

Dyslexic Advantage

NEWSLETTER



SAY DYSLEXIA

Mathias pr Reding

- MANAGING UNCERTAINTY
- SUPPORTING YOUNG DYSLEXICS
- PANDEMIC CLASSROOM HACKS
- DAVID SCHOENBROD CHANGEMAKER
- THE VISUAL POETRY OF REBECCA KAMEN



Fernette Eide MD, Editor

Dear Friends,

Highlight for this issue -Say Dyslexia 2.0 and Beyond Decoding, changemaker David Schoenbrod and his giveaway DC Confidential, Pandemic Hacks, and Rebecca Kamen.

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The app may be used to identify and qualify for services such as Benetech's huge free library of e-books.

Thank you volunteers Shelley Wear, Trish Seres, Dayna Russell Freudenthal, and Michelle Williams for their astute critique and proofing. Thanks to Lady Grace Belarmino for beautiful design and layout.



Editor's Note: to make our publications easier to read, we will avoid use of italics and certain types of fonts.

Newsletters can be read online **HERE**. This issue will be available on the Joomag site for 3 months and can also be downloaded as a pdf file.



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DYSLEXIA NEWS



SAY DYSLEXIA 2.0



From Chalkbeat's story, "[NYC Plans to screen nearly 200,000 students in the early grades to uncover struggling readers. Then what?](#):"

"In a massive bid to gauge reading skills following COVID-related learning disruptions, New York City's education department is introducing literacy screening for its nearly 200,000 children in kindergarten through second grade...

While the education department's screeners aren't designed to identify students at risk of having dyslexia, which is the most common learning disability, they are able to identify learning gaps in skills that are often associated with dyslexia, literacy experts say.

But many also note that screening alone will not address systemic issues that contribute to widespread literacy deficits across the city, such as uneven curriculum and inadequate teacher training.

The success of the screening will hinge on how well schools use the information and the quality of the interventions they're able to offer. That remains a big question mark, as officials have long struggled to provide rigorous literacy instruction. By third grade, close to half of students have already fallen behind grade level in reading, according to state tests."

It's good to hear that more funding is being made available to identify "struggling readers", but it does not specifically address uneven curriculum and inadequate teacher training. As a result, dyslexia may not be specifically addressed whether a student is in K-2 or grades 3-12.

WHY DYSLEXIA IDENTIFICATION IS IMPORTANT

Some educational leaders argue that struggling with reading is important, not whether a student is formally recognized as being dyslexic; but the reality is - if you know the school or test-related challenges are due to dyslexia, then there are helpful solutions to implement, strengths to utilize, associated difficulties to anticipate, results of research to apply, and legal protections like accommodations to set in place.

The idea behind FAPE or a "free appropriate public education" under section 504 is that individuals with disabilities should receive an education "designed to meet their educational needs."

Dyslexic students benefit by explicit structured literacy instruction, accommodations like extra time and writing software, and audiobooks and e-books, and concepts like "big picture first." Multisensory instruction also tends to help with subject learning, specialized topics like math, and also certain aspects of writing.

And what dyslexic students really benefit from are teachers who know what to expect when it comes to dyslexia (including the dyslexic advantage!).

SELF-ADVOCACY

What age can students begin to advocate for themselves? Elementary school is not too soon, but they may need to practice with you and it's helpful to have specific written requests down on paper.

For many students, just being able to say, "I'm dyslexic, and here are some things that can help me be successful in your class" and hand over a list of accommodations, can help tremendously in getting the school year off on the right foot.

Students should know that they may need to remind their teacher about accommodations if they need them. In some classrooms, where a third or more of the students may have an IEP or 504 plan, it may not be easy to remember who among their new students may need what. If students are all in masks, sound processing difficulties may be compounded.



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PANDEMIC

LEARNING THE SCRIPT

Even if your student hasn't been formally identified and perhaps doesn't have an IEP or 504, they can ask for what they believe they need and request an assessment when it is available. For those with a smartphone or iPad, there is the [Neurolearning App](#) which identifies dyslexia. It does not replace comprehensive testing, but also know that it has been useful in supporting the need for accommodations for some students. Unlike many online and early screeners, it tests children and adults from age 7 through 70 specifically for dyslexia and also generates a detailed report. It is accepted as documentation for the free ebook resource, [Bookshare](#)

Examples of What to Say (if relevant for your student):

- "Can I get an audiobook for this?"
- "I need extra time on tests."
- "Because I'm dysgraphic, I need to type my papers and exams."
- "I can't write fast enough to take down notes in class. Can I have a copy of your teacher's notes?"

Students who have certain apps or assistive devices, like a [scanning pen](#), can ask to use them. Students can also request to have assistive devices and apps included in their IEP or 504.

Advice for students:

Request accommodations as soon as possible in the school year even if you aren't certain that you will need them. If accommodations are in place and you've spoken to the teacher, then it's much easier requesting if an assignment or an in-test problem suddenly presents itself.

Dyslexic students may also request to not be called on to read aloud in class and other accommodations may be requested for math or foreign language.

To read more Sentence Starters for Accommodations, check [HERE](#) for grade schoolers and [HERE](#) for middle schoolers.

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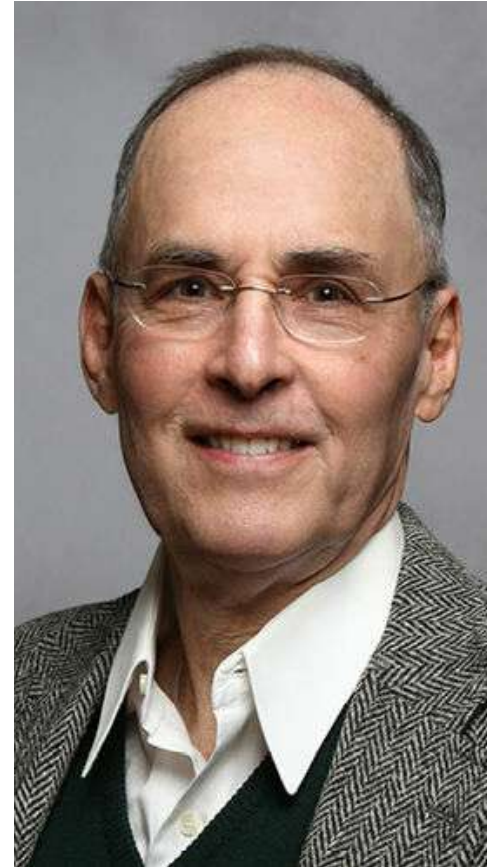


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DAVID SCHOENBROD PROBLEM SOLVER AND CHANGEMAKER

" The fundamental wiring of the brain that causes dyslexia also enhances our ability to see the big picture..."

**- Attorney, Author, and Professor
David Schoenbrod**



David Schoenbrod is a big picture changemaker. In fact, in his impactful life, he's been able to solve huge problems that many may have thought to be impossible.

Take the issue of lead in gasoline. The Environmental Protection Agency has estimated that some 68 million children had toxic exposures to lead from gasoline, causing brain injury and increased risk of other kinds of organ damage.

What David was able to identify, though, is how large systems like the federal government (Congress in particular) and other organizations can drag their collective feet in solving issues that may put health at risk.

David, at the Natural Resources Defense Council at the time, launched a series of lawsuits to force the EPA to regulate lead in gasoline and establish a national air quality standard. Only after winning the lawsuits, did the EPA move to do what it should have done. There were further delays (and more lawsuits, David has clear ideas about solving problems like this - read more [HERE](#)), but what needed to happen, finally happened, and air became safer.

INSPIRATION

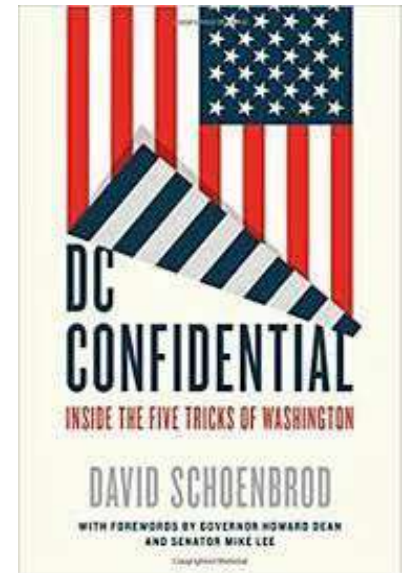
Another example of a complex problem that David helped solve with his big picture strengths is the problem of the Metropolitan Transit Authority in New York. How's that for a multi-faceted and seemingly intractable problem?

The dilemma in the late 1970's was that the MTA was creating a chaotic and dangerous situation, not providing appropriate maintenance for their vehicles, reducing lines to save money, and accruing a deficit that was increasingly difficult to repay. Politicians did not want to increase fares and they passed the blame along by asking the federal government to pay.

In this case, David and his colleagues created and sent a report to the mayor of New York, but also mobilized the media (see their New York Times article [HERE](#)) and other important influencers to get everyone on the same page regarding the need to increase fares and improve the system.

David has generously gifted us with a copy of his book, *DC Confidential: Inside the 5 Tricks of Washington*. If you would like a chance at a free copy, email: team@dyslexicadvantage.org

To see David at our Conference on Dyslexia and Innovation, click on the video below. For premium members, we'll be loading my interview with David in our Premium podcasts area.



In David's talk, he shared how he began to recognize his strengths when he was able to draw a map of an area that he only knew from driving through in a car; his story was one of the inspirations for our [ARTSHARE](#) program.

MY PANDEMIC HACK for CLASSES

Shelley Wear, a long-time volunteer on our Dyslexic Advantage editorial team shared these pandemic hacks for her classroom. Thanks Shelley!

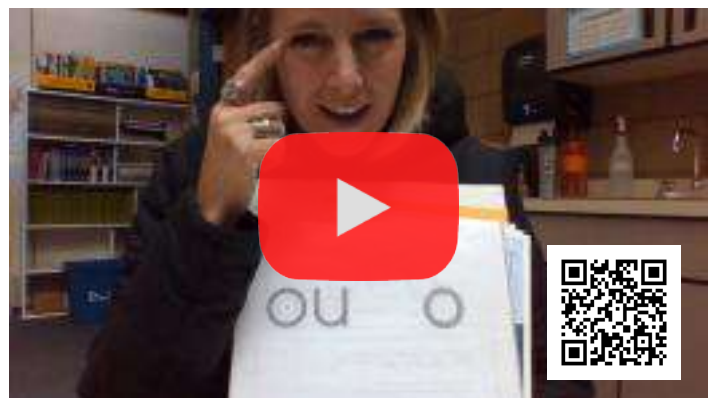


Shelley Wear
Nicoma Park Middle School
Dyslexic Advantage Team

The struggle is real to make sure students understand what you are saying with a mask on. I purchased a personal amplifier (small box with microphone headset) and it has been a game changer for my classroom. Students are much more attentive and I believe it has really helped.



I am also using a multisensory approach to decoding, teaching [Visual Phonics](#). The paras have overheard students talking about how fun it is when kids are in the hallways and think no one is listening. I am relieved, because I have limited access to middle school materials to teach decoding and a large percentage of my LD students are struggling with sound to symbol recognition. Using Visual Phonics gives me a kinesthetic way to show them what each sound looks like as it's being formed in the mouth. It's a bit unorthodox, but I have found that a greater number of students make progress in decoding with this in my tool bag. It gives me a simultaneous visual /kinesthetic/ aural way to communicate to students how to fix errors in reading throughout the year. It's so much better than a red pen...and personally meets the student right where they are." Visual Phonics was originally developed for hearing-impaired.



DYSLEXIA: BEYOND DECODING

If dyslexic students are struggling to decode words, a program of intensive structured literacy will help - but help with phonological awareness may not be sufficient to help them become fluent readers. Why? Because reading fluency, or the ability to read with "speed, accuracy, and proper expression" is also influenced by other factors such as rapid naming.

Recently [researchers](#) found that:

"most adolescents (with dyslexia) were classified as either naming speed only (about a third of the group) or double deficit when defining impairment using performance thresholds to classify groups.

This may suggest that although early phonological deficits are amenable to remediation, identification of language symbols fails to become automatized in most individuals with dyslexia and may require more targeted intervention."

Their results warned about potential errors of dyslexia identification when using simple phonological tests like the CTOPP alone:

"In our sample, over half of students demonstrated intact phonological awareness by the CTOPP, but deficient naming speed performed below the 16th percentile on WIAT Pseudoword Decoding...

Similarly, just over a third of those with no deficit in CTOPP rapid naming skill, performed below the 16th percentile on a separate reading fluency task (Fernetto: indicating the CTOPP is not a sensitive test in adolescent students!). More importantly, a large percent of the students deemed to have "no deficit" using the CTOPP 16th percentile cut score were impaired in one or more academic or processing tasks, and many more had skills that were between the 16th and 25th percentiles. In other words, adolescents who would not be classified as dyslexic using either deficit model were still found to be impaired on many reading-related tasks. Hence, use of only one test to classify children as dyslexic does not accurately capture the functional impairments they experience in real-world learning activities."

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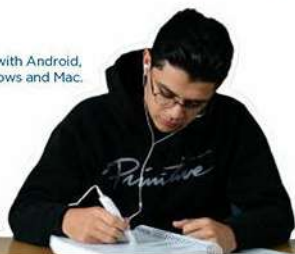
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DYSLEXIA

In fact, the double deficit group in this study also performed significantly lower than the neurotypical group on "Coding, Processing, Speed, Word Reading, Numerical Operations, TOWRE subtests, Reading Fluency, and Oral Reading." For professionals who regularly perform comprehensive dyslexia testing, these results would not be a surprise - but again alarm bells should ring about advocacy groups and school districts who believe that CTOPP or DIBELS tests are sufficient to identify and determine appropriate educational recommendations for students with dyslexia.

Dyslexia specialists properly should understand the comprehensive needs of students with dyslexia - and that includes rapid automatic naming, and oral fluency, but also impacts on activities such as writing, processing speed, math, memory, and foreign language learning.

Another important point raised by this study is that phonological decoding is a better predictor of reading in the early grades before children have established large sight word vocabularies, but for older children, rapid naming is a better predictor in older children.

In their review of the literature, Harrison and Stewart also included mention of the interesting observation by Lovett et al. who found that "children with naming speed deficits had higher verbal reasoning abilities than those with phonological deficits. Katzir et al. (2008) found that children with naming speed or phonological deficits did not differ on single word reading accuracy, phonemic decoding accuracy, or comprehension, but the group with phonological deficits outperformed the naming speed group on reading speed measures at the word and connected text levels.

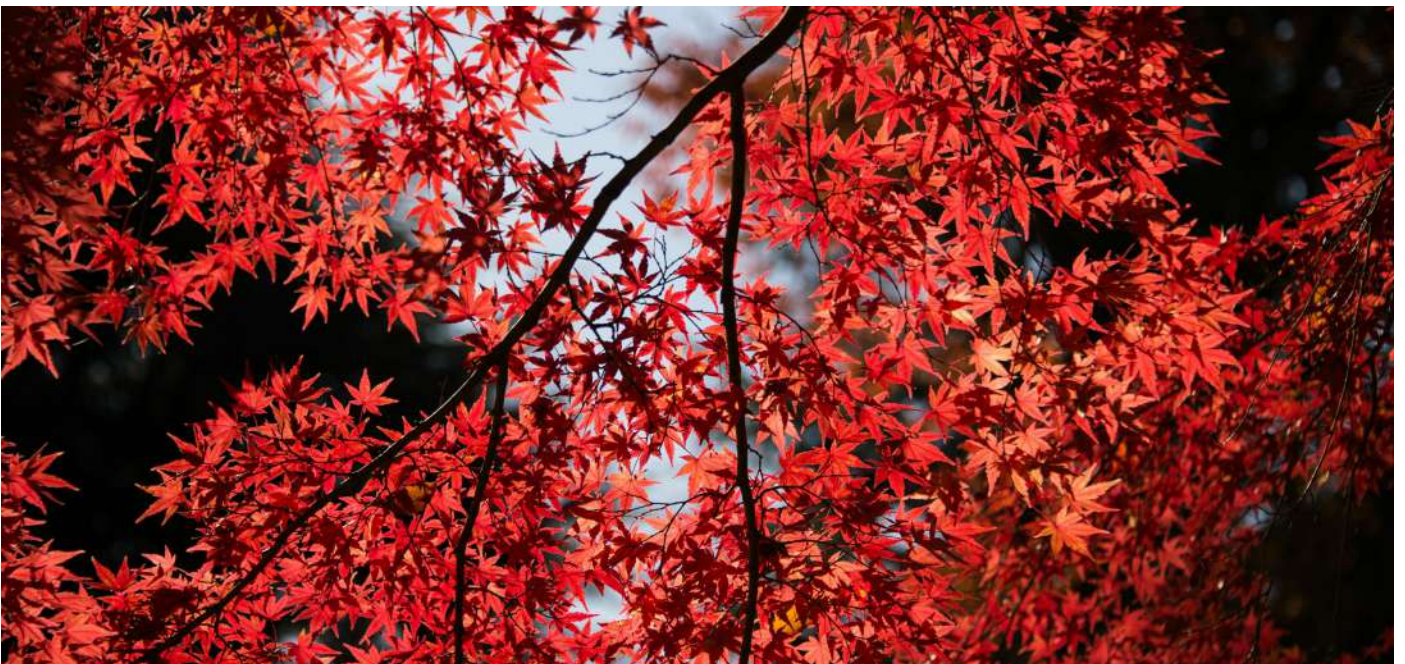
Some of the helpful take-home points of this paper and its review of the literature is that it might help professionals recognize why certain phonological- only screeners overlook many dyslexic students (especially older ones) and why significant numbers of students may adequately complete their phonological remediation, but still struggle to become fluent readers.

Mixed in with many of these studies are students who are more of the "stealth variety" - for instance, those who may be intellectually gifted, "memorize" words to the level that they can read silently with strong comprehension, but actually be quite weak in the area of nonsense word reading (words they could not memorize, so their weaknesses in phonological awareness can be seen). The students with naming speed deficits with stronger verbal reasoning abilities may disproportionately make up this subset of students; these students may be especially frustrated with conventional tasks in school because their advanced intellect has their minds racing ahead, while retrieving words may be slower and more effortful, leading to a painful gap between knowledge and expression.

What is true, is whichever pattern of dyslexic strengths and challenges a particular student may have, the better school programs should be chosen to optimize a learning program.

Dyslexia is much more than decoding.

Decoding is important - especially in the early years when students are trying to make progress learning how to read; but if we really want to help students reach the full extent of their potential, it is essential that decoding is recognized only as a first step.





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National Center for Learning Disabilities, the International Dyslexia Association have evaluated the Sunday System(r) and deemed that the program contained the required elements for teaching reading identified by the Nation Reading Panel.

AUDITORY PROCESSING AND REMOTE AND HYBRID LEARNING

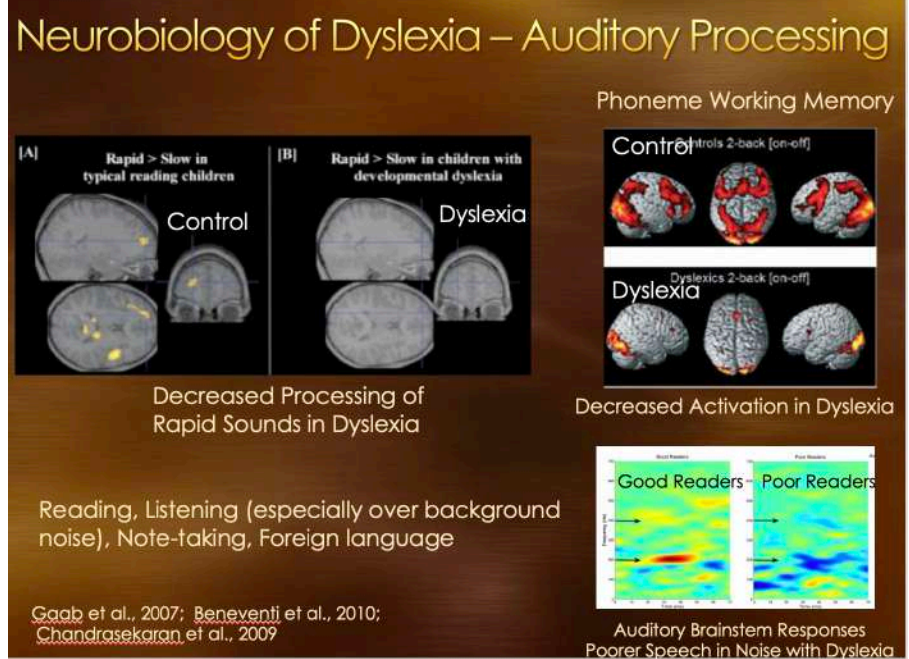
"Children with dyslexia often exhibit increased variability in sensory and cognitive aspects of hearing relative to typically developing peers." - Hornickel et al., 2012 PNAS

There is a long research history establishing auditory processing difficulties among children and adults who are dyslexic. What may be confusing to non-scientific people is that auditory processing is not simply "hearing". It relates to the complex networks in the brain that interpret what sounds are heard.

Auditory processing difficulties in dyslexic people don't present with abnormalities on simple screening hearing tests; instead, the difficulties present in tests that examine the effect of listening over background noise, for instance, or processing of rapid sounds.

The reason it's important to be aware of this is that auditory processing difficulties are often not formally overlooked and untested, although they may have significant consequences with school and work performance.

Dyslexia-related auditory processing difficulties may contribute to difficulty





LET'S TALK DYSLEXIA AWARENESS



October is just around the corner, and with it comes dyslexia awareness month. For our third year running, Scanning Pens is sponsoring **Go Red for Dyslexia Awareness**.

REDUCE DYSLEXIA STIGMA

Go Red is a global community of passionate individuals, companies, schools and organizations looking to eliminate dyslexia stigma and promote quality literacy support.

Will you join this united campaign against dyslexia?

Find out if your state was involved last year.

Why Red ?

The dreaded red, a color we've all seen throughout our education. The red marker used to highlight our mistakes is all too familiar for those with dyslexia around the world. **#GoRedForDyslexia** is reclaiming the color red and taking back its meaning to globally promote dyslexia awareness.

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AUDITORY PROCESSING

in acquiring phonological mastery, but also problems with auditory distractions, hearing over background noise, and sustained attention through listening alone. Several studies have shown that dyslexic students as a group have more difficulty hearing quick sounds - so that might explain why it's so important to pronounce slowly and with exaggeration when correcting sounds or teaching new sounds or words.

With the COVID pandemic, individuals with auditory processing difficulties may have difficulty hearing when teachers are talking through masks (sound is muffled, can't see mouth positions) and when lessons are online, they may have sound distortion and delays that make it difficult to hear sounds clearly and engage in back-and-forth online discussions.

AUDITORY PROCESSING IN PANDEMIC CLASSROOMS

- Masked teachers should be aware of that their students may have trouble accurately hearing them. Investigate personal amplifiers ([page 11](#), this issue).
- Slow down your pronunciation of new words and sounds. Use pictures, and visual examples to clarify sounds (color, capitalization).
- Present pictures of mouth positions or watch videos together with your class to see how new words or sounds are pronounced.
- If you are unable to allow students to see your mouth positions when you are speaking, then watch a high quality video where sounds and mouth positions can be seen at the same time.
- For remote classrooms, recognize that connectivity problems may interfere with accurate audio and pictures and sounds being "in sync."
- Do not grade classroom discussions for students with auditory processing difficulties. Talk to students individually about their needs and brainstorm alternative ways students can contribute to classroom discussions.

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"Once I read Summit Center's report, I finally understood why my son was so frustrated. We made the changes he needed, and everything is better now. Thank you!"

AUDITORY PROCESSING

From audiologist [Jeanane Ferre](#):

"Repeat information with associated visual cue and/or demonstration. With reduction of visual, i.e., lipreading cues/facial expressions resulting from use of facemasks, speakers should increase use of demonstration, cueing, gestures, body language, etc. to compensate.

For multistep directions, provide number of steps, e.g., "I want you to do three things", "tag" items, e.g., first, last, before, after, , and insert brief (1-2 second) pause between items.

Allow "thinking time", i.e., insert "wait time" of up to 10 seconds before expecting a response.

Ask listener to paraphrase instructions to ensure that information was heard AND understood.

Monitor your speaking rate. Children do not process speech as quickly as adults (Hull, 2014).

3-5 yr-olds process speech at 120-124wpm

5-7 yr-olds process at 128-130 wpm

5-6th graders at 135 wpm

Middle school-high school at 135-140 wpm

Adults process speech at 160-180 wpm"

Her list of accommodations includes advanced notice of material (e.g study guide) at the beginning of a unit, audiobooks, copies of teacher notes, "hard copies" of materials through e-learning, limit oral exams, use multiple choice or "closed set" type tests, extended time for tests, option for recorded copy of remote lectures, listening breaks throughout the day to minimize auditory fatigue.

She encourages students to ask for repetition and clarification when needed and use of digital recordings and smart pens or note-taking apps for routine classroom use.

DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE PREMIUM SUBSCRIPTION



August 2021 Premium



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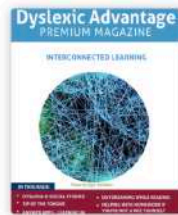
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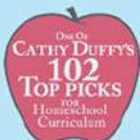
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THE VISUAL POETRY OF REBECCA KAMEN

"It wasn't until I became a college professor myself that a friend and fellow teacher figured out that I had dyslexia... I go out in the world and learn through experience, such as talking to astrophysicists and neuroscientists in their laboratories" - Rebecca Kamen

Rebecca Kamen is a connector. As an artist using physical materials, she enjoys learning from and interacting with scientists, philosophers, and others with diverse perspectives on scientific phenomena. The art she creates is also very personal and in the past COVID years it took on an even greater personal dimension when she was diagnosed with a optic nerve tumor that created visual hallucinations.

In 2019, Rebecca began experiencing bouts of vertigo which she said created a link between her "inner" and "outer" eye. Look at the movement and explosive motions of paint in her *Reverie 1* (right).



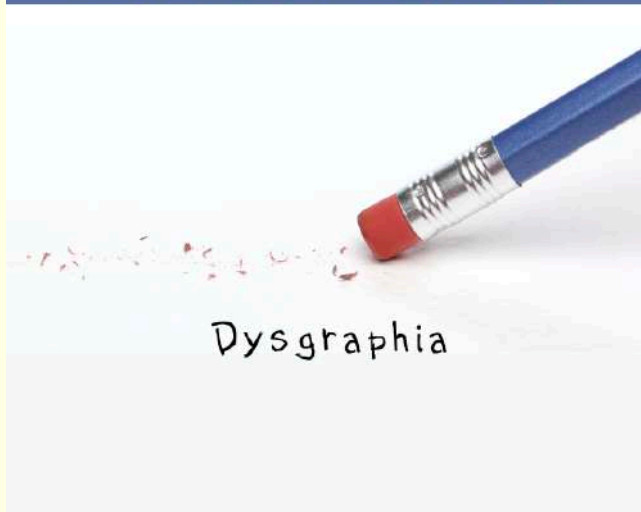
At left is *Warming 5*. Rebecca also worked with injured children creating multimedia works (painting + audio) that could express their experiences visually. One young man who was hospitalized in the ICU for several months, was so moved by the project that after he recovered, he returned to hospital to create art with others.

PREMIUM



PREMIUM ISSUE SIXTY-NINE SEPTEMBER 2021

Dyslexic Advantage PREMIUM MAGAZINE



THE DYSGRAPHIA ISSUE

- What Kind of Dysgraphia?
- White Noise Improves Reading & Memory
- Dr Sara Renzulli on Learning
- Dyslexia and Dysgraphia
- How to Keep Writing During the Pandemic
- Math with Multiple Representations

- WHAT KIND OF DYSGRAPHIA?
- WHITE NOISE IMPROVES READING SKILLS & MEMORY
- DR SARA RENZULLI : LEARNING
- DYSLEXIA & DYSGRAPHIA: EXAMPLES
- HOW TO KEEP WRITING DURING THE PANDEMIC
- MATH USING MULTIPLE REPRESENTATIONS

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INSPIRATION

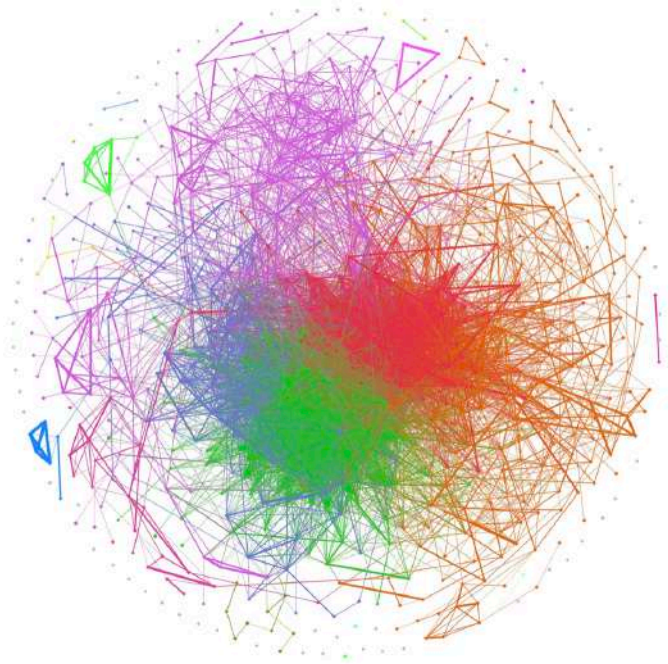
Rebecca's interest in the scientific experience resulted in her crossing paths with [scientists](#) who study the basis of curiosity.

Interestingly, when they studied Rebecca's process in coming up with ideas, they found that she made large leaps between ideas:

"This isn't just about information seeking in the way it is for the hunters and the busybodies. This is jumping across networks and pulling pieces of information together to make something new, like a work of art," says David Lydon-Staley. "I think that's why Rebecca's art is so engaging because it takes disparate concepts and creates something new and interesting out of them."

Said Danielle S. Bassett (Professor of Bioengineering, UPenn) about working with Rebecca:

"I find it really interesting and exciting to work with people who are not familiar with the details of the science—it's almost like looking through [Kamen's] eyes at the science. The process of things becoming strange makes you question the assumptions of your models, and that separation is something that is so valuable to a scientist."



The network visualization that depicts Kamen's idea-generating process. (Image: Dale Zhou)

"Now more than ever, it's important to inspire people to be curious as a way of reconnecting them to their creative self." - Rebecca Kamen



Struggling Students in Pandemic: Extra Help or Disability Services?

Chalkbeat



Dyslexia and Innovation Symposium Online

**Montana State University
(free event, registration limited to 500)**



How Artificial Intelligence Helped Me with My Dyslexia (then she became a Tech CEO)

The Guardian



Helping Dyslexic Students Navigate Online College

SmartBrief



Comic Novels Help Student with Dyslexia

Hub Dallas ISD



I'm a Kindergarten Teacher and the Way I've Been Teaching Reading is Wrong

Today's Parent

Identify Learning Needs with Remote Assessments

assessment | consultation | counseling

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"Once I read Summit Center's report, I finally understood why my son was so frustrated. We made the changes he needed, and everything is better now. Thank you!"



"I grew up prior to the discovery of the computer, and curiosity sparked and served as a catalyst for my understanding of the world around me. To fuel my curious nature, I began taking things apart to try to understand how they work...For me the act of disassembling and assembling helped me gain a greater understanding of the unknown and planted its seeds for using this form of investigation in my art science practice." - Rebecca Kamen

Above: Art inspired by the periodic table. References [here](#) and [here](#).