

HOMEWORK TIPS FOR PARENTS OF DYSLEXIC STUDENTS

Below are some tips to help make homework a more profitable experience.

ESTABLISHING A ROUTINE

Develop a daily homework routine. A written or visual plan put in a prominent place is ideal. It should be flexible enough to take into account after-school activities. Include revision of subjects as well as set homework tasks.

Give breaks between tasks. Work out the best time for your child to do their homework. Keep in mind that your child may be very tired after school – they have had to work harder than their peers because of their dyslexia. They may need a break before starting homework. Daily reading is essential; plenty of practice is required for students to develop and master literacy skills.

GETTING STARTED

The homework place needs to be quiet, with a cleared space for work and items required at hand e.g. pens, pencils, rubber, books, etc. The kitchen table is suitable if close supervision is required at busy times.

The dyslexic student can become discouraged when faced with large amounts of work. Chunk homework tasks into manageable parts. Read instructions aloud when you know it is hard for them to decode accurately. Help your child to generate ideas for writing tasks and projects before they start work. Scribe for your child at the planning stage so that they can get their ideas on paper more accurately. Encourage your child to produce quality work rather than rushing tasks. Use of a computer to present homework often makes a positive difference to motivation because re-drafting is easier.

CHECKING AND MONITORING WORK

Help your child to learn editing, self-checking skills so they can go over their own work more independently as they get older.

For example, a simple process like COPS can be useful when proof reading work: C = Capitals. O = overall appearance. P = punctuation. S = spelling.

If they are slow to complete work, encourage them to use a timer and see how much work they can complete in five minutes. Remember that if homework is regularly taking too long, discuss this with the teacher. Give lots of praise as they complete homework tasks. Be specific about what they have done well.

ORGANISATION

Encourage your child to keep their school notes and work together in folders so they don't get lost or damaged. Organise notes into subjects, and ensure that they are filed regularly. Colour coding of subjects can greatly assist organisation and planning. Check that your child is bringing correct books and equipment to school each day. Develop a visual or written plan if this is an area of difficulty.

STUDY SKILLS

Build up independent work skills in your child and problem solving strategies when they are "stuck" or not sure of how to go about homework.

For example, get your child to think about several different ways they could complete the task correctly. They can also think about who they can ask for help when they have tried other strategies.

Revise work with your child before examinations. Encourage them to make notes, underline key words, draw pictures, etc. when studying to aid their memory.