

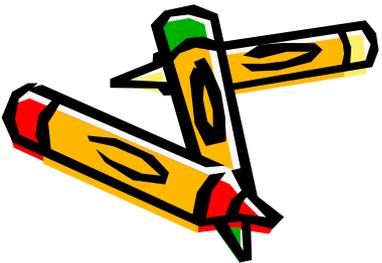
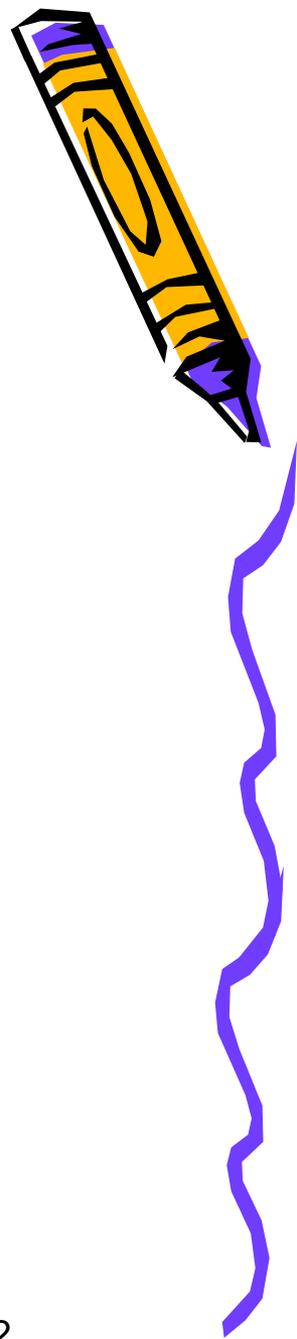
# **Understanding and Addressing Learning Differences / Disabilities in Your Classroom**

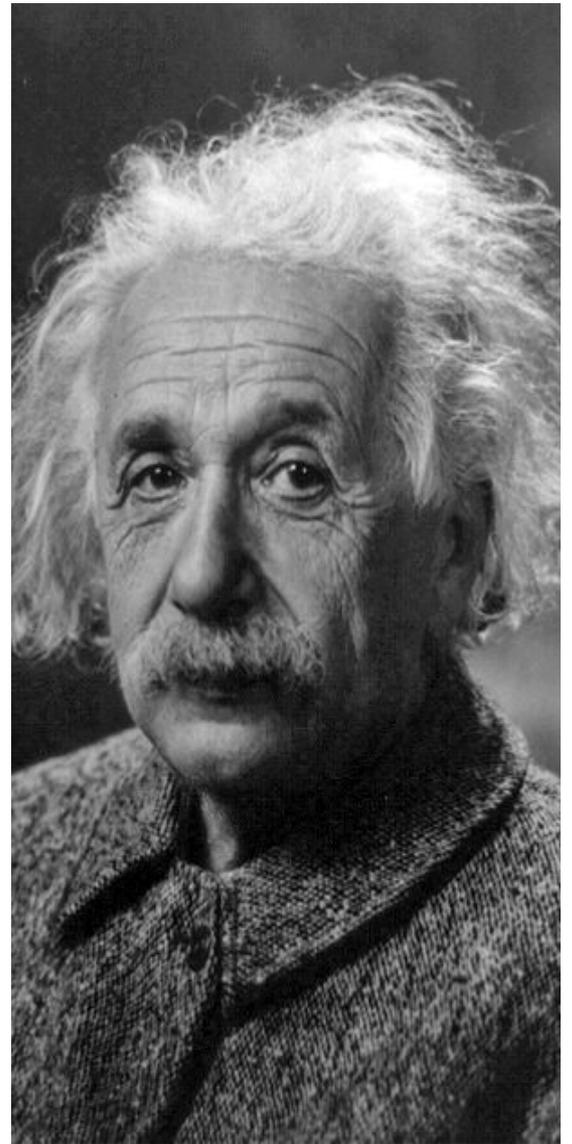
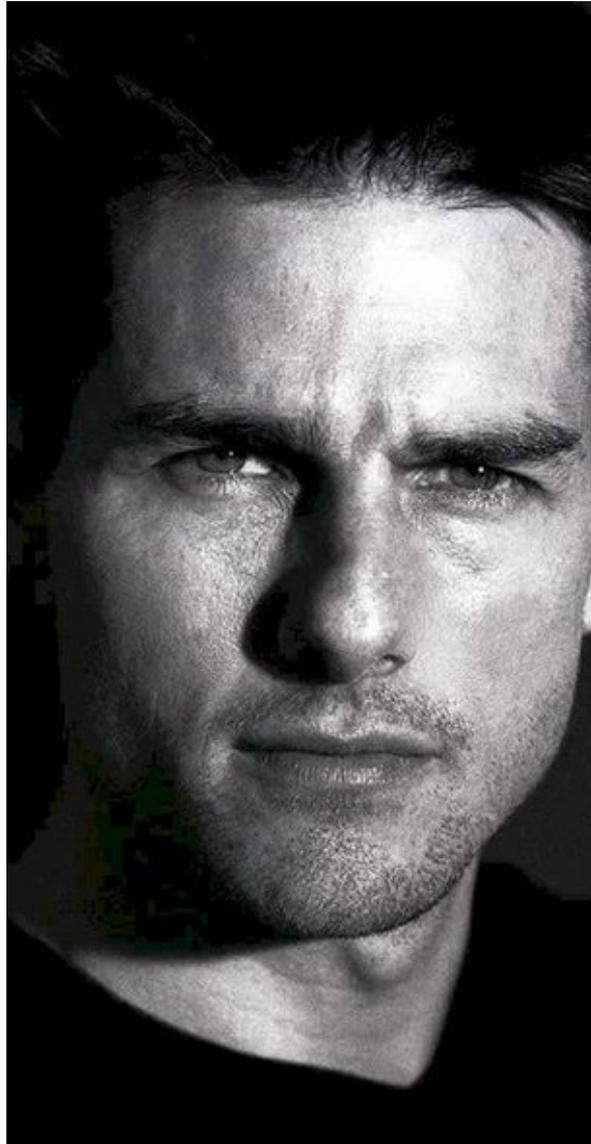
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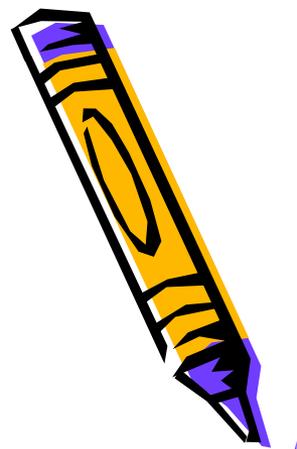
DMV Spanish Heritage Language Pedagogical Workshops

Oct. 20, 2018





# We Are Students with Learning Difficulties



# STORY CIRCLE

“On a crisp winter morning, Melissa decided to go shopping...”

Now, we are going to start the story without using the consonant N .

Today is Melissa’s first day of class...”

# PARAGRAPH WRITING

## USING WRITING HAND

Little Red Riding Hood, also known as Little Red Cape, is a French Fairy tale about a young girl and a Big Bad Wolf.

## USING OPPOSITE HAND

The story has been changed considerably in its history and subject to numerous modern adaptations and readings.





# Alphabet Soup 1

- **LD** = Learning disability / difference / difficulty
- **SLD** = Specific Learning Disability
- **CLD** = Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
- **CLDE** learner = Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional learner
- **GTLD** = Gifted and Talented Learning Disabled
- **IEP** = Individual Education Program
- **RTI** = Response to Intervention

# Alphabet Soup 2

- **DR = Disproportionate representation**  
(Overrepresentation or underrepresentation)
  - Unequal proportions of culturally diverse students in special education programs
    - African American
    - Chicano/Latino

# Who is the Student with mild/moderate LDs?

- Average or above average intelligence
- Underachievement in one or more areas in school despite appropriate educational opportunities
- Can be highly creative and think outside the box



# DEFINITION

## (Not a Legal Definition)

A learning disability is a **neurological disorder**. In simple terms, a learning disability results from a difference in the way a person's brain is **"wired."** Individuals with learning disabilities are as smart or smarter than their peers. **But they may have difficulty reading, writing, spelling, reasoning, recalling and/or organizing information if left to figure things out by themselves or *if taught in conventional ways.***

# Learning Disabilities (LD)

- Types of LD identified by the specific processing problem
  - **Getting information into the brain (Input)**
  - **Making sense of this information (Integration, Organization)**
  - **Storing and later retrieving this information (Memory)**
  - **Getting this information back out (Output)**
- Neurologically-based processing problems
- Life long
- Are the same for student in multiple languages

# Input (Processing) Problems

- **Auditory Perception** (Also called Receptive Language)
  - Difficulty distinguishing subtle differences in sound
  - Difficulty distinguishing individual phonemes as quickly as normal
  - Difficulty with auditory figure-ground. Difficulty identifying which sound(s) to listen to when there is more than one sound
- **Visual Perception**
  - Difficulty distinguishing subtle differences in shapes (graphemes) (rotate or reverse letters)
  - Difficulty blending information from both eyes to have depth perception
  - Figure-ground problem, confusing which figure(s) to focus on from the page covered with many words and lines (Where's Waldo?)

# Integration Problems

- **Sequencing**
  - Difficulty learning information in the proper sequence
- **Abstraction**
  - Difficulty inferring the meaning of individual words or concepts. Jokes, idioms, or puns are often not understood (Literal meaning)
- **Organization**
  - Difficulty organizing materials, losing, forgetting, or misplacing things or difficulty organizing the environment
  - Difficulty organizing time
  - (Organization over time is called Executive Function.)

# Memory

- Three types of memory
- **Working memory**
  - Ability to hold on to pieces of information until the pieces blend into a full thought or concept
- **Short-term memory**
  - Active process of storing and retaining information for a limited period of time
- **Long-term memory**
  - Information that has been stored and that is available over a long period of time
- Difficulty with auditory memory or visual memory

# Output (Production) Problems

- Information is communicated by means of words (language output) or through muscle activity such as writing, drawing, gesturing (motor output)
- **Language Disability** (Expressive language disability)
  - Language output = spontaneous or on demand
  - Most problems with language on demand
- **Motor Disability** (fine motor disability)
  - Writing
  - Manipulation

# Common LDs

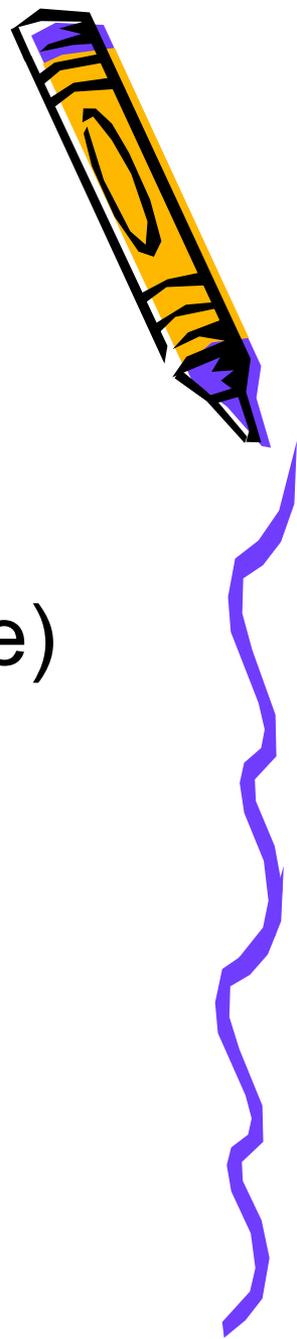
- Writing (Dysgraphia)
- Reading (Dyslexia)
- Speaking (Dyspraxia)
- Math (Dyscalculia)
  
- ADHD (accompanied by LDs)

# DYSGRAPHIA

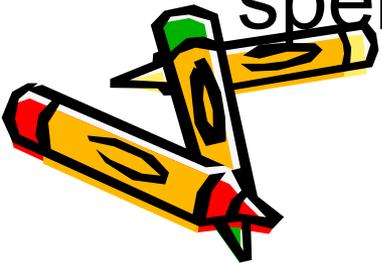
## Writing

An individual with dysgraphia has a difficult time with **the physical task of forming letters and words** using a pen and paper and has difficulty **producing legible handwriting.**

# Written Language Problems



- Write a-grammatical despite lots of grammar instruction
- Leave out small words (for, of; en, de) or parts of words (-ing; ando)
- Mix up word order
- Use inappropriate or no punctuation
- Have problems with accents and spelling



# PUNCTUATION MARKS

“King Charles walked and talked half an hour later his head was cut off...”

“King Charles walked and talked; half an hour later, his head was cut off...”

# DYSLEXIA

Individuals with dyslexia may mix up letters within words and sentences while reading. They may have difficulty spelling words correctly while writing. Letter reversals are common. Some individuals with dyslexia have a difficult time with navigating and route-finding tasks as they are easily confused by directions and spatial information.

# DYSLEXIA

I li

ih, ym ame ssand I ek tormu.

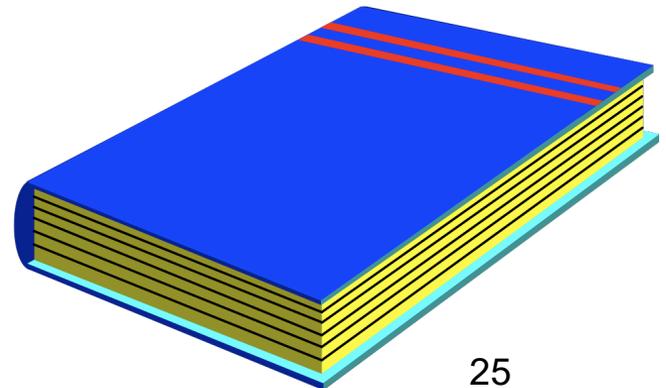
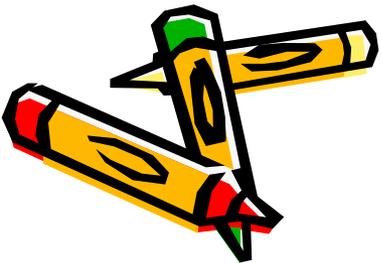
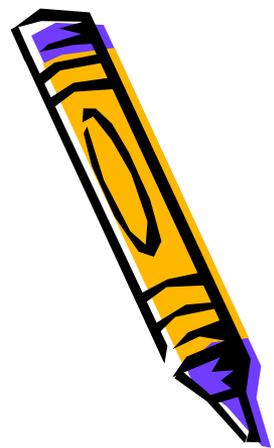
n am

Hi, my name is Sam and I like to run.

# DYSLEXIA

## Reading Problems

- Can decode, but cannot access meaning
- Lack of appropriate **schema** (background pattern)



# Schema

- A
- are
- Between
- consists
- continuously
- corresponding
- curve
- draws
- Graph
- If
- isolated
- Know
- known
- of
- Often
- One
- only
- points
- Relation
- set
- show
- Table
- the
- To
- values
- vary
- variables
- variation

# Importance of schema

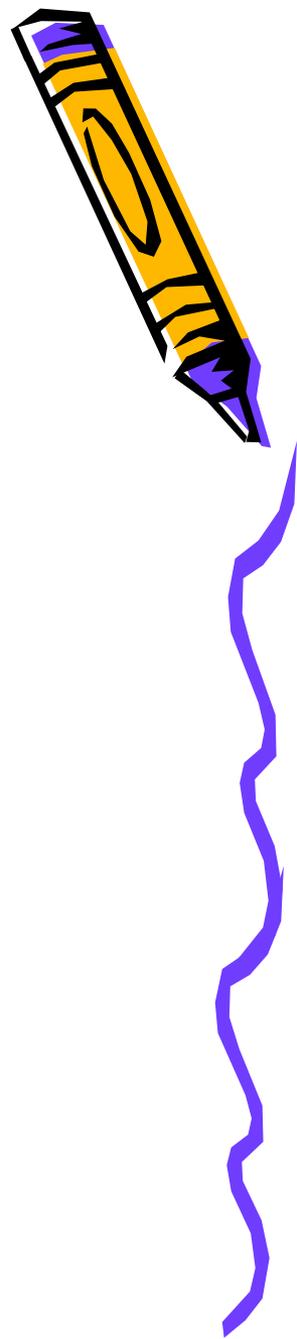
- If the known relation between the variables consists of a table of corresponding values, the graph consists only of the corresponding set of isolated points. If the variables are known to vary continuously, one often draws a curve to show the variation.

# DYSPRAXIA

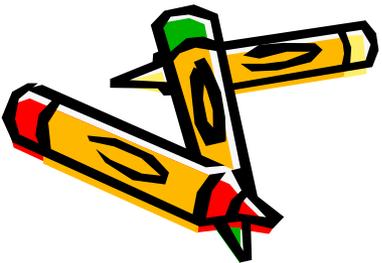
## Speaking

A person with dyspraxia **may mix up words and sentences while talking.** There is often a discrepancy between language comprehension and language production.

# Oral Language Problems



- Cannot repeat words/sentences accurately
- Jumble sounds in words
- Use imprecise, inaccurate, or limited vocabulary
- Use immature syntax
- Can't comprehend oral directions



# Social / Behavioral / Affective Skills

## Non-Verbal

- Poor organization
- Poor time planning
- Poor abstract reasoning
- Poor visual-spatial organization
  
- Disorganized in life, time, space
- Lack of executive function



# **Social / Behavioral / Affective Skills**

## **Non-Verbal related**

- Lack of social skills
  - Misreads social cues, facial expressions
  - Has difficulty relating to authority figures
  - Literal Interpretation

# Some AD(H)D Symptoms in Teens

- “Spaces out” when listening to someone or doing assigned reading.
- Often needs to re-read information or ask people to repeat what they’ve said because it doesn’t “stick” the first time.
- Often gets sidetracked from tasks unless she’s doing something that’s especially interesting to her.
- Says or does things without considering what might happen as a result.
- <https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/signs-symptoms/could-your-child-have/signs-of-adhd-at-different-ages><sub>33</sub>

# Characteristics of Typical ELLs that May be Mistaken as Signs of Learning or Behavioral Disabilities

<b>Learning issues</b>	<b>Possible reason for ELLs showing difficulty not related to LD</b>
Academic learning difficulties	It takes at least 5 years for ELLs to demonstrate native-like functioning.
Language disorder	Lack of fluency and correct syntax is normal in learning an L2. Needing additional wait time may be viewed as a language processing issue, instead of a characteristic of second language acquisition.
Attention and memory problems	Students may lack previous knowledge to help them focus and remember information.
Aggressive behavior	Learners lack familiarity in culturally appropriate behavior.

# So What Do We Do?

- No magic bullet. LDs can't be fixed.
- Advocate for student
- Consider cultural aspects
  - Storytelling (Latino) vs. Story building (US)
  - Adult narration, little interaction vs. adult & child co-construction of story
- Provide accommodations / modifications
- Teach compensation strategies
- Teach Strategies Training (Self-Regulated Strategy Development; Metascript; Plans of Attack)

# Plan of Attack

- **DARE**
- **Develop** topic sentence
- **Add** supporting detail
- **Reject** arguments from the other side
- **End** with a conclusion (Chalk, Hagan-Burke, Burke in Hoover et al. p. 235 )

# Metascript Example: Story Grammar (Harris & Graham)

Table 2-2. The Story Grammar Strategy Steps

1. Think of a story that you would like to share with others.
2. Let your mind be free.
3. Write down the story part reminder:  
W-W-W  
What = 2  
How = 2
4. Make notes of your ideas for each part.
5. Write your story— use good parts, add, elaborate, or revise as you write or afterwards, and make sense.

## *The Story Grammar Mnemonic*

Who is the main character; who else is in the story?

When does the story take place?

Where does the story take place?

What does the main character do or want to do; what do other characters do?

What happens when the main character does or tries to do it?

What happens with other characters?

How does the story end?

How does the main character feel; how do other characters feel?

# Accommodations vs. Modifications

## Accommodations

- practices and procedures for **equitable access** during instructions & assessments in presentation; response; setting & scheduling
- indicate **changes how content** is: 1) taught, 2) made accessible, and/or 3) assessed
- **do not change** what the student is expected to master; **objectives same**

## Modifications

- practices that **change**, lower, or alter learning expectations
- instructional level, benchmarks, number of key concepts to be mastered **changed**

# Accommodations Examples

- **Requiring a student to learn less material:** shorter units or lessons, fewer pages or problems
- **Reducing assignments and assessments:** student only needs to complete the appropriate problems or items
- **Revising assignments / assessments to make them easier:** crossing out half of the response choices on a multiple-choice test so that a student only has to pick from two options instead of four
- **Giving students hints or clues to correct responses on assignments and tests**

# Modification Examples

- A locally developed **course substituted** for a general education course (e.g., Life Skills courses, Functional Mathematics).
- **Selected standards** will be assessed instead of all the standards for the grade level course.
- Off-level instruction and performance expectations in a general education setting are **below grade level and instructional standards**.

# What Do We Do In the Classroom?

- Support when needed: Class
  - Taping class
  - Extended time for coursework
  - Note takers or tutors; tutorial support
  - Providing notes; bigger print
  - Preferred seating; Secret signal
  - Alternatives
  - Explicit instruction; structure and more structure

# What Do We Do In the Classroom?

- Support when needed: Evaluation
  - Untimed exams
  - Alternative testing formats (e.g., oral exams)
  - Private or semi-private testing
  - Not counting spelling errors
  - Reference materials during test

# Accommodations Examples

## Especially Good for Bilinguals

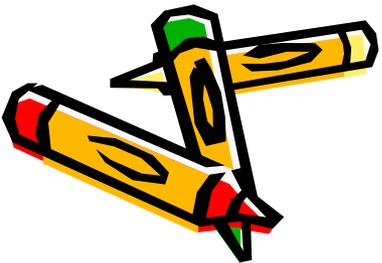
- Use test items that are **high in comprehension** and appropriate to language level with predictable language formats
- When scoring, **allow for differences in dialects** and not count dialectical differences as errors
- **Reword or expand instructions** and check understanding



# Accommodations Examples

## Especially Good for Bilinguals

- **Define key words** both in English and in the student's native language
- Allow the student to use a **language dictionary**
- Present items and directions through **graphics and pictorial representations**
- Allow the student to demonstrate mastery of test materials in **alternative ways**:
  - responses in native language or dialect



**But that's not fair!**

# Are We Doing Anything Right?

- Context
- Reading process
- Writing process
- Explicit instruction
- Strategies instruction
- Kinesthetic activities (multimodal)
- MI
- Technology (apps, assistive technology and devices)

