Supporting Struggling and Dyslexic Readers
Identification and Intervention in Secondary Schools

What I **K**now	What I **W**onder	What I **L**earned

What is Dyslexia?

The International Dyslexia Association defines dyslexia as a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin, characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. The Yale Center for Creativity notes that dyslexia is an unexpected difficulty in reading in an individual who has the intelligence to be a much better reader.

Signs of Dyslexia in Secondary Students	
Strengths	• A high level of understanding of text that is read aloud • Talent for high-level conceptualization and original insights • Strong in areas not dependent on reading, such as math, use of computers, and visual arts
General Difficulties	• Has to study more than peers • Has low self-esteem or anxiety • Has trouble finishing tests on time; tests do not fully reflect knowledge
Reading, Writing & Spelling Difficulties	• Reading requires great effort and is at a slow pace • Avoids reading aloud • Has poor spelling and/or handwriting • Avoids writing; compositions are brief and simplistic • Word processed compositions can be disorganized and lack cohesion
Speaking Difficulties	• Pauses or hesitates when speaking, using words like *um* and *like* repeatedly • Uses imprecise language; for example, *stuff* or *things* • Needs extra time to respond to questions • Oral language abilities much higher than writing skills • Spoken vocabulary is smaller than listening vocabulary • Has difficulty remembering names of people and places; confuses names that sound alike

Key Takeaways From This Session

Strategies That Help All Struggling Readers	
Decoding	• Explicit instruction in phoneme-level and syllable-level phonics • Explicit instruction in morphology (the study of word form) • Identify content-area vocabulary that may be difficult for students and introduce these words before reading • When introducing new vocabulary, break each word into syllables and write the word one syllable at a time while saying each out loud • Point out the similarities and differences of words that belong to the same word family • Model using new or difficult words in different contexts • Encourage students to identify and ask for help with words they find difficult
Fluency	• Repeated oral reading with feedback • Paired reading (students take turns reading to each other) • Choral reading (class reads out loud together) prior to solo re-reading • Silent reading while listening to an oral reader or audiobook • Read text once using oral reader or audiobook before solo reading

Comprehension	• Explicitly teach new and/or unusual vocabulary and morphology
	• Activate prior knowledge related to text before students read
	• Discuss important points of text before students read
	• Use graphic organizers (e.g. KWL chart, story plot diagram) for organizing knowledge about text
	• Teach students to metacognitively monitor understanding and identify breakdowns in understanding by:
	    o visualizing what they read
	    o summarizing after each paragraph
	    o noting words or concepts they don't understand
	    o rereading as needed

Key Accessibility Tools for Students With Dyslexia		
Reading	**Writing and Editing**	**eTexts and Audiotexts**
Microsoft Word 2016 • Speak command • Learning Tools for desktop • Learning Tools online **Web Browsers** • Read Aloud • Reading View • Read&Write • Grammarly • Spreed	**Microsoft Word 2016** • Grammarly • Dictate • Researcher • Lucidchart **Web Browsers** • VoiceIn • Grammarly • Read&Write	• Bookshare.org • Lit2Go • Project Gutenberg • Learning Ally • Librivox • Open Library • ReadWorks • Newsela • Epic! • CAST Book Builder

For a complete list of resources, including intervention programs, assessment tools, and organizations that can provide training, visit **www.sreb.org/dyslexia** and click on *Resources*.

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