

44 MYTHS ABOUT DYSLEXIA DEBUNKED

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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.

29 **Myth:** Retaining a child (i.e. holding them back a grade) will improve their academic struggles.

Fact: According to several institutions (i.e. The U.S. Department of Education, The American Federation of Teachers and The National Association of School Psychologists) and their extensive research there is no benefit to retention because it has never improved a student's academic struggles.

30 **Myth:** Accommodations are a crutch, and the child for whom they are made will become lazy.

Fact: Accommodations are not an advantage; it is an attempt to level the playing field whether it is a standardised test and/or homework assignment. Even with certain accommodations such as extra time on a test, a slow reader will still feel the same time constraints compared to the ordinary reader.

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31 Myth: Most teachers know the warning signs of dyslexia, so they can alert a parent if their child showed symptoms.

Fact: An individual with dyslexia often is confronted with challenges when attending school. Often many classroom teachers have not had formal training. Since there are so many different types and severities of a learning disability that could potentially be in a classroom, at a given time, it is difficult for one teacher to be an expert and meet all of the needs of the students (i.e., with a learning disability and normally developing). Therefore, it is a good idea to have all of the information in order to educate your child's teachers in order for them to receive appropriate accommodations in the classroom.



32 Myth: Dyslexia is equally prevalent in girls and boys.

Fact: This has been a tricky one (and a moving target, somewhat). Quite honestly, it can even be difficult to pin down the prevalence of dyslexia; some say 1 in 5, others say between 5-17%. Boys' reading disabilities have historically been identified more often than girls', but past studies indicated that such identification was biased and the actual prevalence of the disorder was nearly identical in the two sexes (Shaywitz, Shaywitz, Fletcher, & Escobar, 1990). More recently, it has been found that indeed reading impairment is more prevalent in boys (Quinn & Wagner, 2015). Additionally, using fMRI, researchers have found differences in the brain anatomy of dyslexic boys versus girls and caution using male-based models of brain behaviour for females (Evans, Flowers, Napoliello, & Eden, 2013).

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