

Support Strategies for Specific Learning Differences

12 Support strategies for Dyslexia

Please find these strategies that may assist a child, teen or adult with Dyslexia. It is important to stress that a **formal identification** of a specific learning difference **is not a prerequisite** for putting these support strategies in place. It is also important to note that many of the strategies below will make learning more accessible to all individuals, whether they have an SpLD or not.

In these tips sheets, you will notice that a number of strategies are recommended for more than one SpLD. This is intentional and aims to highlight the overlapping nature of SpLD's and their associated challenges. For example, a strategy listed for ADHD may work equally as well for a student with dyspraxia.

Remember, there are no hard and fast rules. Be prepared to experiment, to talk through different ideas and strategies with your child, teen or adult, and to discover what works for them.

- 1. Present the "big picture":** use a top down rather than bottom up approach.
- 2. Present information in a structured and cumulative way** by building on, recapping and reinforcing existing knowledge.
- 3. Make learning personal and meaningful.** Relate new learning to the child's or young person's experiences and interests. Allow them to play an active role in coming up with ideas for learning - e.g. by making up their own mnemonics or by drawing pictures to aid memory.
- 4. Allow extra 'think time'** for processing information and formulating responses.
- 5. Encourage learning by experience rather than being told.**
- 6. Use overlearning** - recap information using different methods.
- 7. Use multisensory methods** - engage more than one sense at a time when presenting new information; e.g. ask them to say letter names out loud when they're writing a word; use movement or gestures to reinforce mathematical concepts such as addition or multiplication.





8. **Ensure materials are appropriately adapted;** e.g. break large chunks of text down into bullet points; use visuals and diagrams to make information more memorable; avoid presenting information as black print on a white background.
9. **Be flexible and responsive to the needs of the learner.** Try asking what works for them and how they learn best.
10. **Draw attention to patterns in words,** e.g. bat, cat, sat; irregular spelling patterns - rough, tough, enough; prefixes and suffixes; rules for plural or -ed word endings.
11. **Foster a love of books and reading by reading aloud to your child or using paired reading techniques to encourage them to join in.** Allow them to choose books that reflect their interests and ensure that they have access to plenty of books and / or magazines that reflect their interests. Try using graphic novels to encourage reading.
12. **Check for visual stress** if there appears to be physical problems with reading, and, if necessary, refer to an optometrist. Experiment with different coloured overlays and tinted paper.