

Common Characteristics of Dyslexia

The following characteristics are commonly associated with dyslexia at different stages or grade levels; however, students with dyslexia may also exhibit characteristics from earlier or later grades.

Preschool

- History of speech and/or language delays or difficulties
- Difficulty with phonological awareness skills, such as identifying the number of words in a sentence or syllables in a word (after receiving instruction in these skills)
- Trouble learning and naming letters and numbers (after receiving instruction in these skills)

Kindergarten

- Difficulty identifying letters by name
- Difficulty identifying, segmenting, and blending syllables and individual sounds in words
- Difficulty connecting sounds with letters

Grades 1-2

- Difficulty reading words accurately
- Poor reading fluency (e.g., reading is slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)
- Reliance on picture clues, story theme, or guessing at words
- Poor comprehension of the text due to inaccurate and slow reading
- Poor spelling and written expression

Late Elementary

- Continued slow and inaccurate reading
- Difficulty reading multisyllabic words
- Avoidance of reading (particularly for pleasure)
- Inaccurate spelling
- Poor comprehension of text, due to slow and inaccurate reading
- Difficulty learning from text across subjects
- Difficulty completing written assignments

Middle and High School

- Continued slow and inaccurate reading
- Inaccurate spelling
- Reading requires significant time and effort
- Difficulty learning from text across subjects
- Difficulty completing written assignments

Secondary Impacts of Dyslexia

Dyslexia may lead to additional difficulties with the following:

- Stress and anxiety
- Distraction and frustration
- Struggle with organization
- Low self-esteem; inability to see oneself as a reader
- Avoiding tasks that involve reading and writing

