

< Understanding differences

# Classroom accommodations for dyslexia



By Amanda Morin



For kids with **dyslexia**, reading can be challenging. Spelling and writing can be challenging too. What classroom accommodations help level the playing field for students with dyslexia? Here's a look at some of the supports teachers can use to help students who struggle with reading, spelling, and writing.

## Classroom materials and routines

- Post visual schedules and also read them out loud.
- Provide colored strips or bookmarks to help focus on a line of text when reading.
- Hand out letter and number strips so the student can see how to write correctly.
- Use large-print text for worksheets.
- Use audiobooks like those available through **services like Bookshare**, a free online library for students with disabilities.
- Allow the student to use a text reader like a Reading Pen or **text-to-speech software**.
- Use **speech-to-text software** to help with writing.
- Have on hand “hi-lo” books (books with high-interest topics for students reading below grade level).
- Provide extra time for reading and writing.
- Give the student multiple opportunities to read the same text.
- Use reading buddies during worktime (as appropriate).
- Partner up for studying — one student writes while the other speaks, or they share the writing.

## Introducing new concepts

- Pre-teach new concepts and vocabulary.
- Provide the student with typed notes or an outline of the lesson to help with taking notes.
- Provide **advance organizers** to help the student follow along during a lesson.
- Provide a glossary of content-related terms.
- Use visual or audio support to help the student understand written materials in the lecture.

## Giving instructions

- Give step-by-step directions and read written instructions out loud.
- Simplify directions using key words for the most important ideas.
- Highlight key words and ideas on worksheets for the student to read first.
- Check in frequently to make sure the student understands and can repeat the directions.
- Show examples of correct and completed work to serve as a model.
- Provide a rubric that describes the elements of a successful assignment.
- Help the student **break assignments into smaller steps**.
- Give self-monitoring checklists and guiding questions for reading comprehension.
- Arrange worksheet problems from easiest to hardest.

## Completing tests and assignments

- Grade the student on the content that needs to be mastered, not on things like spelling or **reading fluency**.

- Allow understanding to be demonstrated in different ways, like oral reports, posters, and video presentations.
- Provide different ways to respond to test questions, like saying the answers or circling an answer instead of filling in the blank.
- Provide sentence starters that show how to begin a written response.
- Provide extended time for taking tests.
- Provide a quiet room for taking tests, if needed.

## What's next?

Do you have a student with dyslexia? Read a [one-page fact sheet](#) to learn more about this common learning difference.

Do you think your child may need accommodations? Explore tips for [talking to the teacher about your child's dyslexia](#).

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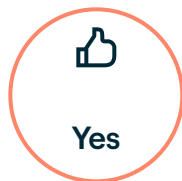


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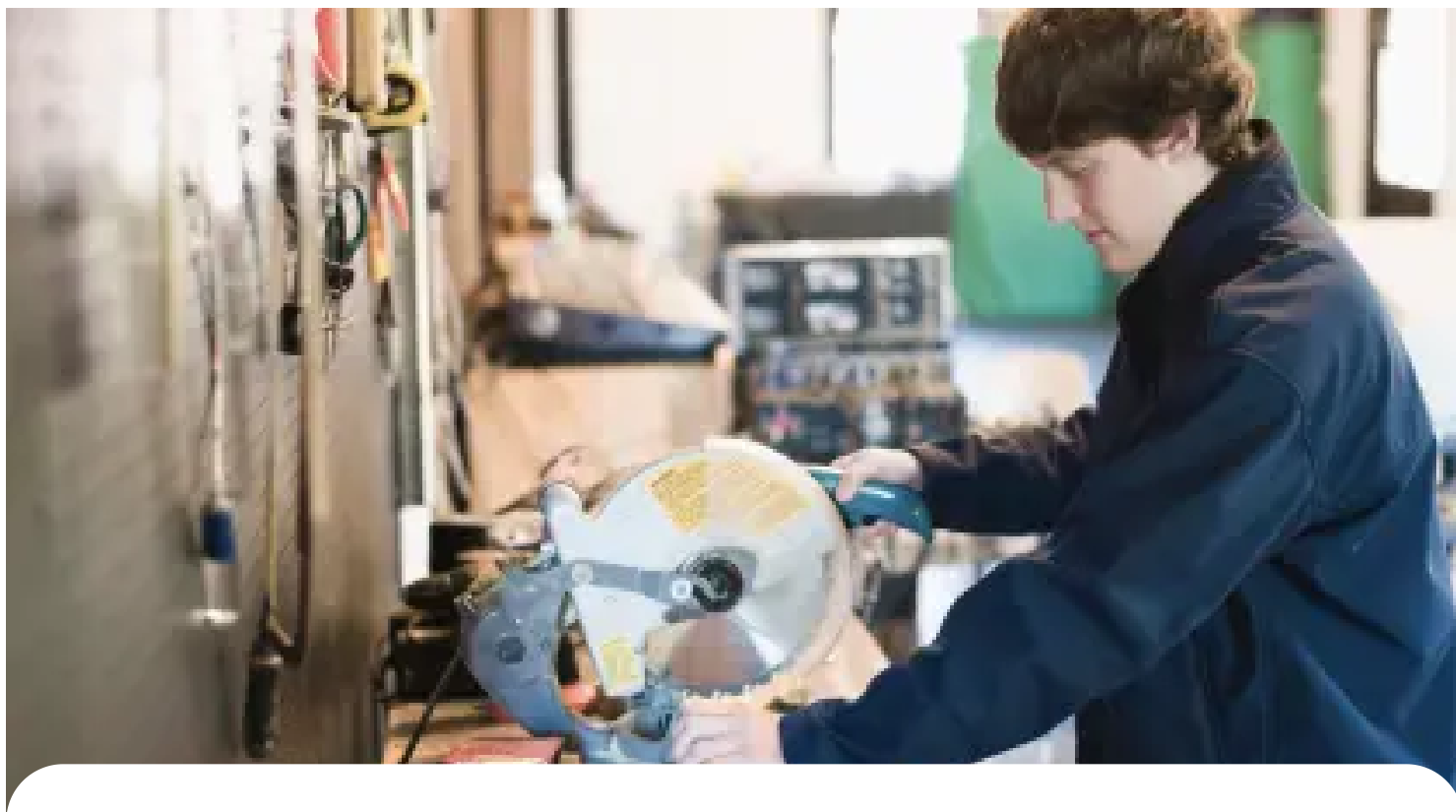
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intervention specialist for 10 years. She is the author of *The Everything Parent's Guide to Special Education*. Two of her children have learning differences.

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