Key Observable Behaviours Indicating Dyslexia

Significant difficulty integrating the cueing systems for reading and writing including:

1. Difficulties in phonological processing - blending, segmenting and manipulating sounds and syllables - and pronouncing words accurately;
2. difficulties with sound/symbol matching and sequencing;
3. difficulties in decoding not related to lack of focus nor practice;
4. extreme delay and confusion in learning sight words, especially those that are visually similar;
5. limited sight word knowledge and lack of transfer of sight words to real reading tasks; and
6. considerable difference between listening comprehension and reading comprehension.

Compromised written communication including:

1. strong ideation, but poor written production and reluctance or hesitancy to write;
2. spelling difficulties despite developmentally appropriate instruction including difficulties with sound/symbol matching and sequencing;
3. difficulties with letter formation and grapho-motor organization at the word and page level; and
4. difficulties with the conventions of oral and written communication.

We recognize that true dyslexia is a significant reading and writing difficulty, but with appropriate assessment, programming and instruction tailored to the individual’s needs, students with dyslexia become successful literacy learners.
READING

1. Difficulties in phonological processing: blending, segmenting, manipulating sounds and syllables, and pronouncing words accurately (manipulation of sounds)

ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND PROCESSES

A. INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

- Medical history (ear infections, Speech and Language Assessments, hearing)
- Marie Clay's *Hearing Sounds in Words*
- *Profile of Phonological Awareness* – Saskatchewan Document – page 109

B. FORMAL ASSESSMENT – Please refer to examiner’s manual for necessary training and education background

- *Test of Auditory Processing (TAPS-III)* areas of discrimination, blending and elision
- Hearing screening for acuity/CAP screening
- *CTOPP (2nd edition)* – rapid naming of digits/letters, memory, phonological awareness
- *Test of Phonological Awareness (2nd edition)* Grades K – 4
- *The Phonological Awareness and Reading Profile – Intermediate*: Grades 3 - 9
- *PAST-R (K-1)*
- *Woodcock Reading Mastery* – subtests for phonological processing – K-2
- *Woodcock Johnson III* – phonological processes, blending words, generating rhyme
- *WIAT*

Recommendations and Strategies

- Earobics
- Florida Reading Research Center website – games
• Word study (Words their Way, Tyner, Gentry, Ganske)
• Explicit multi-modal instruction in rhyming
• Sequenced Instruction – Hoyt and Tyner (further information in appendix)
• Elkonin Boxes-Block-a-sound
• Whisper phone, Tube-a-loo
• Word ladders – sounds in many positions

2. **Difficulties with sound-symbol matching and sequencing – grapho-phonetic relationships**

**ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND PROCESSES**

A. INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

• Fountas and Pinnell Screening (Benchmark Kit)
• Analysis of spelling from a) Words Their Way or DSA Word Journeys
• ERSI (Dictation of Words from Tyner) – Kindergarten - Grade 1
• Intervention Reader (Tyner) – Grades 3 - 8
• Writing of the alphabet (lower case, upper case, (no erase, use brackets)
• Dictation of random phonemes (DLC Rapid Write)
• Marie Clay (Hearing Sounds in Words) – Observation survey
• Non-word repetition (Reading)
• Orthographic assessment – authentic writing samples
• Names Test
• Diagnostic use of Elkonin Boxes
• Saskatchewan Document – pages 109 – 115 (further information in appendix)

B. FORMAL ASSESSMENT – Please refer to examiner’s manual for necessary training and education background
CTOPP- Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing

Test of Phonological Awareness

TAPS 2 - subtest 3 – Test of Auditory Processing Skills

PAST-R

RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES

• Elkonin Sound Boxes /block-a-sound with letters
• Primary and Intermediate Phonological Awareness Kits
• Making words/Making and breaking words
• Earobics-moving to letters
• Tyner and Fountas and Pinnell activities for grapho-phonetic relationships
• Words Their Way
• Word Journeys

• Megan Milani strategies – chanting alphabet, blends and digraphs (see appendix)
• Polysyllabic word study –Cunningham and DLC (see appendix)
• Repeated reading – singing, Big books, stories, poems, rhythm, smart board, Rhyme Magic (Sharon Zinke)
• Word families – word walls
• Glass Analysis (further information in appendix)
• Decodable text for an initial but limited period of time
• VAKT
• Gentry hand spelling
• Hands on letter manipulation or production
• Songs, stories, characters for letter recognition, sound awareness, handwriting.
3. Difficulties in decoding beyond and not related to lack of focus or practice/difficulties with working memory

ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND PROCESSES

A. INFORMAL ASSESSMENT
   - Observations: of body behaviour, anxiety, stress, fatigue, maintaining topic, tracking print, consistent use of strategies
   - Interviews with parent(s), teacher(s), student
   - Cum file review- academic case history
   - Response to diagnostic teaching
   - Time on task analysis in classroom

B. FORMAL ASSESSMENT - Please refer to examiner's manual for necessary training and education background
   - Woodcock Johnson III subtests (4)

RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Self – regulation (i.e. fidget toys, etc.)
- High interest and short texts
- Self-reflection logs- What was easy/hard? What did I learn? What would I do differently?
- Set goals – manageable targets
- Chunk work periods, tasks
- Repeated reading, Readers Theatre, Audio Books, Playaways - adjusting speed
- Interest inventories
- Specific explicit strategy instruction
- Predictable routines
4. Extreme delay and confusion in learning sight words, especially those that are visually similar

ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND PROCESSES

A. INFORMAL ASSESSMENTS

• Graded Word Lists: IRI Word Lists, Slosson,
• High Frequency Words Lists: Fry, Dolch, Fountas and Pinnell, Tyner
• Running records –VSM
• Fluency /automaticity of basic sight words
• Vision assessments

B. FORMAL ASSESSMENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES

• Compare and contrast visually similar words-What is the same? What is different?
• Teach in multi-sensory modes (never sound out sight words as sight words are visual. Don’t confuse with regular pattern words).
• Games: Sight word Bingo, Go-Fish,
• IPAD with various apps, Kindle, e-readers
• Letter manipulations- compare sequence of letters
• Sight word Quick Write
• Practice reading sight word wall in class (further information in appendix)
• Sight words in desk for writing-reading (further information in appendix)
• Milani resources (further information in appendix)
• Exploring fonts – Open Dyslexia Font (further information in appendix)
• Increase verbal rehearsal
• Mrs. Perkin's website (see appendix)
• Repeated readings
• Repeated writing of known sight words
• Prior to bedtime practice
• Student interview – looking for metacognitive awareness
5. Limited sight word (or high frequency word) knowledge and lack of transfer of sight words to reading tasks

ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND PROCESSES

A. INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

- High frequency word lists (Fry, Fountas and Pinnell, Tyner)
- Authentic reading tasks
- IRI sight word assessment/transfer into passages
- Observations of reading sight words in isolation and the same words in connected text
- Observation of rate and accuracy

B. FORMAL ASSESSMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Use the Fernald method - focus on letter names  (further information in appendix)
- Use of multiple modalities
- Use a variety of strategies for memory (visualizing, create mnemonics, tactile cues, pictures, actions, rebus,)
- Use lists of sight words and activities (Mrs. Perkin’s website)(further information in appendix)
- Use high frequency sight words and sight word phrases on power point slides to increase automaticity
- Connect sight word vocabulary to authentic text using physical cues - Megan Milani’s strategies (further information in appendix)
- Use of decodable texts with lots of high frequency words (Reading A-Z)
- Repeated reading of sight words and of independent level short passages (further information in appendix)
- Use reinforcement and self-awareness of increasing competence (graphs and charts, etc.)
6. Considerable difference between listening comprehension and reading

ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND PROCESSES

A. INFORMAL ASSESSMENT (completed interactively with the student)
   - Informal Reading Inventory – narrative/expository
   - Interactive strategies to discover tracking difficulties (use of a moveable line guide)
   - Oral retelling – prompted and unprompted – use taping to assess student expressive language and explanation abilities
   - Oral cloze
   - Classroom teacher interview
   - Student interview – his/her observations about the comprehension process

B. FORMAL ASSESSMENT – Please refer to examiner’s manual for necessary training and education background
   - Test of Auditory Perceptual Skills (TAPS-3/subtests for auditory comprehension-final 2 subtests)
   - Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and Expressive Vocabulary Test (EVT) to assess receptive and expressive vocabulary
   - Woodcock-Johnson Achievement – selected subtests

RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Pre-teaching and linking background knowledge and written vocabulary
- Repeated readings for comprehension – (3 times: for accuracy, for fluency, for understanding)
- Chunking reading – breaking down the amount, working in small segments
- Annotating the text (talking to the text, leaving margin notes, creating a mind map, using sticky notes to track events, creating vocab definitions, using acetates to monitor thinking)
- Teacher modeling “Think aloud”/ Think-aloud on tape?
• Informal tools and templates (graphic organizers, story grammars, Building GIST, summarizing text)
• Teach strategies for visualizing (further information in appendix)
• Self-monitoring strategies

COMPENSATORY STRATEGIES
• Books on tape
• Peer readers
• Visual dictionaries
• Video clips
1. STRONG IDEATION, BUT POOR WRITTEN PRODUCTION AND RELUCTANCE OR HESITATION TO WRITE

ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND PROCESSES

A. INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

- Interviews: Teacher Interview
  Student Interview (survey, motivation)
- Analysis of Writing Samples: Classroom based
  Assessment based (with Reading Clinician)
  Rubrics – Frey, Bonnie Campbell-Hill, 6+1 Traits
- Analysis of Pre-writing Activities: Prewriting web – mapping
- Diagnostic Teaching: writing prompts, sentence frames, mentor texts. Observe for memory and confidence.

B. FORMAL ASSESSMENT - Please refer to examiner’s manual for necessary training and education background

- Marie Clay's Observation Survey: Hearing Sounds in Words
  Writing Vocabulary
- WJ-111 Achievement: Sentence Fluency
  Writing Samples
- Beery Test of Visual Motor Integration

RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES

A. Writing Process:

Pre-writing: Graphic Organizer
  Story map
  Post-it notes
  Teach/student 1-1 peer conference
  Conversation

Composing: Writing model, mentor texts

  Cloze

  Sentence frames/lists

  Writing frames

  Processes for using key words/ transition words

  Tools such as high frequency word lists, personal word wall/dictionary
Shared writing: language experience technique moving to “share the pen”

When a student is ready to move beyond beginning writing, Gallagher Technique (questioning the student’s text) may be appropriate.

B. Technology Based Supports: iPad

- Word Processing
- Dragon Dictation
- Co-Writer
- Inspiration (mapping tool)
- On-line book creation

Apps – Poppet, Dragon Dictation
- Siri – voice to text program plus speak
- Franklin Spelling (electronic dictionary which accepts phonetic spellings)

C. Accommodations/Adaptations: choice of paper (lines, size, colour, post-it notes)

- Offer a variety of writing tools (markers, pencil grip, pencil, pen)
- Use tactile feedback: rice, sand, plasticine, erasable white board crayons, raised letters, cut-out sponge letters, various pencil leads, grease pencils etc
- Consider use of slant boards
- Test formats
- Scribing
- Less output

2. Spelling difficulties despite developmentally appropriate Instruction and including difficulties with sound/symbol matching and sequencing

ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND PROCESSES

A. INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

- Diagnostic Spelling Assessment – Ganske
B. FORMAL ASSESSMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Effective use of spell check strategies
- VAKT (multi-modal)
- Word sorting
- Look, Say, Check
- Visualization
- Mini word wall for spelling reference
- Cue cards
- Overlearning—intensive practice
- Direct teaching of patterns
- Co-Writer/Write Outloud
- Spellingcity.com
- Manipulatives (letter tiles, sand boxes, rice, trays,)
- Songs, rhymes for rules, chants, Morning Message
- Tyner activities – making words and word scrambles
- Collaborative Writing/shared and Interactive writing
- Picture cues for letters sounds
- Elkonin Boxes
- Bingo Chip Spelling and finger spelling
• Picture and Letter sorts/sound sorts
• Morphology: syllabication, word origins, prefixes, suffixes, roots


ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND PROCESSES

A. INFORMAL ASSESSMENTS

  Writing samples in testing situation and from the classroom
  Diagnostic Spelling Assessment – Ganske as a part of active observation
  Early Reading Screening Instrument – Tyner
  Observations of grip, formation, handedness, speed, and motor memory

B. FORMAL ASSESSMENT - Please refer to examiner’s manual for necessary training and education background

  Beery Test of Visual Motor Integration

RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES

• Practicing formation in sand, hair-gel in zip-lock bag, plasticine, Lego, Scrabble tiles, foam letters, beading, paintbrush & water on chalkboard, VAKT – use glue, rice
• Use a variety of writing tools: Pencil grippers, pen sizes, mini marker, stylus.
• Use strengthening tools: springed chopsticks, tweezers, etc.
• Use tools to help with spacing
• Adjust body and paper position, consider slant boards, midline cues
• Use printing and handwriting programs: Fountas & Pinnell verbal pathways, Handwriting Without Tears/ Apps on iPad, Draw Board, Loops and Groups (cursive)
• Use various papers: lined, raised lined, shaded lined, graph
• Dots in margin
• Keyboarding
  • “Dragon Dictation”

4. Difficulties with the conventions of written communication

ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND PROCESSES

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

• Observation of writing samples from classroom
- Engage in diagnostic writing process, analysis and conferencing with the student in 1-1 setting.
- Descriptors for writing analysis including sentence structure, paragraph structure, and grammar may be found in writing continua: (Winnipeg School Division, Bonnie Campbell-Hill, Fountas and Pinnell, 6 + 1 traits, rubrics, checklists and exemplars).
- For adolescent writing:
  Analysis criteria may be found in *Analytic Writing Analysis Tool* - Nancy Frey and Doug Fisher. (further information in appendix)
- Analysis of student’s oral language: vocabulary, sentence grammar, sequencing of ideas, retrieval
- Developmental Spelling analysis: (Words Their Way, Ganske, Gentry)

**RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES**

**A. Sentence Structure:**
- Auditory feedback: rereading written work aloud, whisper phone, audacity (computer)
- Reread after time separation
- Multi-modal supports for “stuck” writers: colour code parts of speech or parts of sentence, reorganizing a cut up sentence, unpacking a stimulus question to formulate the stem of a complete sentence, DLC Question Strip (Who, what Where, When, Why), question and answer relationships.
- Key Word List
- Story Impressions (BLM curr.)
- Quick Writes/Power Writes

**B. Paragraph Structure and Longer Writing**
- Graphic organizers [www.graphicorganizers.org](http://www.graphicorganizers.org)
- Story Impressions
- 6 Traits: structure/organization/word choice
- Sentence Combining at a basic level
- Reading and analyzing non-fiction text
- Use mentor texts as models (create awareness of speech vs writing styles with cultural sensitivity) Kelly Gallagher
- Signal words for each text structure, transition words
- Text structure –Dillabough (further information in appendix)
- Colour-coded paragraph - DLC

**B. Mechanics:** Mnemonic Strategies for editing:
- C.O.P.S. (Capitalization, Organization, Punctuation, Sense)
- M.C.P.S.N. (Meaning, Capitalization, Punctuation, Spelling, Neatness)
- Triple Take (Meaning, Punctuation, Spelling)
Modeling correct grammatical forms in 1-1 setting
Daily edits based on student writing
Creating a personal spelling dictionary

C. Resources
Sentence combining – William Strong
Research strategy – reading and analyzing non-fiction text – Tony Stead
Writing style – Kelly Gallagher
Text structure – D. Dillabough/ Doug Buehl
Nancy Atwell binder
www.readwritethink.org
Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High School - Steve Graham and Dolores Perin
http://carnegie.org/fileadmin/Media/Publications/PDF/writingnext.pdf

FURTHER RESOURCES and REFERENCES

Dillabough, Diane (2008). Teaching Text Structures: Teaching Patterns in Reading and Writing.

Nancy Frey & Doug Fisher. Analytic Writing Analysis Tool

Steve Graham and Dolores Perin. Writing Next: Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high school
(http://carnegie.org/fileadmin/Media/Publications/PDF/writingnext.pdf)


GLASS ANALYSIS – www.getthinkingworks.com/glassDetails.html


Linda Hoyt – Excellence in Literacy Instruction – Tips and Tools
(www.lindahoyt.com/tips.html)

Open Dyslexic Font – (free download) -  www.dafont.com/open-dyslexic.font

www.mrsperkins.com


Buehl, Doug – Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning (2013) and Developing Readings in the Academic Disciplines (2011).