



A Parent's Guide to Supporting a Child with Dyslexia at Home

For the purpose of this document, the term Dyslexia refers to all children with a formal diagnosis of the condition or those that have been identified as having 'Dyslexic tendencies' by the school.

Tips to help you and your child cope with the work set for home learning:

- Lighten the load by managing your and your child's expectations- remember that some tasks will be easier than others
- Just do one small part of the task at a time. If working memory is a problem for your child, being given 5 instructions to complete the task in one go might be too much. You could write the sequence of instructions down and cross them off as each is completed.
- Dyslexic children can find place keeping (the ability to copy text) very difficult, so if this type of task is set, perhaps just do a small section. For example, if a copying task has been set for handwriting practice and it's 5 paragraphs long, just do the first 2 paragraphs. Use a couple of blank pieces of paper to cover the preceding and subsequent lines of text to create a 'post box' where your child can only see the single line of text they are copying. It might also help for you to dictate a word or two at a time for your child to write.
- Remember what the learning intention is- if the task is handwriting then focus on that skill and do not worry too much about spelling. If the task is a creative writing activity, do not worry too much about handwriting etc. At school, your child would be gently reminded about all aspects they have previously learned, but at home it is important to minimize stress for everyone by just focusing on the most important part of the task.
- Use a times table square to support with Maths. Lots of Dyslexic children really struggle to retain times tables facts, so relieve that burden by providing this resource. Just Google these for lots of resources.
- If reading aloud, or even internally is causing stress, provide support for this. Even if the activity is reading comprehension, you could read the text in small chunks to your child discussing new vocabulary as you go and then ask your child to have a go once they have been familiarized with the text. If the task for History is reading heavy but the actual task is designing a poster, read to your child and just ask them to pick out key words you know they know when reading. That way you are sharing the experience of reading an unfamiliar text, without the pressure of your child reading a text that may be full of new language.
- Alternatively, use the 'Immersive Reader' tool on Teams that will read the documents aloud
- Use a laptop to practise typing skills if you have one available. Your child might be keener to 'write' on a laptop sometimes.
- If you have a printer, print worksheets out instead of accessing them on the screen.
- Praise your child for their efforts continuously
- If the task is to write a story or another type of extended writing over the course of the week, that may seem like a mountain to climb for your child. Draw mind maps to help your child with their ideas. You could then cut these up and physically sequence the ideas before any writing occurs. If you have access to a recording device with either video or video and audio you could record your child speaking one sentence at a time. These could then be written up using the recording to prompt sentence writing. Sometimes, you could be your child's scribe.
- If your child's teacher is happy for them to sometimes present their work verbally, a piece of writing could be recorded in small sections (so it can be remembered) and shared
- Listening to audio books will aid your child's vocabulary and comprehension skills. If you are able to source them, listen to assigned books in audio form, reading along in the hard copy.

- Expect tasks to take longer than you expect due to the need for repetition. Some days, you may not get all the tasks done.
- Make flashcards to help learn new vocabulary. For example, if your child's topic is on the Romans, make some cards using words you are most likely to come across in a task and talk about them with your child. Each time you do a lesson linked to that topic, revise them before you begin.
- Use highlighter pens (or equivalent) to pick out key points in a text or for written maths questions to aid understanding
- If possible, work in a quiet room without lots of distractions
- Work for short periods, then have a 10 minute break and return to the task
- Don't be afraid to do something more than once. If for example, the Maths task is practising column addition with numbers that don't bridge 10 eg $23 + 13$ and your child has struggled with that, practise it again the next day. This might mean that the class move on to bridging 10 eg $23 + 18$ but your child needs an extra session to practise the first skill, before moving on. Put a note on the work you submit to your child's teacher so they are aware.

I hope you find some of these ideas useful to support your child at home. Please contact me on Wednesdays or Thursdays if there is anything I can specifically support you with.

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