The Ins and Outs of Dyslexia

Tammy Curran, M.Ed., A/AOGPE
Jay Mayer, M.Ed., A/AOGPE

What is the Plan for this Session?

1. Tammy's and Jay's Dyslexia Stories
2. What is dyslexia?
3. Simulation (short one)
4. Strategies for helping dyslexics

Our goal by the end of the session is for you to understand what dyslexia is and some strategies to help.

Tammy's and Jay's Dyslexia Stories

Tammy
Didn't talk until I was 6 years old. Fifth grade teacher referred me to a speech therapist, but I passed the assessment. I couldn't pronounce "Massachusetts".
Held back in first grade.
I was in a reading class that didn't help me.
I'm charmer and faked my way through school.
Taught myself to read, write, and study in college. Took me 6 years to graduate.

Jay
Talked a lot with people I felt comfortable with, but need to see a speech therapist.
I repeated kindergarten.
In fifth grade couldn't read words with vowel teams.
Worked extremely hard in school but average grades.
Attended DU for my undergraduate degree.

Tammy's and Jay's Dyslexia Stories

Tammy
Started working as a TV editor and producer but decided that path wasn't for me.

Found Education as a career. Went to graduate school at Regis University.
Have worked with dyslexic students for over 27 years.
I was officially diagnosed 5 years ago.
This is where I started owning my learning.

Jay
Started out with a Real Estate Broker financing commercial properties but decided that path wasn't for me.

Went on a journey bartending in Jackson Hole and Maui, and lived on a kibbutz in Israel.

Found education as a career.
Taught in the public school classroom for 25 years. Tutor dyslexic students to read & write.

My wife diagnosed me with dyslexia.

What is Dyslexia?

As state by IDA:

"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."
The Non Dyslexic Brain vs the Dyslexic Brain

**Non - Impaired Reader**
- word analysis (more complex)
- articulation / word analysis

**Reader with Dyslexia**
- word form integrated
- articulation / word analysis over-reliance

**Intervention Can Help!**
- Brain function in children with no reading disability
- Brain function in children with developmental dyslexia
- Children with dyslexia show increased brain function after training

The Reading Brain

**Dyslexia Simulation--Part 1**
With a partner start telling the story with this prompt. You have 60 seconds.

One day I went to the beach...

**Dyslexia Simulation--Part 2**
With a partner start telling the story with this prompt. You have 60 seconds.

BUT DON'T USE A WORD WITH "N" IN IT (noticed that 2 of these words have an 'n' in them..you need to change these words):

One day I went to the beach...

Discuss: Processing and working memory
Strategies for Supporting Dyslexics

There are many ways to support your dyslexic child/student.

- Structured, multi-sensory reading support-systematic reading approach
- Cursive at any age (the earlier the better)
- Learn typing
- Audio books
- Technology to help reading and writing
- Executive Functioning support (working memory & flexibility)
- Grammar

Multi-sensory spelling continued

- Anglo-Saxon (cat, jump)
- Latin (auditory, portable)
- Greek (ph, y, ch)
- Morphology (port=to carry)
- Etymology (port comes from old English)

Cursive

Learning Cursive is a multi-sensory book that has a right and left handed version.

Audio Books

We want to foster a love of books and learning even if our children don't like to read. When we listen to books, we still have to use all the comprehension strategies without decoding. Following along with the text suggested to improve reading skills. People of all ages and reading abilities enjoy listening to stories!

- Crow Call by Lois Lowry Read Aloud
- Shortcut by Donald Crews Read Aloud
- Learning Ally has audio books
Technology Reading and Writing Apps

- Google’s Read & Write is super helpful.
- Text-to-speech
- Grammarly (checks spelling, grammar and punctuation)
- Snap and Read
- Learning Ally
- Read2Go
- Bookshare
- Read&Write for Google Chrome - A how to guide for students

Grammar

It is important to learn grammar. Winston grammar is one program that makes learning grammar easier because there are cards children use to help them learn and discover what the words/ phrases are doing.

We can also use grammar to elaborate writing through describing nouns in pictures with adjectives.

The purpose of learning grammar isn’t just to learn grammar. We can lesson the load on working memory while reading if grammar is used.

Executive Functioning Model

The three main areas of executive function are:

1. **Working memory**
2. **Cognitive flexibility** (also called flexible thinking)
3. **Inhibitor control** (which includes self-control)

Executive function is responsible for a number of skills, including:

- Paying attention
- Organizing, planning and prioritizing
- Starting tasks and staying focused on them to completion
- Understanding different points of view
- Regulating emotions
- Self-monitoring (keeping track of what you’re doing)

Scarborough’s Rope

![Scarborough’s Rope with Executive Functioning](image)

SO MANY...1 IN 5!

Albert Einstein  
Richard Branson  
Tom Cruise  
Charles Schwab  
Steven Spielberg  
Henry Winkler  
Whoopi Goldberg  
Winston Churchill  
George Bush  
JAY LENO  
Walt Disney  
George Washington  
Cher  
AND MANY MORE

“Dyslexia is a gift...embrace it, love it, be it.”