

Creativity and Dyslexia: Strengths in Divergent Thinking

Multiple peer-reviewed studies show that many children with dyslexia display **strengths in creative thinking**, especially on standard tests like the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT). In school-age samples, dyslexic students have scored **higher across TTCT components—fluency, flexibility, originality, and sometimes elaboration**—with one study even finding dyslexic teens matched art-school students on overall creativity and exceeded them on **flexibility**. Other work shows superior performance on tasks that require **unusual combinations of ideas** and **nonverbal creativity** that is independent of IQ and literacy level. Together, these data support a strengths-based view: while reading is hard, **divergent and nonverbal creative thinking can be areas of advantage** for many dyslexic learners.

Highlights from Studies:

- Dyslexic children/teens scored higher on **fluency, flexibility, originality, and total creativity** (TTCT studies).
- Grade 4–7 learners showed **higher ideational fluency** across grades and **higher originality** in Grade 6.
- Junior-high students with dyslexia outperformed peers on **forming unusual idea combinations**.
- Dyslexic children showed **higher nonverbal creativity** independent of IQ and literacy level.

Context: A 2021 meta-analysis suggests the creativity advantage is **clearer in adults than in children overall**, so effects in youth may depend on the task and the school environment.