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Dyslexia is a learning difference (not a reflection of intelligence) that primarily affects reading, spelling, and related language skills.

It is considered a **specific learning disorder** with neurobiological origins: the brain processes written and/or spoken language differently.

Common Signs & Symptoms of Dyslexia

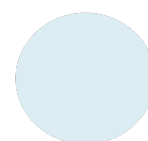
These can vary by age and severity. Not all signs are present in every person.

Area	Common Signs / Symptoms
Reading	Slow, effortful reading; frequent errors (skipping words, misreading)
Decoding / Phonics	Difficulty “sounding out” unfamiliar words; mixing up phonemes (e.g. “b” / “d”)
Spelling / Writing	Inconsistent spelling, omission or transposition of letters, difficulty with writing fluency
Working Memory / Processing	Difficulty remembering instructions, trouble recalling phonemes, slow processing of letters or sounds
Language Skills	Trouble with rhymes, phonemic awareness, naming letters or objects quickly
Other	Avoidance of reading, lower confidence in academic tasks, fatigue when reading, trouble learning foreign languages

In younger children, early warning signs might include delayed speech, trouble learning nursery rhymes, difficulty recognizing letters and sounds.

Tips & Strategies for Supporting Someone With Dyslexia

These strategies can help in school, work, and everyday life.



For Learners / Students

1. **Use multisensory instruction**

Combine visual, auditory, and tactile methods (e.g. tracing letters while saying sounds).

2. **Assistive technologies**

- Text-to-speech software
- Speech-to-text / dictation tools
- Audiobooks / recorded lectures
- Reading pens or scanning devices

3. **Explicit phonics instruction**

Systematic, structured teaching of phoneme–grapheme relationships.

4. **Chunking & scaffolding**

Break reading or writing tasks into smaller steps or segments.

5. **Allow extra time / accommodations**

Extended time on tests, alternate formats (oral responses, multiple-choice), reduced copying.

6. **Encouragement and confidence building**

Emphasize strengths, provide positive feedback, build self-efficacy.

7. **Previewing & supporting vocabulary**

Pre-teach new words before reading, use graphic organizers.

8. **Frequent review & repetition**

Use spaced repetition and regular review of previously learned items.

For Educators / Parents

- Collaborate with teachers and support staff to adapt instruction and assessments.
- Request Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or accommodations in school.
- Provide structured routines and supportive scaffolding.
- Monitor progress, celebrate incremental gains, and adjust supports as needed.
- Reduce frustration by matching reading materials to appropriate levels (but still providing challenge). Librarians can help!! (ask in your neighborhood's library for assistance)

Assessing Dyslexia: Psychoeducational Testing. What Is Psychoeducational / Psychological Testing?

A **psychoeducational assessment** (or educational/psychological assessment) is a formal evaluation to understand a person's cognitive, academic, and processing strengths and weaknesses.

It typically includes:

- Cognitive / IQ tests
- Academic achievement tests (reading, writing, math)
- Phonological / language processing tests
- Memory, processing speed, and executive function measures
- Attention screening
- Observations, interviews, teacher/parent questionnaires

The result is a report with diagnostic conclusions (if any) and recommendations/accommodations.

Through School	Private Assessment
Usually free or low-cost; covered by public education system	Higher cost, More flexible scheduling; may provide deeper, more individualized assessment
Older than 7yo and/or grade 3	More choice of psychologist / test battery
May have waitlists or limitations on tests used	You can request the report be shared with the school for accommodations
The report is readily integrated into school supports	The report can be shared to obtain school supports

Often, parents begin with the school-based route; if that is slow or not sufficiently detailed, private testing is an alternative.

Resources & Recommended Reading

- **Overcoming Dyslexia** by Sally Shaywitz — a comprehensive guide on understanding and supporting dyslexia.
- **International Dyslexia Association** — <https://dyslexiaida.org>
- **Understood.org** — <https://www.understood.org>
- **Canadian Dyslexia Association** — <https://dyslexiacanada.org/>
- **Learning Disabilities Association of Canada** — <https://www.ldac-acta.ca>

These resources offer fact sheets, strategies, support groups, and further readings.

Local Psychoeducational / Psychological Assessment Services in Red Deer / Central Alberta

Below are a few psychologists or clinics known to provide assessment and related services in Red Deer / nearby. (Always call in advance to confirm availability, costs, and services.)

Provider / Clinic	Address / Location	Phone
Froese Psychological Services (Jared Froese)	104, 232 Spruce Street, Red Deer County, AB T4E 1B4 (Froese Psychological Services)	(403) 343-9216
Greenberg Psychological Services	Suite 200, 536 Laura Ave, Red Deer County (Gasoline Alley) (Greenberg Psychology)	(403) 392-9247
Dr. Peter Wass, Psychologist / Clinical Neuropsychologist	39 Garden Road, Lacombe, AB T4L 1R8 (serves Central Alberta)	(403) 782-3071
Aspire Child Development Centre	4826 47th Street, Red Deer, AB T4N 1R2 (Aspire)	(403) 340-2606
DC Psychological Services	#300, 5440 45 Street, Red Deer, AB T4N 1L1 (DC Psychological Services)	(403) 877-0056
Supporting Wellness (Red Deer branch)	Red Deer (office) (Supporting Wellness)	1-888-622-8350