

# NEURODIVERSITY

## DYSLEXIA

### WHAT IS NEURODIVERSITY?

Neurodiversity is the idea that differences in brain function should not be labelled as disabilities, but as normal and valid variations of the human population.

### WHAT IS DYSLEXIA?

Dyslexia is a difference in the brain that makes it more difficult for a person to process and manipulate language.

### WHAT DOES DYSLEXIA AFFECT?



#### READING

Dyslexia makes reading difficult as it becomes harder for the brain to **decipher and manipulate phonemes**. That means:

- Mixing up letters.
- Words/spaces become blurred together.
- Hard to recognise short, familiar words and sound out long ones.
- Reading comprehension and speed can become slower compared to others.



#### SPELLING

Letters that sound alike are often hard to distinguish, especially vowel sounds. Spelling is often very hard. Words are usually spelt how they sound e.g. 'friends' as 'frens.'



#### WRITING

Sometimes dyslexia affects writing skills like punctuation and sentence structure as so much effort is spent on spelling that other aspects of writing are put aside.



#### AURAL LANGUAGE

Dyslexia can also make it hard to understand spoken language. That might mean they can't hear the difference between similar words and can't remember spoken instructions well.

### EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT!

Dyslexia exists on a **spectrum**. For some people, it might only be hard to read quickly, while others can't even decipher or spell simple, monosyllabic words.



### WHAT'S THE SCIENCE BEHIND DYSLEXIA?

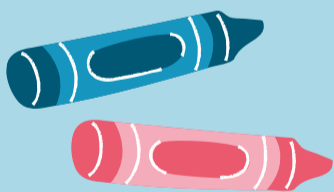
The left side of the brain deals with logic skills like maths but also reading. The right side deals with spatial skills like creativity.

Science shows dyslexic people use the **right side** of their brain more.



When they read it takes a longer time for the information to reach the left side of the brain as it usually travels through the right hemisphere first and can also get delayed in there.

### STATISTICS ABOUT DYSLEXIA IN AUSTRALIA



Most dyslexia is diagnosed at school age, when children are learning to read.



Around 1 in 10 people have dyslexia in Australia but many people go un-diagnosed.



Dyslexia affects all languages and ages but at different rates.

### COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT DYSLEXIA

#### QUESTIONS

Is the main sign of dyslexia is that people see words and/or letters backwards?

Is dyslexia is a disease?

Does dyslexia affect intelligence?

#### FACT

Dyslexia does not cause backwards vision because it doesn't affect sight. Many primary school children without dyslexia reverse letters.

Dyslexia is *not* a disease. It's not recognised as a medical condition either! It's a genetic condition.

There is no link between dyslexia and intelligence. People with dyslexia can have below, above and average IQs.

By the way, it's okay to be wrong about something! Just remember to be open-minded and keep learning!

**Fun fact:** Albert Einstein was dyslexic. Some other famous people who have dyslexia include: Leonardo DaVinci, Walt Disney, John F. Kennedy, John Lennon, Steven Spielberg, Keira Knightley.

## SOURCES

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