

## Accommodations for Students with Dyslexia

- **Oral testing**

Tests are read to the student (or provided pre-recorded on audio tape), and student are allowed to give answers orally (or tape record their answers).

- **Un-timed tests**

Dyslexic students do not perform well under time pressure. It also takes them longer to read the questions, compose the answer in their head, and get it down on paper.

- **Eliminate or reduce spelling tests**

Classroom teachers rarely teach spelling rules in the same way or same order as a dyslexia tutor. Many teachers will accept a spelling test given in a tutoring session as a replacement for the classroom test, or only grade a classroom spelling test on a small number of pre-determined words.

- **Don't force oral reading**

Teachers should never force students with dyslexia to read aloud in front of the class. If for some reason this is absolutely necessary, warn the student in advance and show them exactly which passage they will have to read so that they can practice ahead of time.

- **Accept dictated homework**

Dyslexic students can dictate answers much more easily and quickly than they can write them down. Allow parents to act as a scribe.

- **Reduce homework load**

Many teachers create homework assignments by estimating how long it would take a "normal" student to complete it. They may not realize

it takes a dyslexic student 3 to 4 times longer to complete the same assignment. Teachers should agree to a maximum time to spend on homework. Parents should sign the end of the homework page showing the amount of time spent on the assignment.

- **Grade on content, not spelling nor handwriting**

Some teachers take spelling and handwriting into consideration when assigning a grade. For dyslexic children, this is not appropriate.

Teachers should be asked to grade only on the content of an assignment.

- **Reduce copying tasks**

It takes dyslexic students longer to copy information from the board, and if they have dysgraphia, they may not be able to read their notes. So provide lecture notes, or discretely assign a fellow student to act as a scribe using NCR paper. Quick print shops can create NCR sets of binder paper. (NCR paper is sometimes called carbonless copy paper.) The top sheet of binder paper has a coating applied to the back of it that is pressure sensitive. When someone writes on the top sheet, the coating automatically makes a copy appear on the lower sheet of binder paper. So when class is over, the scribe just tears off the lower sheet and gives it to our student.

- **Alternate assignments**

Teachers should offer alternative ways to show mastery of material other than a long written paper. Alternatives could include oral or video presentations, dioramas, collages, or debates.

- **Avoid or reduce essay tests**

Use match up, fill-in-the-blank, or short answer formats for tests. List vocabulary words for fill-in-the-blank sections at the top of the exam.

Multiple-choice questions are also difficult for dyslexic students due to the volume of reading required to answer them correctly.

- **Conduct a class review session before the test**

Also, provide a study guide with key terms and concepts to the students.

- **Ask the student how he/she learns best**

Often, dyslexic students can explain strategies and techniques that help them learn to teachers. These are usually easy to incorporate into a classroom.