

WJ IV INTERPRETATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTIONS PROGRAM

# Dyslexia Evaluation Checklist: Teacher Form



Student's Name (Last) \_\_\_\_\_ (First) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name (Last) \_\_\_\_\_ (First) \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Form of Address: ☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms. ☐ Miss

*Check only the items that apply to the student.  
Provide examples where indicated.*

## A. Oral Language Skills

- ☐ 1. Has difficulty rhyming words
- ☐ 2. Has difficulty isolating the first and/or last sound in one-syllable words
- ☐ 3. Has trouble pronouncing multisyllabic words
- ☐ 4. Has trouble retrieving words quickly
- ☐ 5. Often uses the wrong word when speaking or has difficulty recalling a word
- ☐ 6. Has difficulty following oral multistep directions

## B. Nonreading Skills

- ☐ 1. Has age-appropriate oral language skills
- ☐ 2. Is creative (e.g., art, music, problem solving)  
If checked, provide example(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 3. Enjoys visual-spatial tasks (e.g., puzzles, blocks, visual designs)  
If checked, provide example(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 4. Enjoys activities that do not require reading  
If checked, provide example(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## C. Basic Reading Skills

- ☐ 1. Has difficulty learning letter names
- ☐ 2. Has difficulty learning letter sounds
- ☐ 3. Has difficulty retaining the connections between letters and sounds
- ☐ 4. Demonstrates difficulty learning phonics
- ☐ 5. Learns phonics generalizations but has difficulty applying them to new words
- ☐ 6. Is slow to develop a sight vocabulary
- ☐ 7. Has difficulty recognizing/reading irregular words
- ☐ 8. Reverses/inverts/transposes letters or words with similar visual appearance  
(e.g., b/d; n/u; was/saw; build/blind)  
if checked, provide example(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 9. Substitutes articles and prepositions when reading  
(e.g., a/the; for/of)  
If checked, how frequently does this occur?  
☐ a. Sometimes  
☐ b. Often  
☐ c. Very often

## C. Basic Reading Skills (continued)

- ☐ 10. Substitutes similar-looking words when reading  
(e.g., house/horse)  
If checked, how frequently does this occur?  
☐ a. Sometimes  
☐ b. Often  
☐ c. Very often
- ☐ 11. Has trouble reading words with two or more syllables

## D. Attitude Toward Reading

- ☐ 1. Complains about reading
- ☐ 2. Shows frustration or anxiety when reading
- ☐ 3. Resists reading aloud

## E. Reading Proficiency and Comprehension

- ☐ 1. Takes a long time to complete assignments that require reading
- ☐ 2. Reads slowly
- ☐ 3. Lacks expression/prosody when reading
- ☐ 4. Ignores punctuation marks when reading
- ☐ 5. Frequently must reread to get the meaning of the text
- ☐ 6. Does not understand or remember what has been read
- ☐ 7. Reading level is below other classmates'

## F. Spelling and Writing Skills

- ☐ 1. Omits sounds when spelling words
- ☐ 2. Spells words the way they sound, not the way they look (e.g., said as sed)
- ☐ 3. Spells the same word in different ways on the same page
- ☐ 4. Expresses ideas orally but struggles to put them into writing

## G. Additional concerns:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## EXAMINER USE ONLY

**Exclusionary Factors:** Please check the following factors that might be contributing to the student's reading and spelling difficulties.

- ☐ 1. Vision impairment
- ☐ 2. Hearing impairment
- ☐ 3. Motor impairment
- ☐ 4. Emotional disturbance
- ☐ 5. Intellectual impairment
- ☐ 6. Limited English proficiency
- ☐ 7. Health-related concerns
- ☐ 8. Poor school attendance
- ☐ 9. Environmental or economic disadvantage

WJ IV INTERPRETATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL INTERVENTIONS PROGRAM

# Dyslexia Evaluation Checklist: Parent Form



Student's Name (Last) \_\_\_\_\_ (First) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent's Name (Last) \_\_\_\_\_ (First) \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Form of Address: ☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms. ☐ Miss

Relationship:

- |                                        |                                         |                                                    |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Mother     | <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Stepfather  | <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Brother                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Father     | <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Grandmother | <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Aunt                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Guardian   | <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Grandfather | <input type="checkbox"/> 11. Uncle                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Stepmother | <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Sister      | <input type="checkbox"/> 12. Other (specify) _____ |

Check only the items that describe your child.  
Provide examples where indicated.

## A. Development

- ☐ 1. Has a history of ear infections
- ☐ 2. Had ear tubes inserted
- ☐ 3. Had difficulty learning to talk
- ☐ 4. Had speech therapy
- ☐ 5. Currently has speech therapy
- ☐ 6. Had some difficulty pronouncing new words
- ☐ 7. Currently has some difficulty pronouncing new words
- ☐ 8. Mispronounces some words by putting the sounds in the wrong order (e.g., *aminal* for *animal* or *pusgetti* for *spaghetti*) or leaving sounds out  
If checked, provide example(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 9. Has difficulty following directions
- ☐ 10. Has difficulty remembering the details of a story that has been read aloud
- ☐ 11. Has difficulty with word retrieval such as remembering the names of people and places
- ☐ 12. Often uses the wrong word when speaking or has difficulty recalling the word he/she wants to use

## B. Family History

- ☐ 1. Has one or more family members who have/had difficulty learning to read and spell  
Relationship(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 2. Has one or more family members who have/had difficulty with attention  
Relationship(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## C. Nonreading Skills

- ☐ 1. Is creative (e.g., loves to draw, sing, act, invent)  
If checked, provide example(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 2. Is good at assembling puzzles
- ☐ 3. Enjoys many activities that do not require reading  
If checked, provide example(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## D. Prereading Skills

- ☐ 1. Likes to listen to books
- ☐ 2. Does not like to look at print when listening to books read by others
- ☐ 3. Had trouble learning how to rhyme words
- ☐ 4. Currently has trouble rhyming words
- ☐ 5. Had trouble learning the alphabet
- ☐ 6. Has trouble remembering letter sounds
- ☐ 7. Has trouble breaking apart the sounds in words and then blending them back together to pronounce the words
- ☐ 8. Currently has difficulty recognizing some letters
- ☐ 9. Complains about having to read
- ☐ 10. Shows anxiety or frustration about having to read
- ☐ 11. Dislikes reading aloud

## E. Reading Skills

- ☐ 1. Confuses little words that look alike (e.g., *who* and *how*, *was* and *saw*)  
If checked, provide example(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ 2. Does not read as well as others the same age
- ☐ 3. Takes a long time to finish homework that requires reading
- ☐ 4. Reads slowly and often has to reread to understand what he/she is reading
- ☐ 5. Needs a parent to read the assigned text aloud prior to doing the assignment

## F. Spelling and Writing Skills

- ☐ 1. Spells words the way they sound rather than the way they look
- ☐ 2. Knows how to spell a word but then forgets it
- ☐ 3. May spell the same word in different ways on the same page
- ☐ 4. Had difficulty with handwriting
- ☐ 5. Currently has difficulty with handwriting
- ☐ 6. Has difficulty with written assignments

## G. Additional concerns:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Additional Considerations in Dyslexia Assessment



When assessing for dyslexia, teams should consider factors such as family history of dyslexia, prior interventions, school attendance, and Response to Intervention data. In addition, the following issues should be considered.

1. If the student exhibits reading and spelling difficulties and currently has average phonological/phonemic awareness, review the student's history to determine whether there is evidence of previous phonological/phonemic awareness interventions. Prior effective instruction in phonological/phonemic awareness may have remediated these skills in isolation, while the student might continue to have difficulties in reading and spelling. Thus, average phonological awareness scores alone do not rule out the existence of dyslexia. Ongoing phonological awareness deficits can also be exhibited in more advanced phonological tasks involving multisyllabic words and manipulation, as well as in word reading and/or spelling.
2. A weakness in orthographic awareness can be a significant contributing factor to dyslexia. Orthographic awareness is often assessed through tests of irregular word reading and spelling. A person's recognition and retrieval of orthographic patterns may be ascertained by analysis of the patterns of responses, as well as the scores, on measures of irregular word reading and spelling. People with a weakness in orthographic awareness are more successful in reading and spelling phonically regular words than irregular words and tend to spell irregular words the way they sound rather than the way they look.
3. As a person grows older and reads less, the limited reading affects the development of both vocabulary and academic knowledge, areas generally assessed by cognitive ability tests. As a result, a person may not have a discrepancy between cognitive abilities and his or her present level of reading skill.
4. Dyslexia often occurs along with other disorders, such as Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and speech or language impairment. It is important to consider the additional impact these disorders can have on both cognitive and linguistic measures. In these cases, a significant discrepancy may not exist between a person's cognitive or linguistic abilities and his or her present reading skill level.
5. The symptoms of dyslexia can vary based upon a person's age and the type of prior instruction he or she received. What often begins as a problem with reading accuracy becomes a problem with reading rate and automaticity. Thus, measures of reading rate should be included in most comprehensive dyslexia evaluations.
6. In cases of dyslexia and speech or language impairment, a person's potential to read successfully may be more accurately estimated by measures of nonverbal reasoning and mathematics.
7. Typically, the more cognitive factors that are involved, the greater difficulty a person will have learning to read and spell.
8. The Woodcock-Johnson IV (WJ IV) does not provide multiple measures of all important constructs, such as rapid automatized naming or timed nonsense word reading. At times, it may be necessary to supplement the WJ IV with other instruments.
9. Dyslexia occurs across all languages; however, it affects individuals differently depending on the characteristics of their language (Mather & Wendling, 2012). The nature of a language's writing system, or its orthography, impacts the reading process. Thus, the most salient characteristics of dyslexia may differ from language to language. For example, shallow or transparent written languages, such as Spanish, Finnish, and German, have more predictable sound (phoneme)/letter (grapheme) correspondences; consequently, students more easily develop phoneme-grapheme correspondence in such languages. So for students speaking these languages, a slow reading rate may be more characteristic of dyslexia than poor phonological processing (Alvarado & Bilingual Special Education Network of Texas, 2011; Mather & Wendling, 2012; Texas Education Agency, 2014).

10. Gifted students with dyslexia, commonly referred to as twice-exceptional learners, are often not diagnosed appropriately because they may excel in some subject areas, including reading comprehension. Their strengths in oral language, knowledge, and reasoning enable them to compensate for weak decoding and encoding skills. These students may skip or misread many words when reading, but they still understand the gist of the material. Their difficulties in decoding may be attributed to carelessness, inattention, or limited motivation; therefore, their dyslexia is often not identified (Uhry & Clark, 2005). When evaluating a gifted student for dyslexia, carefully consider the extent to which discrepancies between the student's strengths and weaknesses cause frustration and interfere with the full development of his or her abilities (Silverman, 2009, 2013). Rather than relying on below average standardized test scores to identify dyslexia, consider that relative weaknesses, which are unexpected compared to a person's strengths, can suggest the existence of dyslexia (Silverman, 2013). Thus, a gifted student with dyslexia may obtain scores in the average range in basic reading skills and still experience a significant impairment. This is even more likely if the student has received systematic, explicit reading interventions in the past. Furthermore, a student with dyslexia who has had effective interventions may have average reading scores but may still demonstrate a significant weakness in spelling.

Alvarado, C. G., & Bilingual Special Education Network of Texas. (2011). *Best practices in special education evaluation of students who are culturally and linguistically diverse*. Retrieved from <http://www.educationeval.com/articles>

Mather, N., & Wendling, B. J. (2012). *Essentials of dyslexia: Assessment and intervention*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Silverman, L. K. (2009). The two-edged sword of compensation: How the gifted cope with learning disabilities. *Gifted Education International*, 25, 115–130.

Silverman, L. K. (2013). *The psych 101 series: Giftedness 101*. New York, NY: Springer.

Texas Education Agency. (2014). *The dyslexia handbook: Procedures concerning dyslexia and related disorders*. Austin, TX: Author.

Uhry, J. K., & Clark, D. B. (2005). *Dyslexia: Theory and practice of instruction* (3rd ed.). Austin, TX: PRO-ED.