

Dysfunctions

“Learning Disabilities” (dysfunctions)

- = a number of disorders which may affect:
 - the acquisition,
 - organization,
 - retention,
 - understanding,
 - use of verbal or nonverbal information.

= the result of a problem in the central nervous system

There is no cure for
dyslexia or
dysgraphia.

Some dysfunctions

- Dyslexia
- Dysgraphia
- Dyscalculia
- Dyspraxia
- Attention Deficit Disorder
- Cluttering (nepořádnost)
- Dysphasia/aphasia – spelling, organising ideas...
- others

Dyslexia and dysgraphia – signs and symptoms

- Very young learners
- Early primary school children
- Older primary school children
- Secondary school children + adults

Young learners

- delays in speech
- slow learning of new words
- difficulty in rhyming words, as in nursery rhymes
- low letter knowledge
- letter reversal or mirror writing (for example, "Я" instead of "R")
- Poor short term memory
- Difficulty in remembering instructions
- Delay in completing tasks

- Techniques:
- Remove stress and anxiety

Early primary school children

- Difficulty in:
- learning the alphabet or letter order
- associating sounds with the letters
- identifying or generating rhyming words
- counting syllables in words
- segmenting words into individual sounds
- Remembering words
- decoding written words
- mixing up sounds in polysyllabic words ("aminal" for animal, "bisghetti" for spaghetti)

Techniques:

- Pre-reading – key phrases on the blackboard
- Underline key words in different colours
 - Using a pointer or ruler when reading
 - Reading in a group
 - shortening sentences
 - Bringing pictures with the text and asking
 - what is happening

Grammar teaching technique:

DREAM TOWN

IN DREAM TOWN THERE IS AN OLD CASTLE AND THE RIVER. AND THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS TO DO. THERE ISN'T A BEACH BUT THERE IS A BIG SWIMMING POOL WITH A FANTASTIC WATERSLIDE. AND THERE ARE TWO CINEMAS AND A BIG PARK. THERE ISN'T A BUS STATION BUT THERE IS A RAILWAY STATION. THERE IS A CHURCH AND THERE ARE A LOT OF NICE HOUSES. THERE AREN'T ANY SUPERMARKETS BUT THERE ARE A LOT OF SHOPS.

Older primary school children

- **Problems with:**
- Slow or inaccurate reading
- Very poor spelling – dysorthographia
- Reading out loud, reading words in the wrong order, skipping words and sometimes saying a word similar to another word
- associating individual words with their correct meanings
- time keeping and concept of time when doing a certain task
- organization skills
- similarities and differences in letters and words
- spacing that organizes letters into separate words
- sounding out the pronunciation of an unfamiliar
- Tendencies to omit or add letters or words when writing and reading

Techniques:

- Gap filling with initial letters
- Listening and reading paralelly
- Understanding the tasks – someone reads the instructions for the student
- Underline
- Write the words down on cards and put them into the right order

- SHE WANTS TO BUY: AN a_____ and TWO
c_____ b_____
and A n_____, THREE s_____ and TWO
p_____.

Vocabulary teaching techniques:

- Using rhythm to remember the words
- The alphabetical order – system
- Categories (for example spring moths), mind maps, spider net
- Key words recorded in phrases, sentences then writing as a dictation
- Cards of different colours
- Writing words in sentences

Secondary school children and adults

- Sometimes disguise their weaknesses, even from themselves.
- Writing does not seem to match their level of intelligence.
- substitute similar-looking, but unrelated, words (what/want, say/saw, help/held, run/fun, fell/fall, to/too, who/how etc.)

Techniques:

- reading the first sentence [and/or last] of each paragraph in a chapter, which can give an overview of content
- Do not to 'read-like-a-non-dyslexic-does', but find a way of extracting information from texts
- Do not ask them to read aloud without preparation
- Encourage them to read aloud at home
- Make them listen (CD) and read the texts at home in advance

Dyslexics & famous

Sometimes dyslexic children may be extremely creative. Here's a list of famous personalities with learning difficulty

- **Abhishek Bachchan** | Bollywood actor
- **Tom Cruise** | Hollywood actor
- **Steven Spielberg** | Hollywood filmmaker
- **Richard Branson** | English industrialist
- **Walt Disney** | American animator
- **Albert Einstein** | German physicist
- **Leonardo da Vinci** | Italian painter, sculptor, scientist, mathematician
- **Auguste Rodin** | French sculptor



Testing

- Clear aim
- More time
- Coloured paper with lines
- Model answers
- Accept answers in notes
- Allow spelling errors, later their own correction
- Prefer oral examining

Examining

- Prefer oral examining
- Evaluate only what the student succeeded to do/write

Error correction

- No red pen
- Underline errors
- The right version can be written on the margin – by the student
- The right version read by someone else
- Encouraging the student to design their own list of errors:

spelling

grammar

organization of ideas

What should we provide the student with?

- Time
- Highlighter
- Coloured papers
- Coloured transparency/plastic film for reading
- Secret signals for a teacher
- **Success**