

## Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a learning difference that involves difficulty with reading. However, its impact on a person's life can be much deeper. Learn how to support students with dyslexia and give them a place to shine at church.

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. - **International Dyslexia Association**

- Symptoms and severity differ from person to person.
- In addition to reading difficulty, some people also have challenges with working memory, word retrieval and processing new information quickly.
- ADHD, Dysgraphia (writing), or Dyscalculia (math) are also commonly present.
- Dyslexia does NOT affect intelligence. Most have average to above average IQ.

### Ways to Support Students with Dyslexia at Church

#### 1. Do Not Put Students on the Spot

- Being pressured to read out loud can feel traumatizing. Please only call on students who volunteer.
- If going around the room, where every student is expected to take a turn reading, please announce beforehand that those who do not want to read out loud can say, "Pass."
- Because some students may also need more time to process things, if a student is not paying attention, please do not put them on the spot by asking them a question about the lesson. Instead find a different way to get them re-engaged, like asking them to help with a task.

#### 2. Look at Your Slides

Though dyslexia is an issue with language, not vision, and font selection is not a treatment for dyslexia, there are ways to make your slides easier to read for everyone.

- Avoid fonts that run together like script fonts, serifed fonts, and italicized fonts.
- Avoid complicated background images.
- Use san serif fonts, short phrases, and lots of white space for easy readability.

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### 3. Teach Students How They Learn

- Understand that being asked to repeatedly learn through reading and writing may make church feel stressful for students and their families. If a family asks for other learning options for their child, please listen and be flexible.
- Notice how students respond to tasks and look for ways to increase engagement.

**Some examples include:**

- Drawing what was learned, instead of writing.
- Adding music and movements to memorization. (And be sure to praise for effort, not results on memorization.)
- Having a student lead a discussion.
- Inviting students to act out the scene you are reading about.
- Multi-sensory learning through audio, video, and hands-on activities.
- Share audio and visual Biblical resources with families.

### 4. Give Students a Place to Shine

- Learning differences like dyslexia can take a toll on students' self-esteem. Help them celebrate the wonderful people that God made them to be by noticing what they are good at. Then give them an opportunity to share their gifts with the class. Then watch them shine!

## Dyslexia - Audio & Visual Biblical Resources

Making the Bible accessible to everyone is important. Check out the resources below to see options that meet different learning styles. \*Please note, these are options to consider, we are not endorsing any certain products, resources or services.

### Illustrated Bibles and Bible Stories

- **The Action Bible** is a great introduction to learning the Bible for kids ages 9 - 12. The bright, engaging illustrations help support the text and keep kids interested with its comic book feel. .
- **The NIV Kids' Visual Study Bible** has over 700 full color images that support the text, as well as, highlighted facts and maps, to increase engagement. Suggested ages 8-12.
- **Eyewitness: The Visual Bible Experience.** This book designed for teens and adults features 39 stories retold in first person narrative, graphic novel style.

### Audio Bible and Christians Books

- **The Youversion Bible App** is a popular free app available for download. Many of the included Bible translations also come with an option for audio. Or for those who prefer to read the text, but benefit from fonts with more space between the letters, the Youversion Bible App now offers OpenDyslexic font as a font option. To learn more visit [youversion.com](http://youversion.com)
- **Audible** offers audio Bibles, Bible Studies and Christian books. Available Online.

### Video Bible Stories, Studies and Commentaries

- **BibleProject** is a nonprofit ed-tech organization and animation studio that produces free Bible videos, podcasts, blogs, classes, and educational Bible resources to help make the Biblical story accessible to everyone, everywhere. Visit [bibleproject.com](http://bibleproject.com) to learn more.
- **RightNow Media** is a church subscription based streaming service that includes more than 20K video Bible studies for churches to share with their members.
- **The Chosen** is a free television series based on the life of Jesus and his disciples. To learn more about where to find it, visit [angelstudios.com/thechosen](http://angelstudios.com/thechosen).