

## Clearing up Common Misconceptions



*Misconception: Dyslexia is a problem with visual processing that causes letters to look backwards or upside down.*

Actually, dyslexia is a problem with phonological processing that causes confusion, disorientation, and often times results in letter and sound transpositions.

*Misconception: It is best to wait until third grade to test for dyslexia.*

Actually, dyslexia can be diagnosed before a child begins to learn to read. The earlier structured, multisensory explicit intervention is initiated, the better the outcome for reducing and even eliminating future reading struggles.

*Misconception: Dyslexia is a reading disorder.*

Actually, our brains were not designed to read specifically, but rather have adapted to read. Because of this, it is neurobiologically impossible for a singular reading deficit to exist; dyslexia is most readily identified when learning to read, but its neurobiological origins precede the historical underpinnings of the reading brain.

*Misconception: Dyslexia is not accounted for under IDEA\* and is not a basis for an IEP\*\**

Actually, dyslexia is in and of itself a basis for implementing an IEP; IDEA does not prohibit dyslexia from being listed as a specific area of difficulty under the category for Specific Learning Disorder (SLD).

\*IDEA: Individuals with Disability Education Act

\*\*IEP Individualized Education Plan

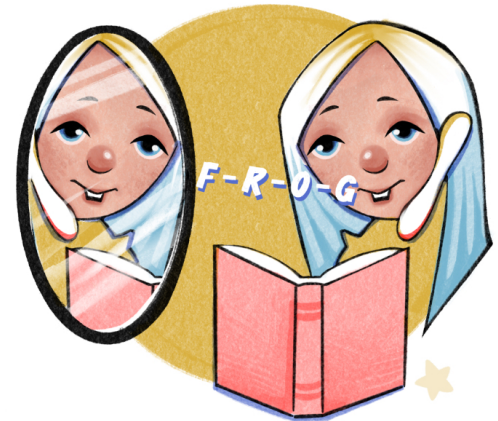
SLPs\* recognize the most important parts of the reading brain. Many SLPs already practice systematic, explicit, multi-sensory speech and language based activities every day!

Broca's Area: planning for speech and language output

Wernicke's Area: processing written or spoken language

Arcuate Fasciculus: connects Broca's and Wernicke's area; imperative for phonological processing.

\*Speech-Language Pathologists



By understanding the nature and characteristics of dyslexia, Speech-Language Pathologists can better recognize potential signs of dyslexia during routine speech-language screenings and evaluations **before literacy struggles emerge.**

Consider a referral for a dyslexia screener if concern persists in more than one of the following areas in kindergarten:

- Repeating rhyming word sequences, nursery rhymes, or the alphabet
- Understanding & making rhymes
- Confusing phonetically similar words like 'pea' and 'bee'
- word finding, expressive vocabulary, color naming, and/or rapid automatic naming
- speech/language or a 'late talker'
- Lack of interest in learning about letters and sounds

## References

Education Programs, 39th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2017, Washington, D.C.

Shaywitz, S. (2003). *Overcoming Dyslexia: A new and complete science-based program for reading problems at any level.* New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

Wolf, M., & Stoodley, C. J. (2007). *Proust and the squid: The story and science of the reading brain.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Youman, M., & Mather, N. (2015). Dyslexia laws in the USA: An update. *Perspectives on Language and Literacy*, 41(4), 10-18.

## Trusted Resources

Facts about a variety of topics related to dyslexia:  
<https://dyslexiaida.org/fact-sheets/>

Understanding the Laws:  
<http://dyslexia.yale.edu/resources/accommodations/understanding-the-law/>

Signs of dyslexia in Preschool and Kindergarten+:  
<http://dyslexia.yale.edu/dyslexia/signs-of-dyslexia/>



## Dyslexia: Brain Fundamentals for Educational Based Speech-Language Pathologists

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