

# DYSLEXIA OVERVIEW & EVALUATION TIPS

## When to assess for dyslexia?

Referral concerns include difficulties with one or more of the following: phonemic awareness, sounding out words/decoding, sight word recognition, spelling, reading fluency, and accuracy. Letter reversals are developmentally appropriate unless they persist past 2nd grade (if the student has had more exposure to text, then reversals may subside in 1st grade) (Brooks, 2011).

Young children under the age of 7 may have dyslexia, though it may not be apparent yet. Screening of rapid automatic naming and phonemic awareness may help to identify children at risk so early intervention can take place.

# WHAT ARE THE DYSLEXIA SUBTYPES?

(Feifer & Nader, 2015)

## 1 **Dysphonetic/Deep subtype**

- Problems applying phonological rules due to a deficit in phonological processing; this subtype is often reflected by weaknesses in basic reading skills, especially pseudowords/nonword reading.
- Observations: student will typically guess words based on the initial letter rather than attempt to sound out, replace words with visually similar words, read quickly but make many errors in accuracy.

## 2 **Dyseidetic/Surface subtype**

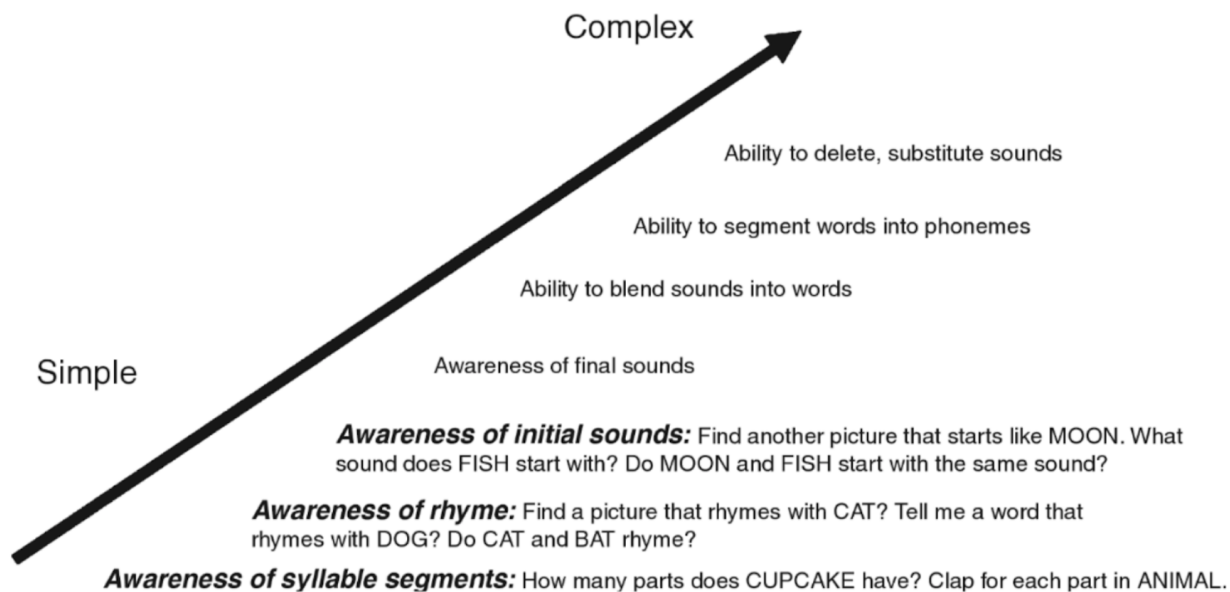
- Problems with the rapid and automatic recognition of words in print. This subtype demonstrates processing deficits in either rapid automatic naming, orthographic processing, and/or morphological awareness (word roots). Academically, surface dyslexia manifests in slow reading fluency, low sight word vocabulary, difficulties reading irregular words, and spelling errors.
- Observations: student laboriously sounds out words, letter by letter, sound by sound; makes multiple errors on phonologically irregular words; tends to spell phonetically; makes letter reversal errors past a developmentally appropriate age.

## 3 **Mixed subtype**

- Most severe form of dyslexia. Multiple reading deficits characterized by impaired phonological and orthographic processing. Problems are usually reflected in poor basic reading skills, poor reading fluency, and unusual spelling errors. Secondary reading comprehension challenges may also be present.
- Observations: Student exhibits a mix of both visual and phonological errors in reading, exhibits bizarre spelling errors that are not phonetically readable or visually recognizable.

## WHAT IS THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION OF PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS?

Phonological awareness skills are typically learned in the same general sequential order. However, children do not necessarily have to master a previous skill before working on a new one. The following visual outlines the general trajectory of phonological awareness development.



**Figure 6–1.** Development of phonological awareness (*Note:* The skills in bold are those typically targeted in preschool instruction).

(Schuele, Skibbe, & Rao, 2007)

## What areas are important to assess as part of a dyslexia evaluation? Tools to use?

[illegible]

Always, always, always be sure to listen to the student read connected text aloud for a dyslexia evaluation.

**The BEST tool is YOUR diagnostic ear!** If we don't do our own academic assessment, we can use the teacher's data and confer with them (Feifer, 2015).

*Note that the following section does not provide an exhaustive list of all evaluation instruments that can be utilized, although we provide some of the most commonly used instruments. Use your professional judgment and knowledge of updated (and outdated) instruments when determining your assessment battery. In addition, refer to your state statutes and local school district policies for guidance on required and expected assessment tools relevant to your specific location.*

## Phonemic/Phonological Awareness

aimswebPlus: Initial Sounds (K-1st only)

aimswebPlus: Phoneme Segmentation (K-1st only)

\*Batería IV: Procesamiento fonético

CTOPP-2: Phonological Awareness Composite, Alternate Phonological Awareness Composite

\*DIBELS 8th Edition: Phonemic Segmentation Fluency (CBM) (K-1st only)

FAR: Phonemic Awareness, Positioning Sounds

\*IDEL 7th Edition: Fluidez en la Segmentación de Fonemas (K-1st only)

KTEA-3: Phonological Processing

TAPS-4: Phonological Processing Composite

WIAT-4: Phonemic Proficiency

WJ-IV Cog: Phonological Processing

WJ-IV OL: Phonetic Coding Composite

## Rapid Naming

aimswebPlus: Letter Naming Fluency (K-1st only)

\*Batería IV: Rapidez en la identificación de dibujos

\*DIBELS 8th Edition: Letter Naming Fluency (K-1st only)

CTOPP-2: Rapid Symbolic Naming Composite

DAS-II NU: Rapid Naming

DIBELS 8th Edition: Letter Naming Fluency

\*IDEL 7th Edition: Fluidez en Nombrar Letras (K-1st only)

FAR: Rapid Automatic Naming

FAM: Rapid Number Naming

KTEA-3: Object Naming Fluency

WISC-V: Naming Speed Index

WJ-IV OL: Rapid Picture Naming

## Phonological Memory

CTOPP-2: Phonological Memory Composite  
 KABC-II NU: Sequential Composite  
 TAPS-4: Auditory Memory Composite  
 WISC-V: Auditory Working Memory Composite  
 WJ-IV Cog: Auditory Memory Span Composite  
 WJ-IV Cog: Short-Term Working Memory Composite  
 WJ-IV OL: Sentence Repetition, Understanding Directions  
 WRAML3: Verbal Working Memory

## Long-Term Recall

ChAMP: Instructions subtests, Lists subtests  
 FAR: Verbal Fluency, Word Recall  
 KABC-II NU: Learning Composite  
 KABC-II NU: Delayed Recall Composite  
 KTEA-3: Associational Fluency  
 WISC-V: Symbol Translation subtests  
 WJ-IV Cog: Visual-Auditory Learning  
 WJ-IV OL: Retrieval Fluency  
 WRAML3: Story Memory subtests, Verbal Learning subtests

## Orthographic Skills

DAS-II: Matching Letter-Like Forms subtest  
 DTLA-5: Nonverbal Memory Composite  
 FAR: Orthographic Processing  
 FAR: Visual Perception  
 FAW: Dyslexia Index  
 KTEA-3: Orthographic Processing composite (Word Recognition Fluency, Spelling, Letter Naming Facility)  
 TOC-2: Orthographic Ability Index, Spelling, Accuracy Index, Spelling Speed Index  
 WIAT-4: Orthographic Processing (Orthographic Fluency, Spelling); Orthographic Processing Extended (Orthographic Fluency, Spelling Orthographic Choice)  
 WJ-IV Ach: Spelling  
 WJ-IV Ach: Spelling of Sounds  
 WJ-IV Cog: Letter-Pattern Matching

## Basic Reading

*\*Ideal to obtain a measure of both word identification & nonsense word reading*  
 aimswebPlus: Letter Word Sounds Fluency (K-1st only)  
 FAR: Nonsense Word Decoding  
 KTEA-3: Decoding Composite

WIAT-4: Basic Reading & Decoding Composites

WJ-IV Ach: Basic Reading Composite

WMLS III: Letter-Word Identification

TERA-4: General Reading Index

## Reading Fluency

*\*Ideal to obtain a measure of fluency word reading/decoding in isolation and within context*

aimswebPlus: Word Reading Fluency (K-1st only)

aimswebPlus: Nonsense Word Fluency (K-1st only)

aimswebPlus: Oral Reading Fluency (Grades 2-3)

aimswebPlus: Silent Reading Fluency (Grades 4-12)

*\*Batería IV: Reading Fluency Cluster*

DIBELS 8th Edition: Nonsense Word Fluency, Word Reading Fluency, Oral Reading Fluency

FAR: Irregular Word Reading Fluency, Isolated Word Reading Fluency, Oral Reading Fluency

GORT-5: Rate & Accuracy Combined

*\*IDEL 7th Edition: Fluidez en la Lectura Oral, Fluidez en las Palabras sin Sentido, Fluidez en el Uso de las Palabras*

KTEA-3: Reading Fluency Composite

WIAT-4: Reading Fluency Composite (Oral Reading Fluency, Orthographic Fluency, Decoding Fluency)

WJ-IV Ach: Reading Fluency Composite

WJ-IV Ach: Reading Rate Composite

## REFERENCES

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