



**NEVADA**  
Department of  
Education



TOPIC: **DYSLEXIA**

## 6-12 READERS

# Instructional Supports for Students with or At-Risk for Dyslexia



The hallmark characteristic of dyslexia is difficulty reading and spelling words, and this is true regardless of the student's age. However, word reading difficulties may not be as apparent among older students. In middle and secondary grades, difficulties are likely to persist in reading text fluently, reading unfamiliar words, and decoding words that are longer and more complex.

### Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension difficulties are highly likely among older students with dyslexia. However, this does not mean that their difficulties are due to poor comprehension skills. Reading comprehension is significantly impaired if words are not read accurately or if text is not read fluently, therefore, the core difficulties of dyslexia are reasons for problems understanding and learning from text.

### Oral Language Skills

Some students with dyslexia will have very strong oral language skills (i.e., rich vocabulary knowledge) and extensive background knowledge. Other students with dyslexia may not. Because reading is one of the ways that children acquire new vocabulary and knowledge, older students with dyslexia may demonstrate below-average vocabulary or background knowledge because they've missed considerable reading experience in the preceding years. Deficits in these areas will pose additional challenges to reading comprehension.

## Recommendations

- Word reading instruction should focus on support for reading **longer and more complex words**.
  - Teach students strategies for attacking multisyllabic words by breaking them into smaller parts.
  - Teach students to identify syllables, affixes, and roots
  - Include morpheme instruction, in which students are taught to read common morphemes and their meanings, which supports multisyllabic word reading and vocabulary knowledge.
- Instruction should build upon students' **vocabulary** across content areas and relevant background knowledge.
- Teach **reading comprehension skills**, such as inference-making, and comprehension strategies such as main idea identification, text summarization, and text structure identification.
- Opportunities to **practice reading** are essential. Older readers are more likely to benefit from independent reading as long as you are sure that their word-reading accuracy is close to 100% (i.e., they make about two or less word-reading errors for every 50 words).
- Students should also be provided supported opportunities to read "**stretch**" texts that are slightly more challenging than their current level. A teacher or skilled reader should be present to help preview the text, provide feedback (affirmative and corrective) for word reading, and provide support to help them integrate new knowledge or comprehension strategies.
- Integrate **writing instruction** within reading instruction. Reading and writing skills have an interactive relationship and growth in one supports growth in the other.

### Nevada Department of Education

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