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Signs of Dyslexia

Pre-school years:

- Trouble learning common nursery rhymes
- A lack of understanding of rhymes
- Mispronounced words and/or persistent baby talk
- Difficulty in learning/remembering the names of letters
- Failure to know the letters in their own name

Kindergarten and 1st grade:

- Failure to understand that words come apart (e.g., homework can be separated into “home” and “work”) and that smaller words can be broken down and sounded out according to the sounds of the associated letters
- Inability to learn to associate letters with their specific sounds
- Reading errors that show no connection to the sounds of the letters (e.g., “big” read as “goat”)
- Inability to read common one-syllable words or sound out very simple words like “cat”
- Complaints about how hard reading is, reading avoidance
- History of reading problems in parents and/or siblings

2nd grade and Onwards:

Problems in speaking:

- Mispronunciations of long, unfamiliar complicated words
- Leaving out parts of words and/or confusing the order of the parts of words (e.g., “aluminum” is said as “amulium”)
- Speech is not fluent. Lots of um’s, pausing/hesitating often when speaking
- The use of imprecise language (e.g., calling objects “thing” or “stuff” instead of its proper name)
- Not being able to find the exact word they are trying to say (i.e., “tip of the tongue” moments)
- Confusing words that sound alike (e.g., tornado/volcano, lotion/ocean, humidity/humility)
- Needs time to formulate an oral response, or the inability to come up with a verbal response quickly when questioned
- trouble remembering small pieces of verbal information (e.g., dates, names, phone numbers)

Problems in Reading:

- Very slow progress in acquiring reading skills
- A lack of strategy to read new, unfamiliar words
- Trouble reading unknown words that must be sounded out. Instead, making wild guesses. Failure to systematically sound out words



- The inability to read small function words, such as “that”, “an”, “in”
- Stumbling when reading multisyllabic words
- Omitting parts of words when reading, failure to decode parts of the word (e.g., “convertible” read as “conible”)
- Fear of reading out loud. Avoidance of oral reading
- Oral reading filled with word substitutions, omissions, and mispronunciations
- Oral reading is choppy, not smooth/fluent
- Oral reading lacks inflection (i.e., changes in pitch of voice)
- Has to rely on context clues to figure out the meaning of what is read
- A better ability to understand words in context than to read isolated words
- Poor performance on multiple choice tests and failure to finish tests on time
- Spelling issues
- Substituting words with the same meaning of words in the text he/she can’t pronounce (e.g., saying “car” when “automobile” is read)
- Trouble reading mathematics word problems
- Reading is very slow and tiresome. Homework never seems to end, and parents are often recruited as readers
- Messy handwriting
- Difficulties learning a foreign language
- Reading accuracy may improve over time but it continues to lack fluency and is laborious

Reference:

Shaywitz, S. (2005). *Overcoming Dyslexia: A new and complete science-based program for reading problems at any level.*
Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group