



Dyslexia Program

During the 2020-2021 school year, Fort Smith Public School District used the evidenced-based Lindamood-Bell Seeing Stars and Visualizing and Verbalizing Programs in small group intervention to address the deficit areas of students identified as exhibiting the characteristics of dyslexia.

Number of Students Who Received Dyslexia Intervention

During the 2020-2021 school year, 1,021 students attending the Fort Smith Public School District received dyslexia intervention services from a trained dyslexia interventionist.

Total Number of Students Identified as Exhibiting the Characteristics of Dyslexia

During the 2020-2021 school year, 1,136 students attending the Fort Smith Public School District were identified as exhibiting the characteristics of dyslexia.

Dyslexia refers to a learning disability that affects reading and writing. What dyslexia is, what causes it, and what can be done about it are commonly misunderstood topics. For example, a commonly held belief is that dyslexia results in seeing things reversed. When in fact, dyslexia is not due to a problem with vision, but rather a problem within language.

Although much remains to be learned about dyslexia, remarkable progress has been made in our understanding as a result of decades of research. *Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide, December 2017.* (link listed below)

http://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/public/userfiles/Learning_Services/Dyslexia/DRG-Final-12-13-17-JS1.pdf

Following is information intended to be helpful in understanding dyslexia.

Definition of Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. – Adopted by IDA: November 2002

Characteristics of Dyslexia

Underlying Cause:

- Deficit in the phonological processing (Phonological awareness, phonological memory, and/or rapid naming)

Characteristics:

- Difficulty reading real words in isolation
- Difficulty accurately decoding nonsense or unfamiliar words
- Poor reading fluency (rate, accuracy, labored)
- Poor spelling

Outcomes:

- Difficulty with reading comprehension
- Reduced reading experience that limits vocabulary and background knowledge

Accommodations

Listed below are some accommodations to be considered for a student exhibiting the characteristics of dyslexia. Specific accommodations should be selected based on individual student needs. *(from Arkansas Dyslexia Resource Guide, 2017)*

Reading

- Allow audio books and/or text-to-speech software
- Utilize outlines, summaries
- Preview questions and vocabulary
- Allow shared reading or buddy reading

Writing

- Grade for content rather than spelling
- Allow students to dictate work to an adult
- Substitute alternative projects for written reports
- Utilize speech-to-text software
- Reduce written work
- Minimize copying
- Accept oral responses, reports, and presentations

Testing

- Provide extra time
- Review directions orally
- Read tests orally
- Allow dictated responses

Homework

- Reduce reading and writing requirements
- Limit time spent on homework
- Provide extra time

Instruction

- Break tasks into small steps
- Give directions in small steps
- Give examples and model behavior
- Emphasize daily review
- Provide copies of lecture notes

Classroom

- Post schedules and maintain routines
- Chart assignments on a calendar
- Use color-coding to organize materials and information
- Incorporate multisensory activities
- Coordinate preferential seating
- Avoid requiring student to read aloud in front of a group