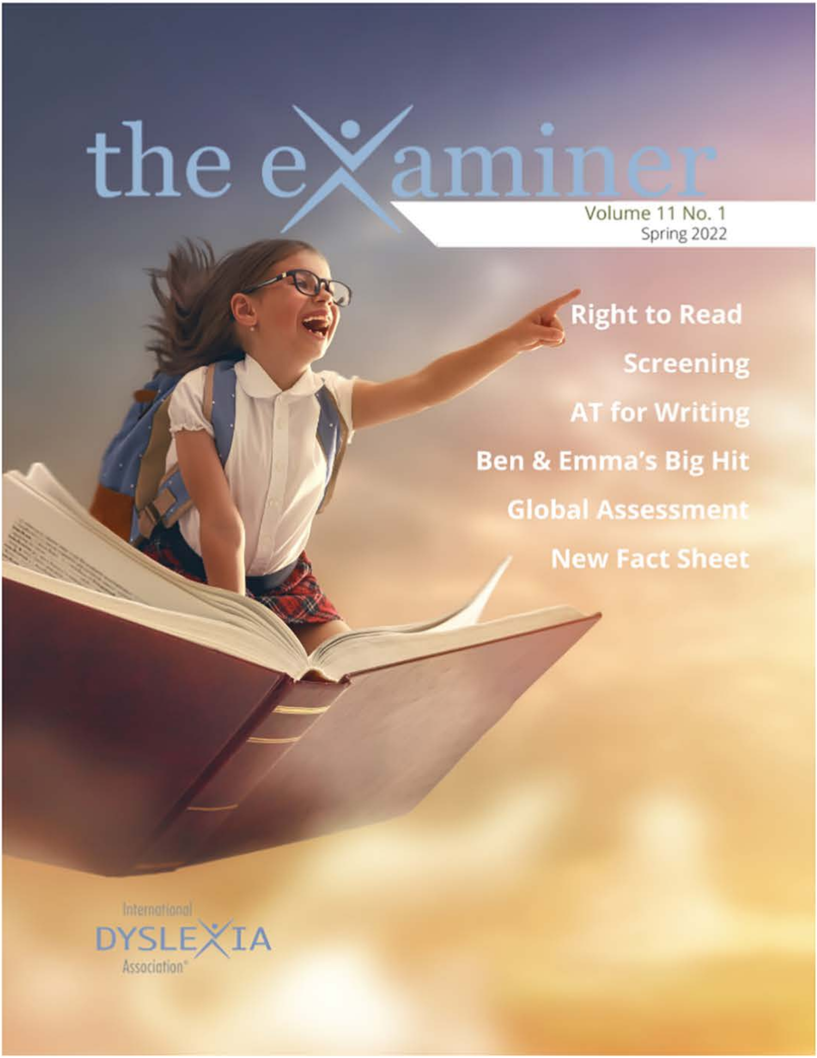

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Volume 11 No. 1
Spring 2022

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NEW FACT SHEET! SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS RELATED TO DYSLEXIA

Over the years, students with dyslexia may develop increasing frustration if the reading skills of their classmates begin to surpass their own. Access to effective Structured Literacy teaching will help these students, but they may still experience social and emotional problems. Understanding these issues will assist parents and teachers in supporting students to develop a healthy sense of emotional well-being that will serve these students well as they continue their work to become skilled readers and spellers.

The fact sheet is available to download and share at DyslexiaLibrary.org.

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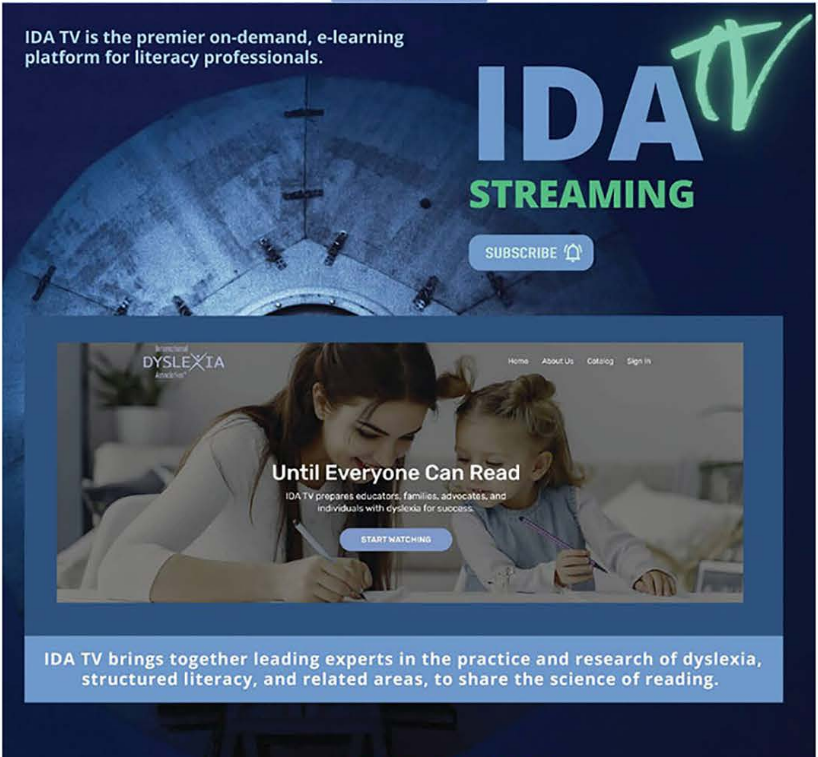

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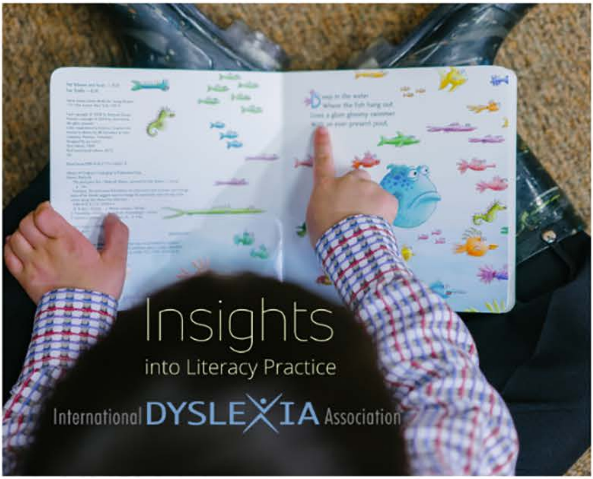

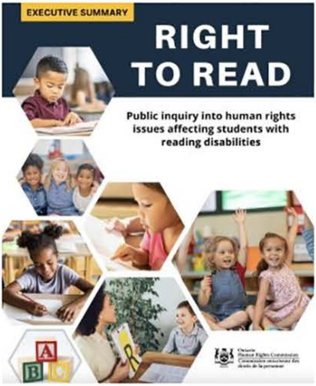

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RIGHT TO READ

Public inquiry into human rights issues affecting students with reading disabilities

ONTARIO RELEASES GROUND-BREAKING "RIGHT TO READ" INQUIRY REPORT WITH GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS ON THE RIGHT TO READ

This comprehensive report calls for changes in "early reading in areas such as curriculum and instruction, screening, reading interventions, accommodations, and professional assessments" and "highlights how learning to read is not a privilege but a basic and essential human right." The report found that "by not using evidence-based approaches to teach students to read, Ontario's public education system is failing students with reading disabilities such as dyslexia, and other students." IDA congratulates Linda Siegel (past Editor-in-Chief of *Perspectives* and 2020 recipient of the Margaret Byrd Lifetime Achievement Award) and others from Dyslexia Canada, International Dyslexia Association Ontario, and Decoding Dyslexia Ontario for their work on this important report.

- OHRC Right to Read full report with executive summary and a host of resources: https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/right-to-read-inquiry-report
- Right to Read Video: It is time for change in Ontario: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iney0cEpx24

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OGA certifies teachers and accredits instructional and training programs that meet these standards. The Academy also promotes public awareness of the needs of individuals with dyslexia and of the Orton-Gillingham Approach for the treatment of dyslexia. It is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

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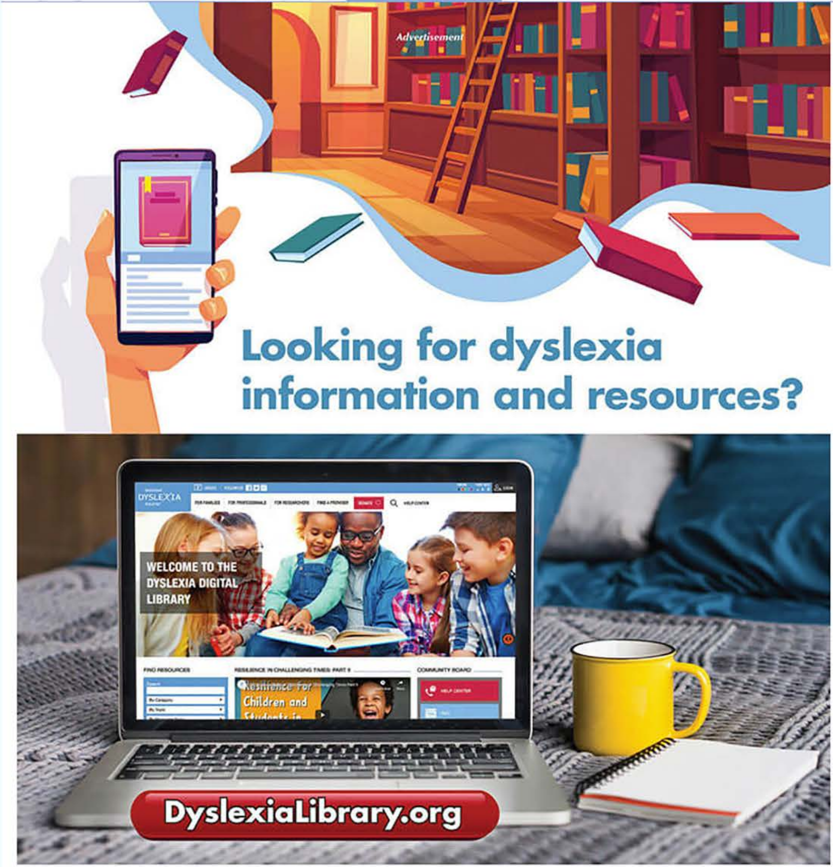
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LET'S CATCH THEM BEFORE THEY FALL

by Nancy Chapel Eberhardt

Joe Torgesen's memorably titled article "Catch Them Before They Fall," published in 1998, stressed the importance of identifying children at risk for reading difficulties as early as possible to avert the negative consequences of reading failure. He wrote, "The best solution to the problem of reading failure is to allocate resources for early identification and prevention" (Torgesen, 1998). These words were instrumental in focusing the attention of educators and researchers on the essential need for early identification.

Today, more than 20 years later, the need to identify students who are at risk for reading difficulties remains a critical goal. Fortunately, as the Winter 2022 issue of *Perspectives on Language and Literacy* conveys, the area of screening—tools, data analysis, and instructional responses—has come a long way. Theme editor Margie Gillis and the contributors to this issue, "Screening: From Science to Policy to Practice," have updated what we know and are doing about early identification. They make the point that it is

We have the tools to sample early literacy milestones, technology to help manage and interpret screening data, and knowledge about types of systems of support required to successfully utilize the data to provide appropriate instruction. Although screening and subsequent treatment responses require diligence to execute well, we have the knowledge and skills to change a child's academic trajectory.

Please take a moment to listen to theme editor Margie Gillis, President of Literacy How, Inc., as she shares some key take-aways about the importance of and progress with universal screening presented in the Winter 2022 *Perspectives* issue. Then, join IDA to have access to this issue of *Perspectives* and many other resources to help you with your screening needs. These resources can help us achieve Torgesen's goal—to "catch them before they fall." Together, let's identify as many of our at-risk students as possible!

not just *if* but *how* and *when* we screen for risk of reading failure that is important for everyone involved with early literacy development.

Why is the opportunity to identify so important? Screening focuses on aspects of young students' literacy development over which we have some control. Unlike poverty, with its corrosive and life-long negative impacts requiring enormously difficult and complex solutions, early identification is an aspect of children's development in an environment (schools) over which we can have significant influence.

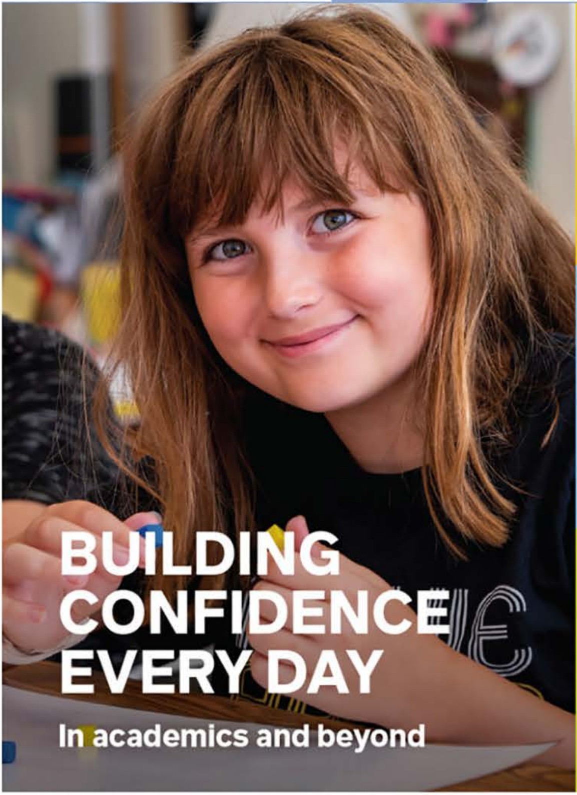
Perspectives Spotlight

Tap Spotlight image to see Margie Gillis talk about the latest issue of ***Perspectives***.

Reference

Torgesen, J. K. (1998). Catch them before they fall: Identification and assessment to prevent reading failure in young children. American Educator, 22, 32-39.

Nancy Chapel Eberhardt is currently an educational consultant and author. She has experience as a special education teacher, administrator, and professional development provider. Nancy contributed as author and co-author to the development of the literacy intervention curriculum *LANGUAGE!* More recently she collaborated with Margie Gillis to develop the *Literacy How Professional Learning Series*. Nancy is the co-author of *Sortegories 3.0*, a web-based app that provides practice with decoding, vocabulary, and syntax to improve decoding, reading comprehension, and fluency. She serves as a member of IDA's *Perspectives* and the *Examiner* editorial boards.



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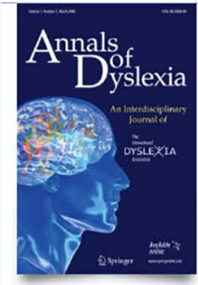

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Volume 72, Issue 1, April 2022

- The role of grit and resilience in children with reading disorder: a longitudinal cohort study *by Bushra Hossain, Yingtong Chen, Robert L. Hendren*
- Coarse or fine? Grain size and morpho-orthographic segmentation in struggling readers *by Lindsay Rosenberg, Richard S. Kruk*
- Categorical perception and influence of attention on neural consistency in response to speech sounds in adults with dyslexia *by T. M. Centanni, S. D. Beach, J. D. E. Gabrieli*
- Characterizing the knowledge of educators across the tiers of instructional support *by Susan B. Porter, Timothy N. Odegard, Emily A. Farris*
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- Identifying dyslexia at the university: assessing phonological coding is not enough *by Helle Fredslund Ottosen, Katrine H. Bønnerup, Rauno Parrila*
- Shallow or deep? The impact of orthographic depth on visual processing impairments in developmental dyslexia *by Serena Provazza, Barbara Carretti, Daniel Roberts*

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Dr. Dave's AT Lab

AT for Writing: What about High-Tech Access through Alternative Keyboards?

by David C. Winters

Welcome once again to my AT lab. Did you notice that I moved some things around so that we can

After you tap it, you will be taken back to the previous Keyboards screen, and you should see it be appropriately physically distanced? And please let me know if you have trouble understanding me through my mask.

By the way, have you had a chance to try any of those speech-to-text apps we talked about last time? Excellent! They can be very helpful. And you are quite correct: In some situations, such as in a classroom or out in public, accessing writing through a speech-to-text approach is not practical or ideal. So, today, let's talk about using an alternative keyboard app on a smartphone or tablet—another high-tech approach to getting our thoughts down in writing. We'll save talking about apps to help us with our writing on a computer for a future visit.

Alternative keyboards can be very helpful with spelling and word prediction, and some come with additional editing features. While I'm going to show you alternative keyboards that work with iPhones and iPads, I'll let you know if an Android version is available as well.

"Slide-to-Type" is a feature already built into the iOS operating system.

Before you can use it, though, you need to enable it in the Keyboard setting in General Settings. You'll find it listed under the "English" keyboard features. (This feature also works with some of the other iOS operating system's keyboard languages, but not all of them.) Then, when you're ready to write something, just put your finger on the first letter of the word you want to write and slide it from one letter to the next without lifting your finger. Try it out. Did you notice that you often don't need to spell the word perfectly to have the correctly spelled word show up in your writing? You can also see the words the operating system thinks you want to use in the word prediction line right above the keyboard. This feature adds a space between words when you lift your finger to start the next word. While you may need to practice using this feature a bit,

in the list. But you have one more important step. Be sure to tap on the Gboard line to go to another screen, and on that screen turn on "Allow Full Access." Now you're set to use it. Let's get ready to write something using the Gboard alternative keyboard.

Open one of the apps you use to type information, such as a new email. Do you see the keyboard show up on your screen? Great! Since we were using the built-in English keyboard previously, we'll need to change to the Gboard keyboard. Just tap on the globe icon, which is often at the bottom left. Tapping on it once changes to the next keyboard. If you want to pick a specific keyboard, tap and hold the globe icon to see the list of available keyboards and choose the one you want. By the way, do you see that Gboard (and some other keyboards) has an additional row of icons above the word prediction row? Those icons will let you add some additional things into your writing, such as something you drew with your finger or Apple pencil or a photo. In addition, if you tap the G icon, you'll be able to search Google and insert the results right into your writing without having to open Google separately.

Besides these free alternative keyboard options, I want to end today's visit by showing you the Dyslexia Keyboard by Ghotit, an alternative keyboard developed especially for people with dyslexia and dysgraphia. It is available for iPhones and iPads, and you install it the same way I told you to install the Gboard keyboard (above). I checked the price before you arrived today, and right now it costs about $50. While this keyboard does not have a slide/glide-to-type feature, its word prediction is based on ways a person may try to phonetically spell (or "sound out") a word. Let me explain what I mean. Suppose I typed "thot" because I wasn't sure of the correct spelling. After I typed "thot," if I looked in the word prediction list, I should see

I think you will find it very helpful. I tend to like using this feature on the iPhone more than the iPad because the distance from one letter to the next is much closer on the smaller device. You might find that it works well for you on both devices.

Another alternative keyboard that has this kind of feature is Gboard, a free app available for both iOS and Android mobile devices. Gboard calls this feature "Glide Typing," and it works just like the Slide-to-Type feature I just showed you. However, because it is not built into the operating system, you will need to download the app first from the Apple App Store or Google Play. Once downloaded, follow the directions to install and activate it. On iOS devices, go to General Settings, then Keyboard, then Keyboards, then Add New Keyboard. On the screen that opens up, you should find the Gboard that you just downloaded.

"thought." That's exactly the word I was trying to spell when I typed "thot." To insert "thought" into my writing, I would need to tap it. If you have the app, try it out on your iPhone or iPad. In addition, this app can correct grammar and punctuation errors. Just tap the "abc" icon, and the app will check your writing for spelling, grammar, and punctuation. On the Ghotit website (www.ghotit.com), you can find instructions for using several other settings available as part of this app.

Well, like my dad used to say, "Time flies when you're having fun," and I just realized that our time together today is up. Since you know that I like you to try things out between our visits, be sure to try one or more of these alternative keyboards before you come see me again. I'll be looking forward to hearing what you think of these writing options. Next time, we'll look at a few more helpful writing apps.

David C. Winters, Ph.D., Fellow/AOGPE, is an associate professor in the Department of Special Education at Eastern Michigan University. He has been a classroom teacher, tutor, diagnostician, administrator, and tutor/teacher trainer for more than 30 years and is a member of the International Dyslexia Association Orton Oaks. He currently teaches courses introducing preservice teachers to special education; in addition, he teaches courses in instructional and assistive technology, writing, and assessment in special education for preservice special educators and speech language pathologists.

This is Dr. Dave's 15th column for the *Examiner*. Read and share his other columns, by searching for "AT Lab" in the Digital Library.

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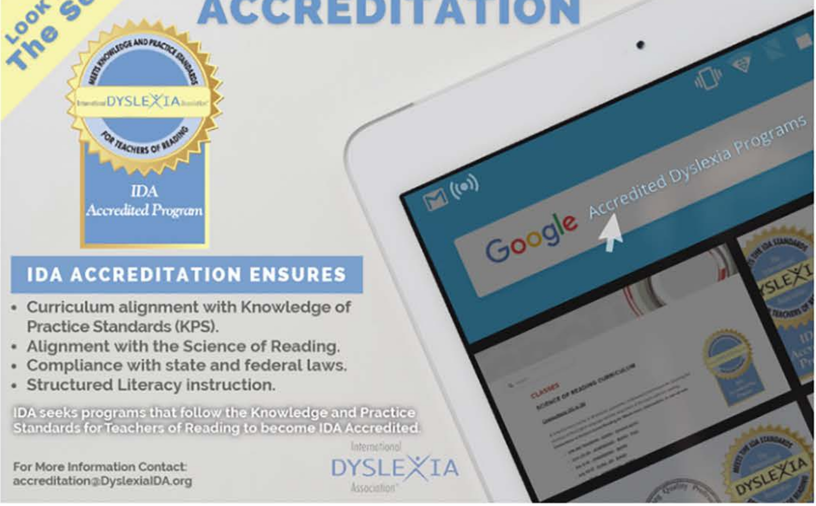
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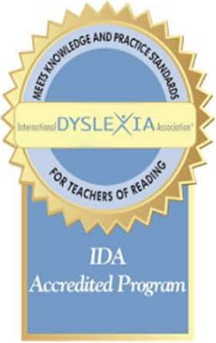
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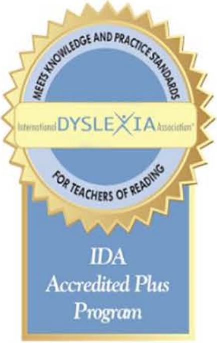
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IDA ACCREDITS 14 PROGRAMS ALIGNED TO PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF STRUCTURED LITERACY

Since 2018, The International Dyslexia Association's (IDA) has been conducting reviews of universities and independent teacher preparation programs. IDA's Program Review and Accreditation initiative is a unique accrediting model, in that it promotes the systematic evaluation and refinement of educator preparation programs against IDA's research-based Knowledge and Practice Standards (KPS) for Teachers of Reading. When an educator preparation program displays the IDA Accredited Program seal and advertises itself as an IDA Accredited Program, the public is assured that program completers have engaged a rigorous, standards-based preparation program designed to promote candidate mastery of the principles and practices of Structured Literacy and the science of reading, and is aligned to the 2018 IDA's Knowledge and Practice Standards (KPS) for Teachers of Reading.

A complete list of university programs accredited by IDA is available at https://dyslexiaida.org/university-programs-accredited-by-ida/ and IDA accredited independent teacher training programs can be found at https://dyslexiaida.org/accredited-teaching-training-programs/

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DYSLEXIA ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS

by Elsa Cárdenas-Hagan and Eric Tridas

Reading difficulties are the most common cause of academic failure and underachievement, and they occur in all countries. Many countries, including the United States, rely on the assessment process to determine eligibility for educational support services. To support our Global Partners and assessment services providers in the U.S. and around the world, the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) Global Partners (GPs) Committee formed a workgroup to develop guidelines for the assessment of

symptoms and a timetable of the impairment they cause over time. Typical sources of information for a history include the parents/caregivers, student, and teachers. The history should summarize the challenges experienced by the student. The examiner should document what informants observe rather than what they think it is. A thorough educational history will provide documentation of the onset of symptoms and the response to instruction beginning in the preschool years.

dyslexia with recommendations for a consistent approach to evaluate students worldwide. Below we share the *Assessment Guidelines for Dyslexia and Related Disorders*, to be offered initially for professionals who perform dyslexia assessments for English speaking individuals, with plans to adapt the guidelines to different languages and make these resources available worldwide. The purpose of developing the guidelines was to define the structure and content of a dyslexia assessment which with the ultimate goal of testing to teach. To accomplish this the guidelines emphasize three main goals: (1) Describe the structure (2) Describe the content and (3) Develop an accreditation process.

Goal 1: Describe the Structure of the Assessment

This section explains how an assessment is conducted by focusing on four main areas: history; standardized testing; interpretation of findings, including diagnosis; and a plan for management. These steps are summarized below.

History: The history is the one of the most important elements of the evaluation. It allows the examiner to identify the domains where the student is experiencing impairment. These include academic, behavioral/emotional, social relationships, and health problems. In addition, the history provides a description of the

Another important component of the history is the documentation of common comorbidities, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, behavior disorders, or health and social/environmental concerns. This provides documentation of factors that can have a significant impact on the learning process, even though they may not be considered a specific symptom of dyslexia.

Testing: The administration of standardized tests is a critical element of the assessment of dyslexia and related disorders. It allows the examiner to quantify the problems described in the history. Standardized tests are intended to assess the elements that define dyslexia.

Another approach to supplement standardized tests is to perform a qualitative assessment of the student. Error analysis of the student's work can provide valuable information about a student's learning problems. This approach is vital when standardized tests are unavailable for a specific population's language (e.g., indigenous populations, countries with regional dialects, etc.). By identifying the skills and functions to be tested, the guidelines provide the structure for the examiner to make observations that may help understand the student's challenges in the absence of standardized tests. *(continued)*

Continued from Previous Page

Interpretation and Explanation: This section allows the examiner to integrate the history and test results to identify the factors that contribute to the student's learning challenges and explain why the student is experiencing problems. At the same time, it quantifies the severity of the

Understanding what needs to be done to address the problem should be the ultimate goal of the assessment. That is, testing should guide teaching! Finally, providing the parents, student, and teachers with reasonable expectations can offer hope and allow the family to plan for a realistic future.

problems. Furthermore, the formulation provides the data to support the different diagnoses identified in the assessment. A most important element of the interpretation section of a report is providing the necessary data for the schools to determine if the student meets eligibility criteria for special education services and/or accommodations.

An additional critical component of the interpretation of the report is providing feedback to the family, the student, and the teachers about the findings of the assessment. This process should be guided by five essential questions that should be addressed at the conclusion of each assessment:

- Does the child have a problem? (Is it more than simple developmental variation?)
- What is it called? (Diagnosis)
- What are the causes? (Etiology)
- What can be done about it? (Management)
- What can be expected for the future? (Prognosis)

Providing this feedback helps demystify the problem and focuses on the symptoms that cause impairment, rather than labeling the child. By describing the specific skills that are affected and the impact they have on the student's learning, the evaluator can explain to the student why he or she is struggling. A diagnosis provides a name for the problem and allows the student and the family to gather more information on the subject. A diagnosis may also provide information required for a student to qualify for services.

Plan: The goal of an assessment is to guide the instructional approach for the individual student. It gathers data to inform decisions regarding the plan of intervention. If the student is identified as having dyslexia, Structured Literacy is the educational intervention. If comorbidities are found as a result of the evaluation, they should be addressed as they can have a significant impact on student learning and self-regulation. The management plan for a child with learning and/or behavioral challenges focuses on four major areas of intervention:

- Educational—These would include educational remediation and accommodations.
- Psychological—Behavior modification and cognitive behavior therapy can be effective in addressing externalizing and internalizing disorders.
- Medical—Medications are often needed to address problems commonly associated with dyslexia, such as ADHD, anxiety, and depression. Similarly, there may be a need to address medical factors that affect learning, such as sleep problems and chronic health conditions.
- Environmental—Making physical facility adaptations can have a dramatic impact in a child's learning. Preferential seating, testing in a separate room, providing small group instruction, or transferring to a school that specializes in teaching students with learning challenges are some examples of this type of intervention. *(continued)*

Continued from Previous Page

Goal 2: Describe the Content of the Assessment

This section lists what functions and skills must be included as part of the assessment based on the definition of dyslexia and the Simple View of Reading. The Simple View of Reading explains

Goal 3: Develop an IDA Accreditation for the Assessment of Dyslexia

This goal is intended to provide a process for endorsement/accreditation by IDA based on the assessment guidelines and provide assistance to evaluators to align their dyslexia evaluations with reading using the formula *Decoding x Linguistic Comprehension = Reading Comprehension*. The definition of dyslexia and the Simple View of Reading are based on scientific research and offer a clear description of the functions and skills that must be included as part of the evaluation. The workgroup also used the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-5 Edition's criteria for the diagnosis of a specific learning disorder with impairment in reading, which includes the assessment of common coexisting conditions.

At a minimum, an assessment should include the evaluation of cognitive abilities (e.g., language comprehension and skills, background knowledge, executive functions, visual-spatial abilities, and processing speed), single word decoding (e.g., phonological processing and accurate and fluent word recognition), and spelling abilities.

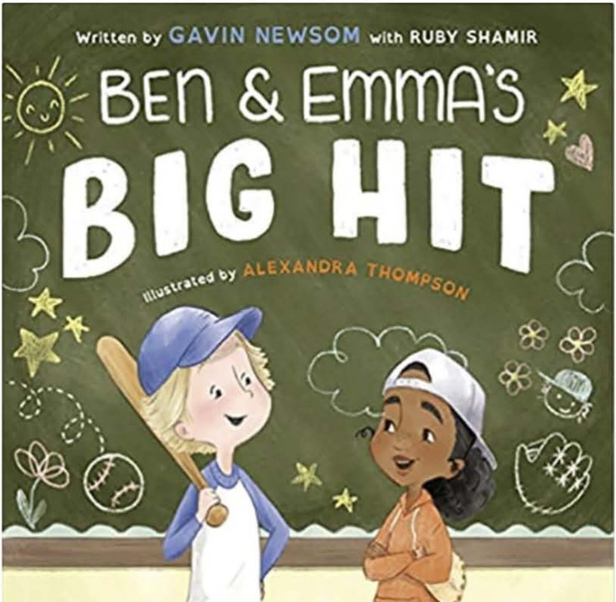
best practices.

In order to develop an appropriate accreditation process and to continue enhancing the *Assessment Guidelines for Dyslexia and Related Disorder*s, the workgroup plans to conduct additional pilot projects with several of IDA's Global Partners. This will provide further opportunity to refine the data collection process, as well as establish the procedures needed to conduct an efficient and effective accreditation program for English speaking individuals. The plans are for the Global Partners to continue their collaboration with IDA, consult with dyslexia experts from various countries, and subsequently adapt the assessment guidelines in other languages. This will ultimately allow for the development of an evaluation and identification process for dyslexia from which a standard can ensue.

References *(for a complete list of references, please click here.)*

Elsa Cárdenas-Hagan, Ph.D. , CCC-SLP, President of Valley Speech Language and Learning Center in Brownsville, TX, also works with the University of Houston–Texas Institute for Evaluation and Statistics. Her research interests include the language and literacy development of Spanish-speaking English learners and interventions for bilingual students. She has authored research articles, book chapters, and interventions for English learners. A former Vice President of IDA's Board of Directors, she is a member of IDA's Global Partners Committee, a member of IDA's Media and Communications Committee, and an IDA representative and Chair of the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD). In 2019, she received IDA's Margaret Byrd Rawson Lifetime Achievement Award.

Eric Tridas, MD, FAAP practiced developmental and behavioral pediatrics in the Tampa Bay Area for 37 years. He is founder and Senior Partner of The Tridas Group, a developmental pediatrics consulting and software company. Dr. Tridas is a member of the Professional Advisory Board of the Learning Disability Association of America, Past President of the International Dyslexia Association, and an IDA representative on the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities. He is also the State Medical Director for Pediatric Health Choice for Florida-Prescribed Pediatric Extended Care Facilities (PPEC) and was a Clinical Associate Professor in Pediatrics at the University of South Florida, Morsani College of Medicine. Dr. Tridas is the recipient of the 2017 International Dyslexia Association Margaret Byrd Rawson Lifetime Achievement Award and was inducted into the International Dyslexia Association Sylvia Richardson Hall of Fame. He also received the 2012 IMSLEC Innovator Award. Dr. Tridas edited and co-authored *From ABC to ADHD: What Every Parent Should Know About Dyslexia and ADHD.*


Written by GAVIN NEWSOM with RUBY SHAMIR
BEN & EMMA'S
BIG HIT
illustrated by ALEXANDRA THOMPSON

A book review by Ruth Nelson

As mayor of San Francisco and governor of California, Gavin Newsom has often spoken about educational concerns. One learning issue he knows personally, and as a parent, is dyslexia. Recently, Newsom has partnered with author Ruby Shamir and illustrator Alexandra Thompson to produce a picture book that gently presents the daily reality of dyslexia. The main character has dyslexia, but it does not define him.

Warm sunshine, blue skies, puffy white clouds, and green grass signal the welcome arrival of spring, enticing people outdoors for kite-flying, gardening, picnics, and baseball. Young Ben is so ready for baseball! Standing on the baseball field with his cap and bat, he feels happy and confident. His gaze captures every detail of his favorite turf—the round pitcher's mound, the straight chalk lines between the bases, the far-off home run fence. With good coaching and hours of practice, Ben has learned what he needs to do when it is his turn to throw the ball, catch a fly, swing the bat, or sprint to a base. Ben loves everything about baseball and always enjoys playing it with his friends.

However, away from the ballpark, Ben has a BIG worry. In the classroom, Ben cannot understand why he is having so much trouble learning how to read. Every day he struggles to make sense of the letters, sounds, and words. He is embarrassed that he seems so different from his classmates. He wonders why reading is so hard for him.

Soon his kind and observant teacher is finding ways to help all her students to read, reminding them that learning is hard work and takes lots of practice—like baseball. One day she even shares her own secret about baseball, and Ben comes up with an idea for the whole class to spend their recess having some very special batting practice.

In creating this book, Gavin Newsom wants all readers of Ben & Emma's Big Hit to understand that, even though the brains of people with dyslexia may work in different ways, persistent efforts, aware teachers, and targeted instruction can propel all students toward growth and success.

Reading this book with one child or a group offers an opportunity to foster discussion about things that may be hard to do or difficult to learn. This conversation could also include the idea of having a supportive "coach" and "mates" to ease the difficulty of those tasks and make it a shared experience. Like Ben, no student wants to be the only one working hard.

In addition to the story's empathetic addressing of a child's confusion about the daily frustrations of dyslexia, the illustrations of this picture book enhance its important message. The endpapers resemble a classroom blackboard where all students were encouraged to contribute an idea, and each student's idea respected and given its own space.

Another interpretation of these endpapers could be that they represent some of the ideas swirling around in one student's brain. The spread across the title pages shows a typical school and its yard. From Ben's perspective, the baseball field outranks the school building. The classroom scenes are realistic and pleasant but not distracting. The diversity of the teacher and students matches many school populations. Their varied facial expressions and groupings suggest a caring classroom community. The muted color palette sustains the gentleness of the book, envisioning a possible way to soften the sometimes overwhelming reality of dyslexia.

Although the reviewer has no financial connection to IDA, proceeds from Ben & Emma's Big Hit will be donated to IDA. The opinions of this reviewer are not necessarily the opinions of the International Dyslexia Association.

Ruth Nelson has extensive experience as a classroom teacher, a learning support teacher, and a school librarian. She has especially enjoyed sharing thousands of books with K-8 students as she guides them to become competent readers and writers. A particular challenge has been her search for reading materials to motivate struggling readers. Ruth spends many happy hours examining the myriad of new titles as she continues to make targeted recommendations to students, families, teachers, and tutors.

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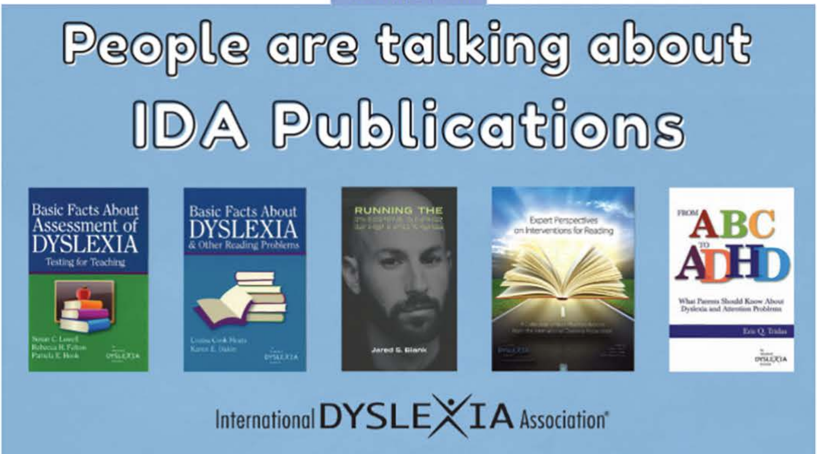

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