

## 44 MYTHS ABOUT DYSLEXIA DEBUNKED

# 44 Myths About Dyslexia Debunked



It is important to be aware of some of the popular misconceptions and myths surrounding dyslexia and language-based learning disability. We have highlighted some of the more common myths and provided the alternative understanding.

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**Myth:** Dyslexia is a specific brain weakness. It is a genetically-based, neurological difficulty with phoneme awareness and processing skills (the ability to detect and process the smallest perceptible speech sounds).

**Fact:** Phonemic awareness is only necessary when learning to read and spell and involves using an alphabet code. Research has shown that this aptitude is not acquired often in children. Usually, students need systematic phonics instruction in order to become proficient in reading and processing. Some people find this ability to learn how to recognise and manipulate phonemes more difficult than others due to normal genetic variation, rather than a brain weakness.

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**Myth:** fMRI brain scan studies show that dyslexics' brains work differently from those of non-dyslexics.

**Fact:** When a brain scan is done of someone who struggles to read while he is trying to read, the scan will look different than one of someone who has no trouble with reading. When the first individual is then taught to read properly, his scan will look exactly the same as the second individual's.

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**Myth: Dyslexia is caused by a lack of phonics instruction.**

**Fact:** Increased phonics instruction will not help a child with dyslexia. Children with dyslexia are able to learn phonics; they just have trouble applying it. This is why difficulty with phonics and word pronunciation is a good warning sign of dyslexia.

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**Myth: Children who fail to discover how to read from embedded phonics instruction by age 7 or 8 and remain phonologically unaware are likely to have dyslexia. Children who continue to struggle with reading despite receiving conventional remediation ('treatment non-responders') have the most severe form of dyslexia.**

**Fact:** Failure to read is often more to do with the nature of teaching rather than the nature of the child. A child will not develop dyslexia because he has trouble reading. There are many causes of reading difficulty. If a child is dyslexic, he will show many of the other warning signs.



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