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Dyslexia: Difficulties, Differences and the Feel Good Factor

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Outline of Talk

1. Effective Learning
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Learning Styles
4. Metacognition
5. Motivation
6. Self-esteem

Effective Learning

- Independence
- Control
- Active
- Interactive
- Achievable

Dyslexia definition: Reid (2009)

- "Dyslexia is a **processing difference** characterised by difficulties in literacy
- it can affect **cognition** such as memory, speed of processing, time management, co-ordination and directional aspects.
- Can be visual and phonological difficulties
- There are usually **discrepancies** in performances
- It is important that the **individual differences** and learning styles are acknowledged
- as well as the learning and work **context**

Factors in Dyslexia:

Cognitive

- phonological processing
- naming speed
- working memory
- metacognitive factors
- automaticity

Educational

- pattern of errors in reading and spelling
- writing difficulties
- time management difficulties
- more time to complete work
- avoidance of writing
- discrepancies in performances in curricular activities

Environment

- Learning environment
- Music , movement, lighting
- Classroom design
- School ethos
- Learning styles
- Education policy/legislation
- Social and Cultural factors

Importance of the task

Activity

Left / right hemisphere

Left-hemisphere

logic

detail

facts

language

order/ sequencing

sounds in words

Right-Hemisphere

big picture

imagination

symbols and images

creative

visual

comprehension

feeling

Intervention Approaches

Individualized approaches

- Usually one on one,
- OG phonics approach,
- overlearning, multisensory,
- sequential

Support approaches

- Supports what is happening in class,
- Differentiated worksheets,
- additional time
- computer programs,
- paired reading, paired spelling, paired thinking

Intervention approaches

Whole School Approaches

- Study skills
- Thinking skills
- Learning styles
- Circle time
- Sport
- Skiing

Learning Environment

The Mind your Table Manners' Classroom

Benefits

- Predictability,
- routine,
- students are aware of class rules,
- the structure can be good for some.

Disadvantages

- controlled by the teacher,
- lack of freedom,
- heavily based on routine,
- can be difficult for learners who prefer an informal learning environment.

The ‘set menu’ classroom

Benefits

- Secure predictable environment,
- easy to locate items,
- all resources can be easily accounted for,
- students will know where teacher will be seated

Disadvantages

- Can be very much teacher controlled,
- may be a lack of freedom for exploratory learning,
- heavily based on routine,
- can be difficult for the learner who prefers an informal learning environment.

‘The a la carte classroom’

Benefits

- can be a visually appealing classroom to work in,
- easy to find items,
- good if student needs structure,

Disadvantages

- can be difficult for informal learners,

‘The Buffet Classroom’

Benefits

- Visually appealing,
- children’s work usually displayed,
- students can note and more readily recall the work they have completed,
- provides students with sense of ownership and responsibility,
- stimulating environment,

Disadvantages

- May be over stimulating for some students,
- Some children may not have as many wall displays as others,
- Takes up a lot of teacher time.

The ‘Street Market’ Classroom

Benefits

- Visually stimulating,
- informal design can be suited to some,
- students have a sense of ownership,
- work is readily and quickly displayed in some way.

Disadvantages

- can be chaotic for some,
- may also be disorganised and finding items can be difficult,
- can be frustrating for students who prefer predictability.

Continuum of classroom environments

Left Hemisphere **Right**

TheMind your Table Manners	**The set menu**	**The a la carte**	**The Buffet**	**The ‘Street Market’**

Classroom design - Task

Discuss a student with the person next to you

2. Which of the classroom designs would best fit the student?

3. Design the optimum classroom for children with dyslexia

Learning Styles:

Strategies for global learner

- Work in groups
- Include lots of discussion
- allow scope for creativity but provide some kind of structure
- Active and interactive learning
- Lots of why questions
- Lots of visuals, colour, music
- Usually can cope fairly well with background noise

Strategies for analytic learner

- Checklists
- Researching for information
- Set achievable goals
- Extension exercises
- Give time limits
- Likes structure, sequence and order

Activity

Learning Style

- Auditory
- Visual
- Kinaesthetic
- Persistent
- Global
- Social
- Metacognitive
- Tactile

Task /activity

Learning Style	Task
Auditory	Make lists, find out information,
Visual	drawings, diagrams, use DVD, computer programmes
Kinaesthetic	Arrange visits, activities, field trips
Persistent	Lengthy tasks, problem solving activities
Global	overview, short tasks, frequent breaks, discussion
Social	Work in groups, in pairs, discussion
Metacognitve	Problem solving, thinking skills
Tactile	Hands-on, model making, demonstration

Metacognition

- Questioning - *'why, what, where, how'*
- Clarifying – '*I see, but what about this'?*
- Understanding – '*right I get it now'*
- Connecting – *'I did something like this last week'*
- Directing – *'okay I know what to do know'*
- Monitoring – *'maybe I should do this now –that does not seem to be correct'*
- Assessing – *'so far so good' 'I think I am on the right track'*

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Motivation

- Setting goals, short term targets and rewards
- Intrinsic motivation
- Whole school ethos and school climate
- Prevent ‘learned helplessness’

Types of Motivation

Motivation by Task	Social Motivation	Motivation by Feedback	Motivation by Achievement
Task must be achievable; Broken down into small steps	The influence of peer group	Continuous and formative	Depends on learners readiness for task

The motivating environment

- Classroom design
- The motivated school
- school ethos
- Learning experiences
- Learning styles
- Choice, freedom and creativity
- Stress proof school

Moving forward with motivation

1. Ensure success with small achievable steps

2. Provide feedback to students about their own personal progress

3. Help learners believe in their own abilities

4. Acknowledge the individual styles of each child

5. Use observation to begin with to get to know the learning and environmental preferences of the students.

Motivation

6. Group work as motivator

7. Encourage self –assessment

8. Develop student responsibility

9. Encourage creativity

10. Celebrate success

Emotional Literacy checklist

- Does the learner show any stress signs?
- Can the student be left to work independently?
- Can the student persist with the task or will he/she require monitoring?
- Can the learner only work for short periods?
- Does the learner require constant re-assurance?
- Is the learner aware of the needs of others?

Learned Helplessness

- ‘*the parallels between learned helplessness and children with reading difficulties are striking* (p.197).

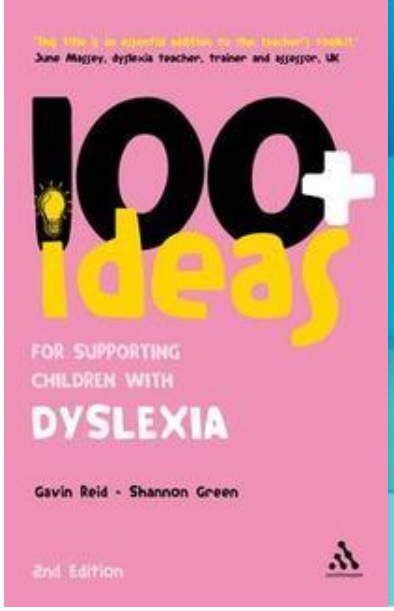
Humphrey and Mullins (2002)

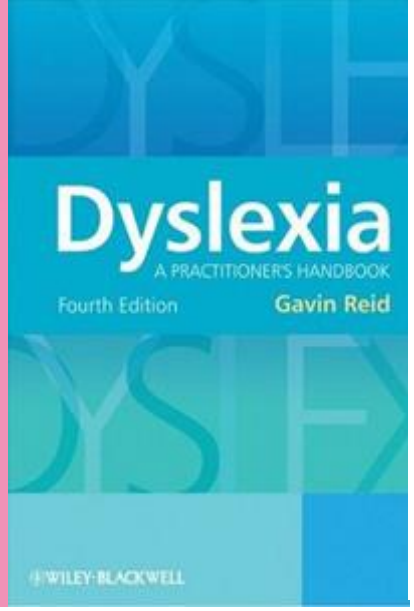
How to boost self-esteem

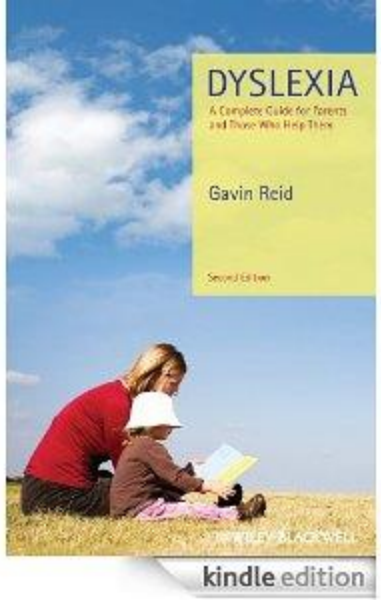
- “They need to achieve”
- Ensure success and give genuine praise
- Dyslexia is a difference, not a deficit
- Focus on their strengths and develop them
- Point out progress – self-attribution
- Avoid “learned helplessness” – allow for pride in achieving

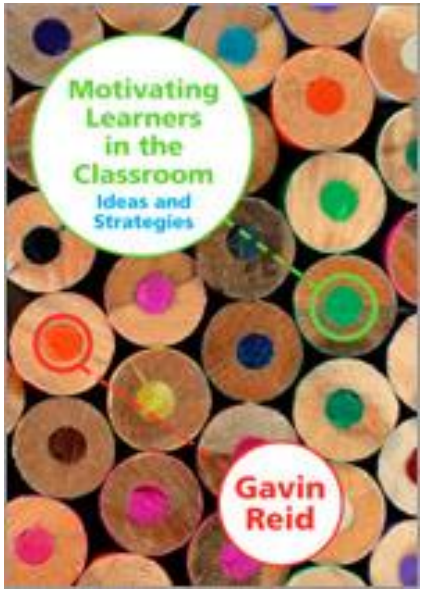
Main challenges in parenting a child with dyslexia (Reid, 2009)

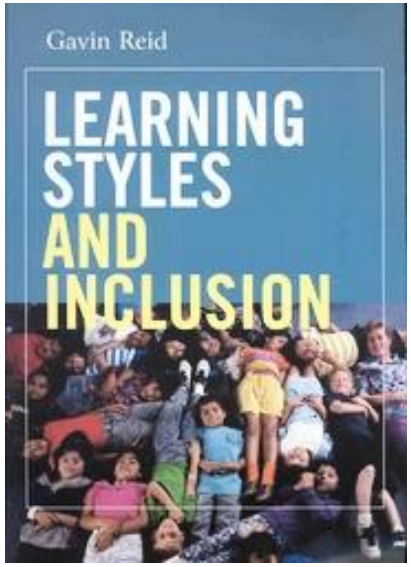
- Maintaining child's self-esteem
- Helping the child start new work when previous work not yet consolidated
- Protecting child's dignity when dealing with therapists/professionals
- Personal organization - child
- Peer insensitivity
- Misconceptions of dyslexia
- Homework

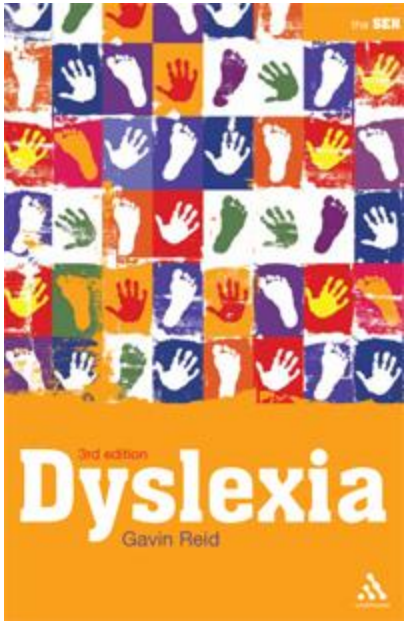


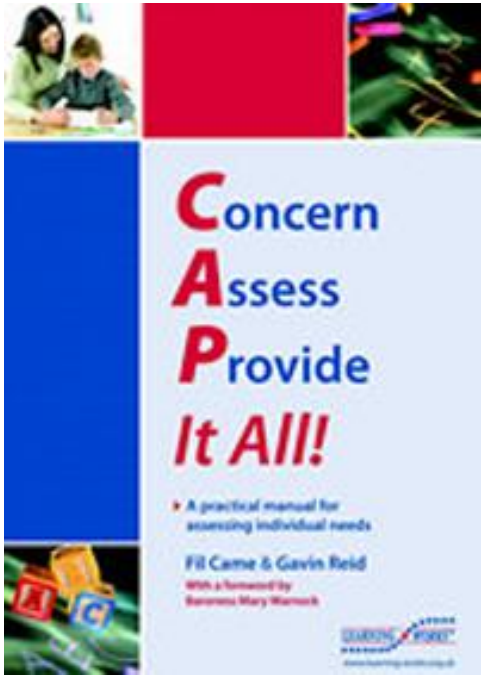












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