

When most people think about [dyslexia](#), they think about struggles with reading. But [dyslexia can also affect speaking](#), spelling and other skills that involve language.

This checklist can help give you a sense of whether your child might be showing signs of dyslexia. Keep in mind that many kids find out they have dyslexia in grades 3–5. But not every child who struggles with reading in these grades has dyslexia.

If you're [concerned your child might have dyslexia](#), you can print the checklist and talk with your child's doctor or teacher about what you're seeing.

If you're not sure whether your child is showing certain signs or not, you may want to revisit this checklist after spending some time observing your child's reading and language skills.

Signs of Dyslexia in Preschool

- Often mispronounces words, like saying "beddy tear" instead of "teddy bear."
- Was considered by his doctor to be a "late talker" (saying very few words by his second birthday).
- Often has trouble naming familiar objects.
- Has trouble learning a new word, even after you've tried to teach it to him many times.
- Has trouble learning nursery rhymes or song lyrics that rhyme.
- Has trouble splitting up the sounds in words. For example, when you say a word like *bat* and tell him you're taking away the first sound (the *buh*), he can't tell which sound is left over (the *at*).
- Has trouble remembering sequences, such as singing the letters of the alphabet or saying the days of the week in the right order.
- Often tells stories that are hard to follow; has trouble talking about an event in a logical order.
- Has [trouble following directions](#) with multiple steps.
- Often can't tell you the name of capital letters (such as if you point to the letter *M*).
- Speaks like a younger child (uses "baby talk").
- Often says general words like "thing" and "stuff" instead of the names of objects.
- Can't point out his own name.
- Has trouble writing his own name.
- Has a hard time coming up with a group of words, such as if you ask him to say the names of five colors.

Signs of Dyslexia in Grades K–2

- Struggles to read familiar words (like *cat* or *sit*), especially when there are no pictures or other context clues.
- Doesn't seem to know how to approach unfamiliar words, such as focusing on the sound of the first letter.
- Often substitutes words when reading aloud, such as saying *hourse* when the story uses the word *home*.
- Often skips over or confuses small words like *to* and *as* when reading aloud.
- Often seems to guess which letters make which sounds.

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Signs of Dyslexia in Grades 3–5

- Often confuses small words like *does* and *goes* when reading aloud.
- Frequently identifies words incorrectly after having just read the same words correctly earlier in the same passage.
- Has trouble sounding out new words; if a long word comes up when reading, often gets it wrong or skips over it.
- Often can't recognize common words ([sight words](#)) at a glance, such as *because* and *which*, and tries to sound them out.
- Often has trouble explaining what happened in a story or answering questions about key details of a passage.
- Has an easier time answering questions about the text if you read it aloud to him.
- Frequently makes the same kinds of mistakes, such as [reversing letters](#) (writing *bots* instead of *dots*) or mixing up the order of letters (writing *nip* instead of *pin*).
- Quickly forgets how to spell many of the words he studies.
- Spells the same word correctly and incorrectly in the same passage.
- Often struggles to pronounce words correctly, such as saying "mazagine" instead of "magazine."
- Has trouble with rhyming, such as completing the last word in a poem or song or thinking of words that rhyme with *hoop* (even though he's spent plenty of time working on rhyming).
- Has a hard time coming up with a bunch of words, such as if you ask him to say the names of 10 colors or 10 fruits.
- Seems confused by or uninterested in books, even books that feature his favorite characters or topics.
- Tries to avoid reading whenever possible; may get frustrated or agitated when he is reading.
- Seems to take a very long time to complete reading assignments; often has to re-read sentences.
- When discussing a story, steers the conversation to his own experiences rather than what was written in the story.
- Seems to read at a lower academic level than how he speaks.
- Seems to have a smaller vocabulary than other kids his age.

Signs of Dyslexia in Teens

- Often skips over small words or leaves out parts of longer words when reading aloud.
- Often has an easier time answering questions about a page of text if it's read aloud to him.
- Prefers multiple-choice questions over fill-in-the-blank or other questions with short answers.

class.

- Often **doesn't "get" the joke**; has trouble understanding idioms and puns.
- Lacks sense of direction; has trouble reading charts and graphs.
- Makes frequent errors reading and spelling common words.
- Tries to avoid reading whenever possible; gets frustrated or agitated when he is reading.
- Seems to take a very long time to complete reading assignments; spends a lot of time re-reading passages.
- Seems to read at a lower academic level than how he speaks.

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Learn more [about dyslexia](#), including [common myths about dyslexia](#). And get tips on [what to do if you think your child could have dyslexia](#).

About the Author



The Understood Team is composed of writers, editors and community moderators, many of whom have children with learning and attention issues.

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Yes

No