



Promoting literacy through research, education, and advocacy.

Arizona Branch

Steps for Seeking Appropriate Intervention for Your Child:

IDA DISCLAIMER

The international Dyslexia Association supports efforts to provide individuals with dyslexia with appropriate instruction and to identify these individuals at an early age. The Association, however, does not endorse any specific program, speaker, product, or instructional material, noting that there are a number of such which present the critical components of instruction as defined by IDA.

First Things First: The Assessment Process: If you suspect that your child has difficulties with reading, a comprehensive assessment is necessary to identify what the problem or problems are.

There is no one single test that can be used to test for dyslexia. A battery of tests must be administered.

Tests should be chosen on the basis of their measurement properties and their potential to address referral issues. Various tests may be used but the components of a good assessment should remain constant. Tests that measure expressive oral language, expressive written language, receptive oral language, receptive written language, intellectual functioning, cognitive processing, and educational achievement must be administered. The following elements should be included in an assessment for dyslexia:

- 1) A developmental, medical, behavioral, academic and family history,
- 2) A measure of general intellectual functioning
- 3) Information on cognitive processing (language, memory, auditory processing, visual processing, visual motor integration, reasoning abilities, and executive functioning),
- 4) Tests of specific oral language skills related to reading and writing success to include tests of **phonological processing**,
- 5) Educational tests to determine level of functioning in basic skill areas of reading, spelling, written language, and math -- testing in reading/writing should include the following measures:
 - single word decoding of both real and nonsense words,
 - oral and silent reading in context (evaluate rate, fluency, comprehension and accuracy),
 - reading comprehension,
 - dictated spelling test,
 - written expression: sentence writing as well as story or essay writing,
 - handwriting,

6) A classroom observation, and a review of the language arts curriculum

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Now what do I do with this information? Finding appropriate treatment for your child can seem like a daunting task. When making this decision, it's important to recognize that the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) recognizes the importance of choosing a **multisensory language based program**. Most individuals with dyslexia have difficulty with phonological and **phonemic awareness skills** (i.e. ability to appreciate and manipulate sounds in words). Therefore, treatment should focus on building these skills first before addressing the rules of phonics (i.e. making sound symbol relationships and the rules that govern how we read and spell words). It's important to ask a lot of questions. Suggested questions to ask can be found in an accompanying handout entitled "**Tips for Evaluating Treatment Programs for the Prevention and Treatment of Reading Disabilities.**"

If you wish to have your child tested for dyslexia then the best start is to ask their school to arrange testing for him/her. Put this request in writing, and then the school should act on it.

If you have already tried this, and you are not satisfied with the results, and you wish to do this privately, check with your insurance that they will pay for the testing, as some of them will and others will not.