



Developing the  
Potential of the  
Dyslexic Learner



Building Foundations.  
Enabling Success.

Since 1959, The Schenck School has been dedicated to the education of students with dyslexia. Using the highly-effective Orton-Gillingham Approach, the School teaches students to overcome individual learning differences and return to a traditional academic program as quickly as possible.

Experience has shown that people with dyslexia are often above-average in intelligence and highly creative, having a heightened ability to solve complex problems. When they successfully learn how to read and write - to decipher the letters on the page - they are able to realize and enjoy their unique gifts and talents.

### *The Schenck School:*


- Promotes an environment of acceptance where students can develop self-confidence, build self-esteem and better understand their dyslexia
- Provides a close, supportive atmosphere in classrooms with low student-teacher ratios
- Ensures all its teachers are extensively trained in the Orton-Gillingham Approach and kept abreast of the latest research on effective teaching methods
- Is one of a select group nationwide and the only school in Georgia accredited by the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators as both a school and a teacher training program



# SIGNS OF DYSLLEXIA

The word “dyslexia” is broadly defined as difficulty (dys) with the written word (lexis). Though often associated with transposing or reversing letters, dyslexia is far more complex. The range of learning deficits includes difficulty with areas such as reading and written language and varies from one person to another. Frequently, children with dyslexia will have a parent, sibling or relative who is also dyslexic.

Children and adults with dyslexia have difficulty mastering basic elements of language as taught in traditional classrooms. Since language is necessary for academic learning, people with dyslexia often encounter problems with many subjects in school. Individuals with dyslexia may experience all or some of the following:

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- Difficulty establishing sound/symbol relationships
  - Difficulty learning words using a visual, whole-word approach
  - Difficulty learning to read
  - Reading comprehension difficulty due to decoding problems
  - Reversal or omission of letters, syllables and small words when reading or writing
  - Difficulty with spelling, punctuation and capitalization
  - Uneven, slow or cramped handwriting
  - Difficulty with word problems in math
  - Difficulty with application of math concepts

Signs of dyslexia often appear well before formal schooling begins. Early intervention makes a dramatic difference in a child’s development of reading and writing skills. It is important that children receive help as early as possible to minimize continued frustration and failure. The Schenck School helps students recognize the many aspects of dyslexia which helps them build confidence and learn to advocate for themselves.



# THE ORTON-GILLINGHAM APPROACH (O-G)

The Orton-Gillingham Approach is language-based, multisensory, structured, sequential and cumulative. The Approach uses the strong cognitive skills of the student and is infinitely flexible. It's a *philosophy* rather than a prescribed system. Some of the characteristics of O-G are:

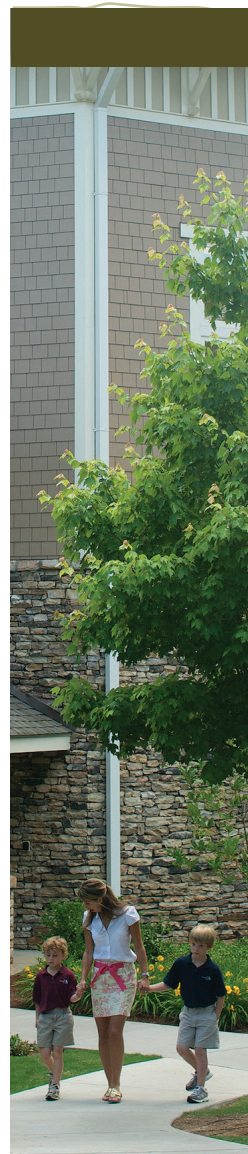
***Language Based:*** a technique of studying and teaching language, understanding the nature of human language and the mechanics involved in the language-learning process.

***Multisensory:*** action-oriented with auditory, visual and kinesthetic elements reinforcing each other for optimal learning. Students learn spelling simultaneously with reading. O-G differs from traditional phonics instruction.

***Structured, Sequential, Cumulative:*** elements of language are introduced systematically. Students begin reading and writing isolated sounds. Sounds are then blended into syllables and words. As students learn new material, they continue to review previously taught material until it becomes automatic. Vocabulary, sentence structure, composition and reading comprehension are addressed in a similar structured, sequential and cumulative manner.

***Cognitive:*** the history of language and the elements and rules which govern its structure are directly taught.

***Flexible:*** the teacher seeks to understand how each individual learns and then devises appropriate teaching strategies specifically for that student.





# The Schenck School Program

Schenck  
School  
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Students usually attend The Schenck School for two or three years before returning to traditional public or private schools. The School's student/teacher ratio is five-to-one. Classes are generally eight to eleven students with two teachers. Since no two students are exactly alike, each child's learning program is tailored to his or her particular needs. Individual instruction is a key element in helping students overcome their difficulties.

Throughout the school day, multisensory teaching knits together visual, auditory and kinesthetic pathways for students. They touch, feel, speak, hear, and see letters and words which helps them master the written language.

Experienced instruction by highly-qualified, Orton-Gillingham trained, faculty and specialists (in physical education, music, art, library and technology) provide each student the opportunity to work on individual skill-building.

*Curriculum for Kindergarten through Sixth grade includes:*

- Phonemic Awareness
- Language (includes spelling and decoding)
- Written Composition
- Reading Comprehension
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Mathematics
- English Grammar
- Social Studies and Science
- Study Skills
- Physical Education
- Art, Music, Computer and Library Skills





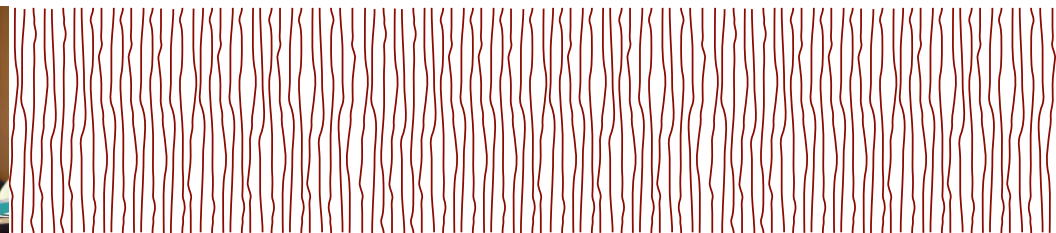
Students learn how to use textbooks, take notes, prepare an outline, use the library and prepare to take tests and exams. Homework assignments are important in helping students with essential practice for mastering proficiency and in developing responsibility.

Organizational skills are also stressed. Students must maintain notebooks, keep up with materials and turn in homework on time. Organization and time management become a part of their daily routine.

As the school year progresses, students are given more independent work, such as long-term assignments or projects. These activities prepare students to return to a more mainstream academic environment.

Parents receive weekly written reports and additional communication through formal conferences and parent meetings. Informal and standardized tests document the student's progress.

The School experience is enhanced by two additional services. Occupational Therapy addresses basic skills needed to successfully participate in school such as fine and gross motor ability, visual-motor and perceptual skills, and sensory integration. Speech and Language Therapy targets those skills which are fundamental to learning by providing re-training for articulation errors and intervention for expressive and receptive language difficulties. The inclusion of these services in the school program insures that therapists, teachers and parents work as a unified educational team to most effectively assess and address a student's deficits in these crucial areas.









The background of the page is a photograph of an indoor climbing wall. Two people are visible: one is high up on the wall, and another is at the bottom, possibly acting as a belayer. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent red filter. On the left side, there is a vertical rectangular area with a pattern of thin, white, wavy vertical lines. At the bottom of the page, there is a solid light green horizontal bar.

# Other Resources and Programs at The Schenck School

## ***Tutoring***

The School provides individual tutoring for students attending schools other than The Schenck School who need assistance in remedial reading, writing or spelling. All tutors have been trained in the Orton-Gillingham Approach. Sessions are usually for one hour, with a minimum of two sessions per week. For more information and to apply, go to the School website and select “Programs and Curriculum.”

## ***Summer Adventures Program***

The Summer Adventure Program offers both remediation and enrichment for students currently enrolled at the School as well as for students enrolled at other schools. Small class instruction by highly trained Schenck School teachers helps students maintain academic gains achieved in the previous school year.

### **Early Adventures**

**(for rising first and second grades)**

is designed to help young learners develop crucial academic skills with practice in phonics, fundamentals in written language and math concepts.

### **Reading Adventures**

**(for rising third – fifth grades)**

works to help build confidence and self-esteem through instruction in decoding, comprehension, fluency and vocabulary.

### **Literature and Creative Writing**

**(for rising third – fifth grades)**

promotes creative writing and independent reading as students complete a travelogue through sights and books about traveling through the United States or around the world.



**Middle Learning Adventures**  
(for rising sixth – eighth grades)

focuses on remediation of reading and writing skills for middle school students.

**Math Blast**  
(for rising fourth – seventh grades)

is designed for the dyslexic student to learn strategies to master math facts, techniques for problem solving and use of assistive technology.

**Kindergarten Prep**  
(for rising kindergarteners)

to help prepare for a successful start to the school year through building phonemic awareness and phonics skills with games, songs and stories while using a multi-sensory approach to learning.

**Orton-Gillingham Tutorial**  
(for rising second – fourth grades)

provides assistance to struggling readers who need to improve in the areas of reading and spelling through a personalized, structured, sequential, and multisensory instruction.

Detailed program information on the academic programs and “Afternoon Adventures” are available on the School website in early January under “Programs and Curriculum.”

***Study Lab***

Study Lab is a specialized program for full-time students at The Schenck School needing structured guidance to complete daily homework assignments. The program’s goal is to help students complete work in a



supportive environment. Experienced teachers and staff at the School clarify homework assignments, use drilling decks, interpret directions, and assist with other homework needs. The program is not designed for individualized instruction or after-school child care, but as an academic atmosphere in which students benefit from additional teacher guidance. Study Lab runs throughout the school year for an hour after the regular academic day, Monday through Thursday.

### *Teacher Training*

The Schenck School's Teacher Training Program is accredited by the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators. In 2001, The Schenck School began this course work for teachers outside of The Schenck School, teaching in both public and private schools. Classes are ongoing throughout the school year and the summer.

### *Adult Dyslexic Program*

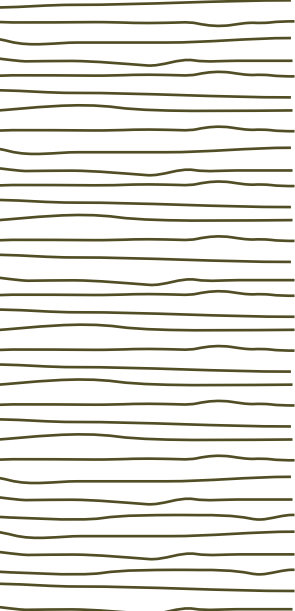
The Schenck School began offering evening classes for adults in 1999. The Adult Dyslexic Program identifies mildly to moderately dyslexic learners and helps them gain the literacy skills necessary to successfully accomplish individual goals. Using the Orton-Gillingham Approach, the program helps both beginning readers and those frustrated by the complexities of reading and spelling. The program is purposely small with classes of 10-12 students each session, which meet once a week for eight weeks. There are two sessions per year, and the faculty adapts the sessions to meet the needs of the current participants.

### *Phoenix Fun After-School Program*

A variety of after-school opportunities are available for all current students of The Schenck School. The courses are subject to change due to popularity and availability of teachers. Examples of the after-school opportunities are soccer, chess, drumming, Art Barn and film.

*(Due to COVID-19, this program is suspended for 2020)*





## JOINING THE SCHENCK SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The nature and extent of each individual student's written language disability and capacity to benefit from the School's program determines acceptance. Students are typically referred to the School by teaching professionals, psychologists, medical professionals and parents who have noticed their child is not progressing in school.

The Schenck School encourages interested families to begin the application process as early as possible. Screenings typically begin in September and are completed in March. For more information about the application process and to complete the on-line application, please see the School's website, [www.schenck.org](http://www.schenck.org).



# CORE BELIEFS

Students with dyslexia have great potential in school and life.

Academic success can be achieved through research-based teaching methods including the Orton-Gillingham Approach.

Small class size, low student-teacher ratios and multi-sensory instruction create the optimal setting.

Faculty understands dyslexia, believes in their students and are trained to meet their educational needs.

Students should develop high self-esteem, become self-advocates and view themselves as competent and independent learners.

Students are best served by an active community of parents, faculty, administrators, specialists and trustees.

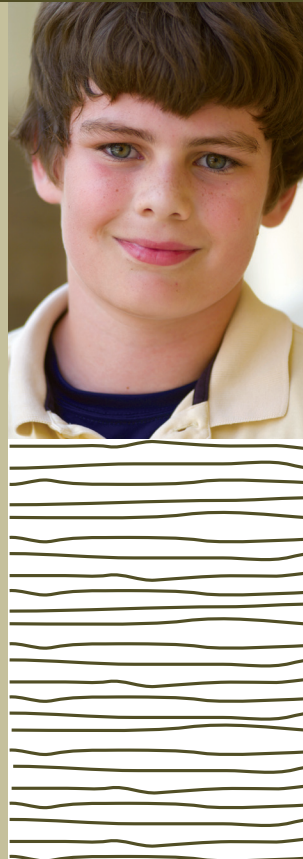
After a short term placement at The Schenck School, students leave with a firm foundation for continued learning.

## ACCREDITATIONS

- Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators (AOGPE)
- Georgia Association of Private Schools for Exceptional Children (GAPSEC)
- Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS)
- Southern Association of College and Schools (SACS)

## AFFILIATIONS

- National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)
- Atlanta Area Association of Independent Schools (AAAIS)
- Georgia Independent Schools Association (GISA)
- Atlanta Area Technology Educators (AATE)
- International Dyslexia Association (IDA)
- Learning Disabilities Association (LDA)
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)



# THE SCHENCK SCHOOL MISSION

Build a solid educational  
foundation for students  
with dyslexia and develop  
their rich potential.



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