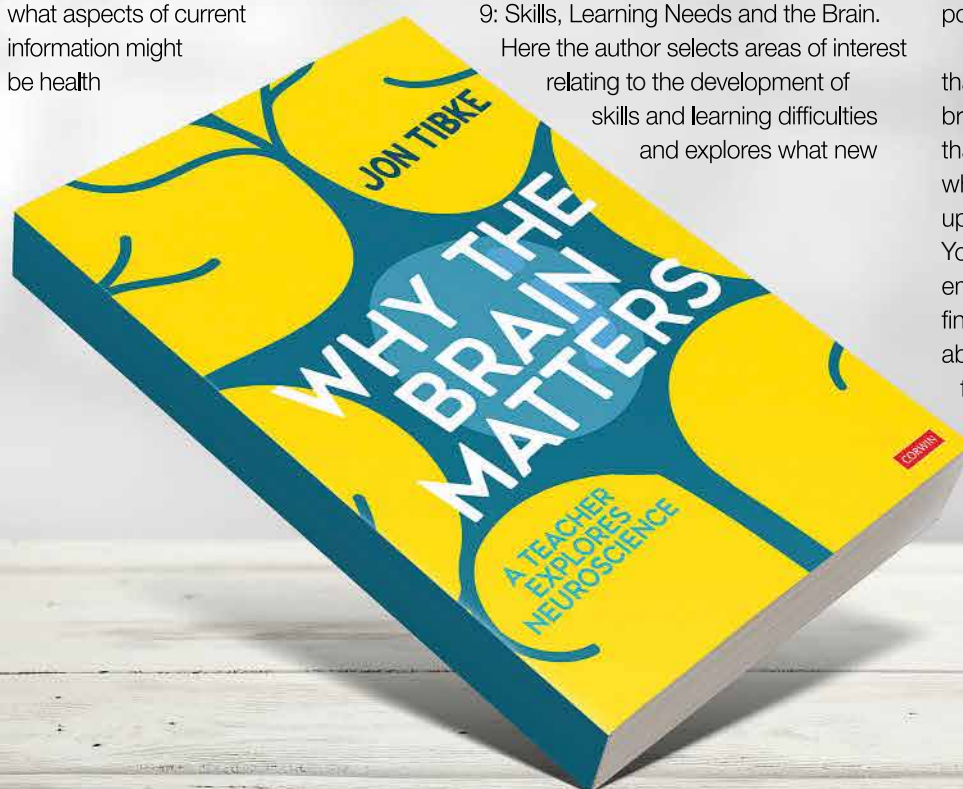
Here the author selects areas of interest relating to the development of skills and learning difficulties and explores what new

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information neuroscience has been able to shed on these areas. Skills covered are reading, numeracy and mathematics, neuroscience of creativity, habit formation, and attention. As well as investigating how these five skills are developed and can be enhanced, Tibke also explores what neuroscience can reveal when these skills are not developing as expected. The final chapter explores predictions about the future of educational neuroscience and examines research that may lead to new possibilities.

This is a really well-balanced book that will help you to understand the brain and the neuroscientific field so that you can think critically about it and why it should figure in your professional updates, discussion and development. You can also use it to understand and employ some relevant study skills in finding reliable sources, think critically about research and look for corroboration from related studies, all skills which enhance your own professional development. I highly recommend it.



Exploring Children's Literature: Reading for Knowledge, Understanding and Pleasure

(2019) Nikki Gamble: London: Sage

Reviewed by Jan Beechey MCILIP, Dyslexia Guild Librarian

The best way to develop young readers is to ensure they get access to materials that engage and inspire them. This book explores how children's literature can be used in teaching, and is supported by a range of extra online resources, including further book recommendations. Aimed at teachers based in primary education, this resource will be very useful for teachers within secondary education, as well, as it covers materials suitable for older readers.

Written by Nikki Gamble, Director of Just Imagine, an organisation that promotes literacy using high quality children's literature, the 4th edition of this book has been arranged in three parts.

The first part focuses on the arguments for developing your personal knowledge about children's literature, and also children's reading practices; the second part looks at different aspects of the literature such as fantasy, realism, classic children's books, picture books, comics and graphic novels, non-fiction, poetry and humour; the third part considers application in the classroom and developing a reading culture.

There are accounts from expert contributors throughout the book to give further context to some of the themes and discussions that are explored and to help teachers use this knowledge in the classroom.

Although this is not a book about the teaching of reading, it is about how children are supported to become readers. Teachers need to be

knowledgeable about books and understand how they can use that knowledge through their teaching. The author gives some really interesting insights into how the National Reading Strategy had this effect on teaching using extracts, rather than providing an experience of reading full text, when she first produced this title in 2002. She says she has 'a conviction that deep subject knowledge of language and literature provides a foundation for effective teaching and learning, and the teaching with extracts militated against

that subject knowledge.' Reading for pleasure has become a hot topic in education recently for its importance for both personal fulfilment and academic achievement.

The author gives a very comprehensive history of children's literature and this is especially interesting in the context of children's classics and picture books.

Each chapter has bullet points at the beginning that outline what is considered and a brief recap of the previous chapter covered so you can dip in and out to chapters that are relevant to you.

There are activities throughout that are designed either to allow you to reflect on your own reading journey or your teaching practice but also activities that you can use in the classroom.

There is a whole chapter dedicated to humour and some insightful uses of humour in the classroom to alleviate stress, anxiety and boredom but also to enhance student-teacher relationships.

I would recommend this book to anyone engaged in children's literacy but also those teaching teenagers. The sections on picture books, illustrated fiction, comics and graphic

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novels is highly relevant to anyone who wants to support struggling readers. The author draws on research to argue that rather than limiting interpretation, illustration opens up the text for other possible interpretations, stimulating imagination and reading comprehension.

Graphic novels provide a reading experience for both print and visual literacy skills to be developed in the classroom. The value of comics both in terms of helping readers achieve the traditional goals of literacy, of offering varying levels of sophistication and of developing advanced reading skills are all explored in this book.

As part of the third section, the last two chapters look at the reading school and the reading classroom. There are some interesting insights into readability and text level. As most graded reading books will have been categorised by software, there is still a need for the teacher or librarian to make professional judgements about what might be suitable texts for the children they teach regarding meaning and contextual knowledge. There is also exploration about the importance of reading aloud to children and she proposes some ways to do this effectively. The third section of the book also looks at developing a reading culture in school, effective ways of working in partnership with parents, and the benefits of working with external organisations.

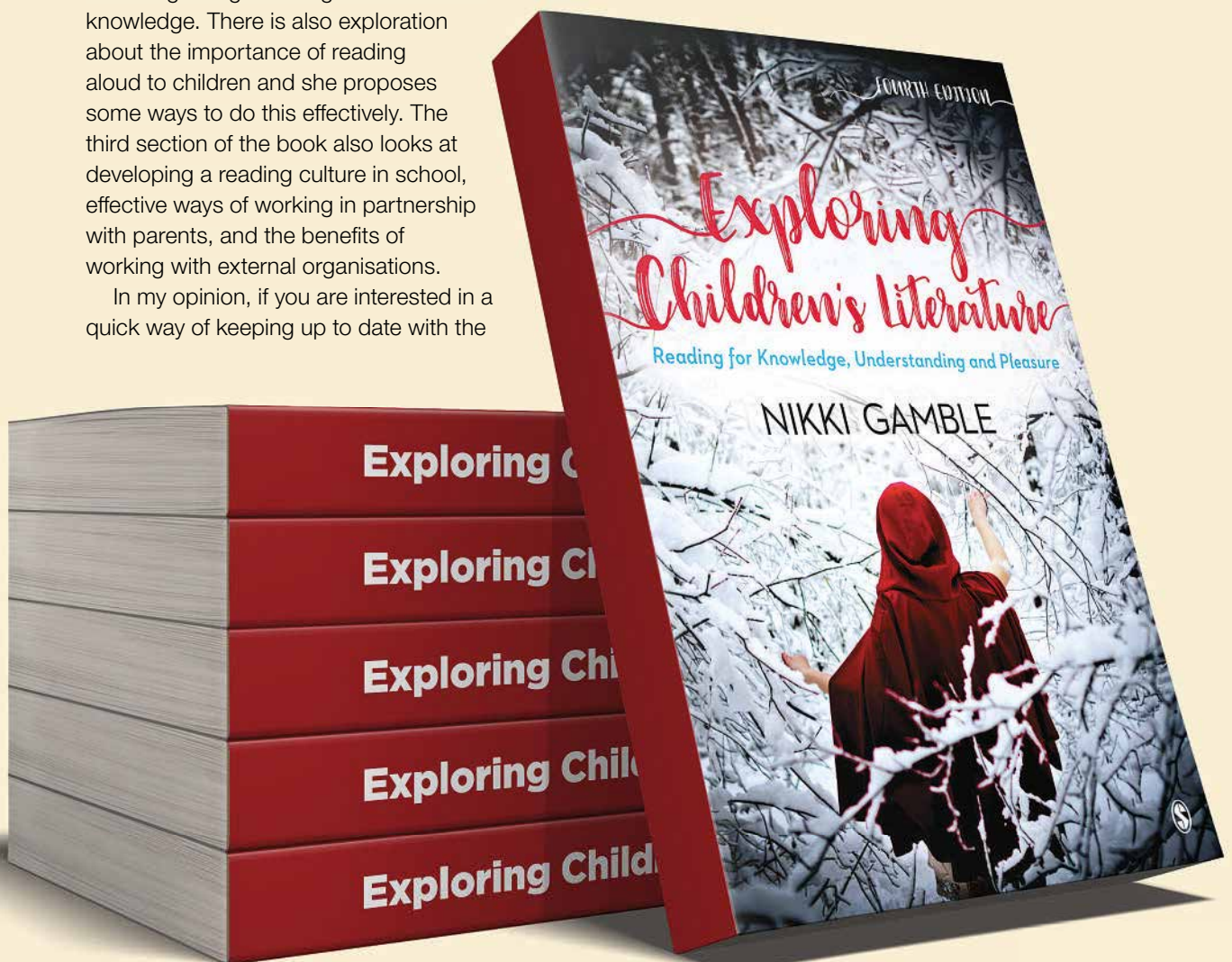
In my opinion, if you are interested in a quick way of keeping up to date with the

latest quality children's literature and illustration, look out for The CILIP Carnegie & Kate Greenaway Children's Book Awards announcements. These are books chosen by librarians and are sure to embrace modern themes:

<https://www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/2019-winners-announced.php>

Schools can also get involved in the Shadowers' Choice Awards and 'shadow' the judging process, read, discuss and review the books on each shortlist selected by the panel of librarian judges between March and June each year: <https://www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/what-is-shadowing.php>

Dyke House School, Hartlepool Shadowing Group leader Angela Bailey describes the Carnegie shadowing scheme as "excellent", as it really encourages students to read. As someone based at a school with a large number of students who have a low reading age, she finds that the scheme really boosts literacy levels.



Finding Your Voice with Dyslexia/SpLD

(2019) Ginny Stacey and Sally Fowler,
Oxford: Routledge

Reviewed by David Bailey ADG, CPD tutor,
Dyslexia Action Training

Chapter 4 looks at neuromyths and Finding Your Voice with Dyslexia/SpLD is the first in the series Living Confidently with Specific Learning Difficulties. It is a transformative tool that can guide those with Dyslexia/SpLD and all those who care for, teach, live with and love these people. I began my reading as an interested and informed practitioner working with individuals with dyslexia. Soon however I became a participant observer. As a dyspraxic adult I wish I had had this book 30 or 40 years ago, when I was still growing up and moving through those complex stages of learning to study, work and live independently.

The book is attractive and interesting to pick up, packed with colourful diagrams, bullet pointed lists and text boxes. Written by someone with dyslexia and backed up by another, it is striking for the contrasting styles of thinking that are catered for. The purpose is to empower the person with a specific learning difficulty to express themselves. It takes them through developing awareness of the best way to organise their thoughts. It does not stop there. It is about developing the confidence to say something to others. It is designed to show what a person with dyslexia can do to improve their working, social and personal life.

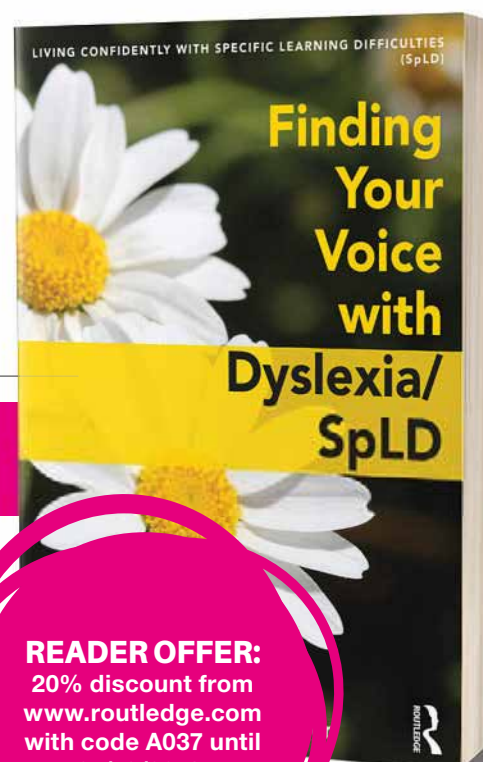
It is a demanding read. The Living Confidently series is something that you have to work hard at. It is a tool to help. It is something that requires a mature approach. This is not a book that most people will read from cover to cover. Unlike with most books you have to read the preface carefully, then study a chapter. The companion website is not

an optional extra. For the book to work you must download a folder of PDFs and Word documents. I followed the instructions and read the preface carefully, making notes as instructed. From this I was able to identify my reading style and to work out my areas of interest.

Armed with my handily structured bookmark, downloaded from the companion website, I focused on Chapter 5, Thinking Clearly. Often with a complex text like this, my mind would meander along many interesting but time-consuming paths. Having the bookmark gave me anchor. I stuck to the purpose of the reading.

The beauty of the book is that there is something for everyone. There is throughout the book an explicit recognition that there is not a single 'dyslexic' way of thinking. It encourages the reader to try a task but not be afraid to look for another technique. This part of my review therefore has become more personal. I remember things well through stories and anecdotes. There is always an example to illustrate a phrase. For example, there is a clear textual description of 'emotional hi-jacking' involving the neocortex being bypassed by a stimulus and going through to the amygdala. What I will remember more is the example – the author could not find her debit card. Until she had taken steps to slow down and reprocess the situation, she was unable to take steps to resolve it.

I like the way in which the authors are always thinking of alternatives. For example, one of the stress relief techniques recommended is to



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visualise a
happy event.

Unfortunately, I've
tried this before and it

never works for me. My particular memory is more a collection of single sentences. I can't seem to go back and re-build past experiences that well. However, there is a second exercise which is much more up my street. This one involves sitting and thinking carefully about building a house, garden or landscape for various family and friends. This works wonderfully for me and I have used it on the train, lying awake or simply as a little break from working on a complex issue. It works every time.

There is so much more packed into this book that I am hard-pressed to stop. The section on reframing thoughts through changes in modalities is worth the purchase price alone, for teachers trying to develop a growth mindset in their pupils and indeed themselves. One more simple but effective example is the importance of modalities in our thinking. When we say we can't, can, could, wish to, need to or shall eat breakfast, go to the ball or write this assignment it changes how we feel about a breakfast, the ball or the assignment.

I thoroughly recommend this book for those who are determined to improve their metacognition and their thinking and to anyone who wants to help them.

Coping with Dyslexia, Dysgraphia and ADHD: A Global Perspective

(2019) Catherine McBride: Oxford, Routledge

Reviewed by Patricia Fletcher MDG

The author of this book is a Professor of Developmental Psychology at The Chinese University of Hong Kong and is an expert on reading development across languages, scripts and cultures. The book is intended to promote further knowledge and enable greater understanding and insight into the fundamental nature of these three learning difficulties, dyslexia, dysgraphia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), uniquely seen from a worldwide perspective.

The text makes interesting reading and highlights current research as well as informative stories of real-life experiences from interviewees and multicultural researchers. These help the reader gain knowledge of these specific disabilities and special needs as well as other common disabilities and mental disorders that are shown to be global difficulties.

The first chapter, 'Understanding Learning Disabilities Around the World', focuses on the effects associated with dyslexia, dysgraphia and ADHD. There are stories from genuine respondents such as Danna, one of the 32 real-life interviewees, who as an adolescent had a

diagnosis made after a teacher observed a discrepancy between her conceptual skills and her actual school marks.

The author stresses the importance of early intervention that promises a better outcome. Remarkable strategies from interviewees are described such as in the following case study of comorbidity. Amy, who has a Master's degree in French, copes with spelling difficult words as she practises typing them over and over again on the keyboard using muscle memory, memorising what it feels like in her fingers. At work she worries that her learning difficulties will be picked up by others, as she has dyscalculia and dyslexia, as well as ADHD and dysgraphia. The reader discovers her tenacity for self-help.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 cover each of the core characteristics of the three highlighted specific learning difficulties with causal factors, whether genetic, environmental or both. The reader gains further understanding with reading citations and many references to follow up. In the case of ADHD, a large set of studies throughout the world has helped towards understanding the helpfulness of medication used responsibly and in close consultation with professionals.

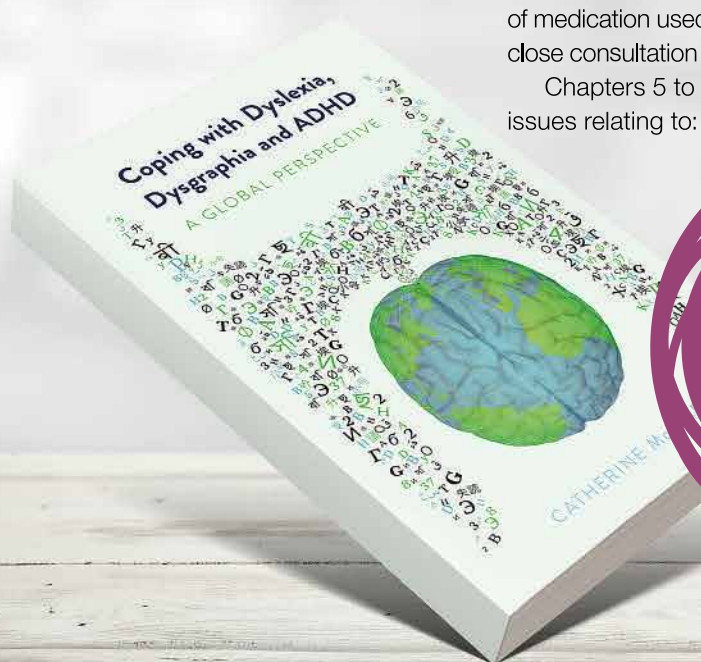
Chapters 5 to 9 consider different issues relating to:

- Comorbidities: where dyslexia, dysgraphia, ADHD overlap – either two combined or all three together
- Specific learning disorder: Dyscalculia; difficulty with mathematical concepts and operations. Additional psychological disorder of anxiety/depression
- Multiple languages and literacy: foreign language and script within different cultures, cultural attitudes about learning and resources
- Remediation practices for dyslexia, dysgraphia and ADHD.

Chapter 10 considers reading comprehension and writing composition difficulties, with many helpful suggestions of tackling common struggles such as selecting suitable text that is manageable for the reader.

The book has eight useful appendices which hold information and advice with practical tips on dyslexia and related learning disabilities along with worldwide lists of organisations and websites; a list of the questionnaire respondents; computer games and apps to aid reading development and a selection of useful movies and video clips related to dyslexia, dysgraphia, ADHD and other learning disabilities from various countries. Appendix H gives a list of phonological and morphological awareness exercises to help with reading which can also be adapted to other languages.

Overall the book leaves you feeling that all things are possible in learning, whatever the difficulty, provided the opportunity is there to manage the learning process.



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Enlarging Text in Word

Ctrl -] Increases font size by 1 pt

Ctrl - [Decreases font size by 1 pt

Keyboard Shortcuts for Windows

The Windows key (icon of 4 squares) can be used as a control key.

WIN - U Opens Accessibility Utilities

WIN - E Opens File Explorer

WIN - D Shows your Desktop

WIN - arrow keys

Change size

of Window

Change

the size of your mouse pointer

in Windows, Settings, Devices, Mouse,

Related Settings: Adjust mouse and

cursor size

Free apps

Office Lens – free app that allows you to take a photo of any text and hear it read aloud

Grammarly – free app that can be used with the Google platform to check spelling and grammar



Speechnotes – a free app speech recognition text editor for dictation

Coggle – a free app for Windows collaborative mind maps

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Read and Write Texthelp –

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