


# 5 Self-Advocacy Sentence Starters for Grade-Schoolers With Dyslexia



By Amanda Morin





**Self-advocacy** is an important skill for even young kids to develop. But sometimes it's hard for grade-schoolers to know what to say. Here are some sentence starters you can teach kids with dyslexia to practice speaking up for what they need.

## 1. "I need help with directions."

**The situation:** The teacher doesn't say all of the directions out loud, and your child is having a hard time making sense of the written ones.

**Your child can go up to the teacher and say:** "Can I talk through the directions with you?"

**Your child can later say to you or the IEP team:** "I can do the work once I understand the directions. But it's hard for me when they're all in writing."

## 2. "It's part of my learning plan."

**The situation:** A substitute teacher doesn't realize your child uses audiobooks during reading time. The substitute tells your child to leave the listening station and sit somewhere else to do the reading.

**Your child can go up to the substitute and say:** "I use audiobooks as part of my learning plan. I have dyslexia and

they make it easier for me to follow along.”

**Your child can talk to the regular teacher later and say:**

“The substitute didn’t know that I can go to the listening station for reading. I’m worried it will happen again. Can you help?”

### **3. “Can you help me with a problem?”**

**The situation:** A classmate asks your child, “Why do you always leave the room during reading?”

**Your child can say to the teacher after class:** “Kids are asking why I leave for reading class. I don’t know what to say. Can you help me come up with an answer?”

### **4. “I don’t want to stand out.”**

**The situation:** Your child is upset about reading “baby books” while other kids are reading chapter books.

**Your child can say to the teacher after class:** “Can you help me find books I can read that don’t seem so babyish? I like learning about dinosaurs. Are there other books about dinosaurs I could read?”

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## 5. “I need help staying on track.”

**The situation:** Your child can't find the right place during read-aloud time.


**Your child can raise a hand and say:** “I’m sorry, I lost my place. Which page and paragraph are we on?”

**Your child can say to you or the IEP team:** “I need a way to keep my place during read-aloud time.”

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**Amanda Morin** worked as a classroom teacher and as an early

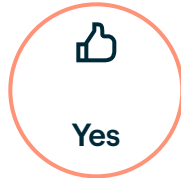
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**Mark J. Griffin, PhD** was the founding headmaster of Eagle Hill School, a school for children with specific learning disabilities.

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