

The Reading and Writing Centre

your centre for expert advice and professional learning
in child and adolescent reading and writing disorders

Dyslexia support strategies the evidence-base

What is
dyslexia?

Dyslexia is a word-level reading disability stemming from an impairment in the phonological component of language. It is characterised by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition, decoding and by poor spelling. Dyslexia is not a visual processing deficit. Evidence-based interventions for dyslexia must address the underlying language deficit.

Irlen
syndrome

In 2019 the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO) released a position statement explaining that there is no evidence that Irlen Syndrome exists and that treatments associated with Irlen syndrome such as coloured lenses, have not been proven to be effective in improving reading difficulties.

Synthetic
phonics

Intervention studies demonstrate that high quality synthetic phonics is an effective word-level reading remediation (Kilpatrick 2015). Synthetic phonics is the process of synthesising or blending the sounds and letters to decode words, and the segmenting of sounds and letters to encode words. Students are taught to decode at the phoneme level and attend to all the sounds and letters in a word. Phonemic encoding and decoding are dependent upon the skills of phoneme segmenting, blending and manipulation. Evidence-based interventions incorporate explicit instruction in these skills, and importantly, practice applying these to reading and spelling.

Decodable
readers

One of the key elements in highly effective word-level reading intervention is applying skills and knowledge to reading connected text (National Reading Panel 2000; Kilpatrick 2015). Decodable texts are specifically constructed texts that contain only those elements of the phonetic code that the student has already learned. Decodable texts are important for students with dyslexia as they provide the opportunity to immediately practice their new skills to build automaticity, fluency and confidence (Konza, 2014).

Education
adjustments

Making reasonable adjustments to curriculum delivery and/or assessment in a unit is how diverse learning needs of students can be met. All students are entitled to demonstrate the full extent of their knowledge and skills in response to assessment against relevant aspects of an achievement standard using a preferred mode of communication. Only a small portion of each English achievement standard from Prep–Year 5 demands the demonstration of decoding and encoding, or using knowledge of letter-sound relationships when reading and writing.

The Reading
and Writing
Centre

The Reading and Writing Centre draws on contemporary research and methodologies to provide specialist advice to parents and educators on the prevention, identification and intervention of reading disorders, with a specific focus on dyslexia.

