

Dyslexia

Supporting your child

Dyslexia explained

[Dyslexia - British Dyslexia Association](#) is an informative website you can access to learn more about dyslexia and how it might affect your child.

Below are some links to videos you may want to watch with your child to help explain dyslexia to them:

[What is dyslexia? - British Dyslexia Association \(bdadyslexia.org.uk\)](#).

Bing Videos

[My Dyslexic Mind - A Newsround Special - BBC Newsround](#) has children explaining their dyslexia and the experiences they have, as does [Dyslexia Awareness Week 2025 Teaching Resources - BBC Teach](#)

How to help with spelling

Mnemonics:

Help your child to make up a phrase where the first letter of each word spells out the target word. Highlighting the first letter in a different colour can also help:

e.g. said **S**ally **A**nn **I**s **D**ancing

Drawing a silly picture to go with it can also help your child to remember:

Word art:

e.g. **W**hole
Wide
World



to help remember that there is a w at the beginning of this meaning of whole.

Use an NLP (neurological programming) technique of learning a spelling:

- Show a card with the target word written or typed in large, clear print.
- Hold it in front and just above the left eye of the learner.
- Ask whether the word is long, short or middle sized in length.
- Ask whether it has any ascenders (tall letters) and where they are in the word.
- Ask whether it has any descenders (letters that go below the line) and where they are in the word.
- The learner then names the letters forwards several times saying what the word spells.
- Then they name the letters backwards.
- Now remove the card and ask the learner to say the letters forwards and backwards again.
- If a mistake is made, re-show them the card.
- When correct without the card, the learner should write the word down naming the letters as they write and reading the whole word at the end.

foreign

Trace, say, cover, write and check:

- The learner traces over the target word 3 to 5 times, saying the letter names as they write.
- They then copy the word, saying the letter names as they write.
- Finally, cover up the target word and write it from memory, saying the letters as they write.
- They could then try writing the word again with their eyes closed, children love doing this!

Tapping the non-writing arm:

This technique can be used for words of 6 letters or less.

- Show the learner the word, read it for them.
- The learner repeats the word.
- Then, with their writing hand, they gently tap the other arm starting at the shoulder, saying the names of the letters in the word.
- The whole word is then said.
- Finally, the learner writes the word saying the letters as they do.



Tricky parts:

Remembering the parts of the word that they always make a mistake with, rather than the whole word, can reduce the pressure of learning the spelling.

This can be done with:

- **Silly sentences** e.g. there is **a rat** in **separate**, or 'It is busy on the bus.' to help remember how **business** starts.
- **Word graffiti** - making the tricky part stand out with capitals, different colours, different size letters, bubble writing etc
- **Pronunciation** - e.g. saying scissors with the hard c sound, or sounding the s in answer.
- **Word art** - think of a picture to help with the tricky part e.g. to help remember the first r in February, draw a snowman with a speech bubble saying 'br' with Fe and uary on either side of the bubble.

Triangles:

The learner writes the word beginning with one letter, then starting a new row with two letters then three etc adding one more letter each time resulting in a triangle shape:

c
ce
cer
cert
certa
certai
certain

Vowels:

In longer words, it can help to count the vowels or say them in order.

e.g. experience has 4 es and 1 i

To help with reading

Reading single words that are not phonetic.

Recognising the whole word:

- Make a pairs game with the words being learnt. Write each word out on separate pieces of paper or card until you have two of each. These can then be used to play snap or Pelmanism.
- Play SWAT:

Lay out the word cards. Say one and the learner has to 'SWAT' the correct word. You can use a wooden spoon for this or a real fly swat, just improvise!

- Play bingo.

The learner copies the words onto a grid or uses the cards you have made. They can then put a counter or coin on top of the word when it is read to them until they have a full house.

- Find word:

Place the word cards around the room then say one of the words. The learner has to find the correct word and bring it to you. An element of speed can be introduced by timing how long it takes to collect them all, but only if the learner feels comfortable with it.

Reading longer words

Segmenting (chunking):

Breaking words down into their syllables helps tackle longer, more complex words. Each syllable will contain a vowel or vowel sound.

e.g. accidentally can be broken down into ac/ci/dent/al/ly

natural - na/tur/al

possession - po/se/ssion

Once the learner is able to read the word, they can begin to the play games suggested on the previous slide to encourage the word to be stored in their memory rather than have to be segmented each time.

Reading texts

For younger children reading shorter texts:

4 reads:

Reading the text four times is beneficial. They can either read the whole page, a paragraph or just a sentence at a time depending on how much text there is.

During the first read, the reader decodes any unfamiliar words by segmenting the word into its smallest sounds (phonemes) e.g. playing - p/l/ay/i/ng or splitting them into syllables (as described on a previous slide) see [Phonics: How to blend sounds to read words | Oxford Owl](#) for a demonstration.

The second read should be more fluent as the reader now recognises the majority of words.

On the third read, fluency increases again, allowing the brain to focus more on the meaning of the text.

The fourth read should be entirely fluent and include some expression to reflect the meaning of the text.

For older children reading longer texts:

- Try to get an overview of what the text is about before reading fully.

For fiction books, this can be done by reading the blurb on the back of the book, looking at chapter headings, discussing the picture on the book cover or any that accompany the text inside. Make any links with experiences your child has had, or has understanding of.

For non-fiction, read any subheadings and use any pictures and illustrations along with their captions to support understanding. Then, read the first and last line of each paragraph. Going over any unfamiliar vocabulary that appears in the text is also helpful before reading the piece fully.

If answering comprehension questions, read these through before reading the text, so that the brain can be listening/looking out for the answers as they read.

Try to connect any new learning to what your child already knows.

Afterwards, summarise what has been read.

To help with memory

- Play 'I went to the shops' - where each person says a different item to buy but on your turn you have to list everything that has already been said. You can do this for items all beginning with or ending with the same sound, buy items in alphabetical order etc. Talk about techniques that can help you remember. Some people picture the words/items, some people link them with a story, some people find it helpful to touch a finger for each item.
- Pairs games - you can do this with words that rhyme or words that contain the same spelling pattern. Alternatively, the game can be used to match times tables questions with their answers. You can make the cards using old cereal boxes or similar.
- Try showing or saying something for the learner to remember then ask them to do an activity (such as touch their toes ten times) or answer a simple question before asking them to repeat the information given at the beginning. This helps working memory, which in turn can help with remembering things in class when there are distractions. It also helps when working out answers to reasoning questions in maths.
- Another game to play is 'Kim's game' where you put out ten objects (or ten letters or numbers), ask the learner to memorise them, then cover them up and either take one away and ask what is missing, or ask them to name all ten objects. If this is tricky, then try using fewer items to begin with. When they get good at remembering them you could try asking them to remember them in a certain order.

Some of these ideas and others can be found on <https://www.curiousworld.com/blog/games-that-boost-memory-skills>

As mentioned earlier, whilst playing all of the above, it is helpful to talk about techniques to help the brain remember. Your child can then try some out to find which works best for them.

For example:

Do they need to tap their fingers to keep a track of how many objects they have said?

Do they find picturing things in their mind's eye helps?

Does repeating in their head help?

Do they need to move around to help themselves remember?

The above are games you can play at home with minimal resources but there are many memory games that you can buy if you wish to.