

Risk Factors Associated With Dyslexia for Grades PK-12



This checklist can be used to support the decision to assess for dyslexia.

Schools shall recommend assessment for dyslexia if the student demonstrates the following:

- Poor performance in one or more areas of reading and spelling that is unexpected for the student's age/grade
- Characteristics and risk factors of dyslexia indicated in Chapter 1: Definitions and Characteristics of Dyslexia

The Dyslexia Handbook, page 16

If the behaviors in this checklist are unexpected for an individual's age, educational level, or cognitive abilities, they may be risk factors associated with dyslexia. A student with dyslexia usually exhibits several of these behaviors that persist over time and interfere with his/her learning. A **family history** of dyslexia may be present; in fact, recent studies reveal that the whole spectrum of reading disabilities is strongly determined by genetic predispositions.

The Dyslexia Handbook, page 9

"The reading, spelling, and other academic challenges that people usually think of as the essence of dyslexia are really "side effects" of having a mind that's wired to be good at other things." Brock Eide



Student: _____ Teacher completing the checklist: _____ Date: _____

Risk Factors Associated With Dyslexia – Preschool through First Grade

Please indicate how often the student exhibits the following behaviors.

Kindergarten and First Grade	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Difficulty breaking words into smaller parts (syllables) (e.g., “baseball” can be pulled apart into “base” “ball” or “napkin” can be pulled apart into “nap” “kin”)				
Difficulty identifying and manipulating sounds in syllables (e.g., “man” sounded out as /m/ /ă/ /n/)				
Difficulty remembering the names of letters and recalling their corresponding sounds				
Difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation)				
Difficulty spelling words the way they sound (phonetically) or remembering letter sequences in very common words seen often in print (e.g., “sed” for “said”)				

Students in **kindergarten and first grades** may continue to find the following behaviors problematic. Please indicate how often the student exhibits the following behaviors.

Preschool	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Delay in Learning to talk				
Difficulty with rhyming				
Difficulty pronouncing words (e.g., “pusgetti” for “spaghetti,” “mawn lower” for “lawn mower”)				
Poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants				
Difficulty in adding new vocabulary words				
Inability to recall the right word (word retrieval)				
Trouble learning and naming letters and numbers and remembering the letters in his/her name				
Aversion to print (e.g., doesn’t enjoy following along if book is read aloud)				

Please include any additional information about this student that would indicate a need for dyslexia assessment:

Student: _____ Teacher completing the checklist: _____ Date: _____

Risk Factors Associated With Dyslexia – Second and Third Grade

Please indicate how often the student exhibits the following behaviors.

Second and Third grade	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Difficulty recognizing common sight words (e.g., “to,” “said,” “been”)				
Difficulty decoding single words				
Difficulty recalling the correct sounds for letters and letter patterns in reading				
Difficulty connecting speech sounds with appropriate letter or letter combinations and omitting letters in words for spelling (e.g., “after” spelled “eftr”)				
Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)				
Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics				
Reliance on picture clues, story theme, or guessing at words				
Difficulty with written expression				

Students in **2nd and 3rd grades** may continue to find the following behaviors problematic. Please indicate how often the student exhibits the following behaviors.

Kindergarten and First Grade	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Difficulty breaking words into smaller parts (syllables) (e.g., “baseball” can be pulled apart into “base” “ball” or “napkin” can be pulled apart into “nap” “kin”)				
Difficulty identifying and manipulating sounds in syllables (e.g., “man” sounded out as /m/ /ă/ /n/)				
Difficulty remembering the names of letters and recalling their corresponding sounds				
Difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation)				
Difficulty spelling words the way they sound (phonetically) or remembering letter sequences in very common words seen often in print (e.g., “sed” for “said”)				

Preschool	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Delay in Learning to talk				
Difficulty with rhyming				
Difficulty pronouncing words (e.g., “pusgetti” for “spaghetti,” “mawn lower” for “lawn mower”)				
Poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants				
Difficulty in adding new vocabulary words				
Inability to recall the right word (word retrieval)				
Trouble learning and naming letters and numbers and remembering the letters in his/her name				
Aversion to print (e.g., doesn’t enjoy following along if book is read aloud)				

Please include any additional information about this student that would indicate a need for dyslexia assessment:

Student: _____ Teacher completing the checklist: _____ Date: _____

Risk Factors Associated With Dyslexia – Fourth through Sixth Grade

Please indicate how often the student exhibits the following behaviors.

Fourth Through Sixth Grade	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Difficulty reading aloud (e.g., fear of reading aloud in front of classmates)				
Avoidance of reading (e.g., particularly for pleasure)				
Acquisition of less vocabulary due to reduced independent reading				
Use of less complicated words in writing that are easier to spell than more appropriate words (e.g., “big” instead of “enormous”)				
Reliance on listening rather than reading for comprehension				

Students in **4th, 5th and 6th grades** may continue to find the following behaviors problematic. Please indicate how often the student exhibits the following behaviors.

Second and Third grade	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Difficulty recognizing common sight words (e.g., “to,” “said,” “been”)				
Difficulty decoding single words				
Difficulty recalling the correct sounds for letters and letter patterns in reading				
Difficulty connecting speech sounds with appropriate letter or letter combinations and omitting letters in words for spelling (e.g., “after” spelled “eftr”)				
Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)				
Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics				
Reliance on picture clues, story theme, or guessing at words				
Difficulty with written expression				

Kindergarten and First Grade	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Difficulty breaking words into smaller parts (syllables) (e.g., “baseball” can be pulled apart into “base” “ ball” or “napkin” can be pulled apart into “nap” “kin”)				
Difficulty identifying and manipulating sounds in syllables (e.g., “man” sounded out as /m/ /ă/ /n/)				
Difficulty remembering the names of letters and recalling their corresponding sounds				
Difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation)				
Difficulty spelling words the way they sound (phonetically) or remembering letter sequences in very common words seen often in print (e.g., “sed” for “said”)				

Preschool	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Delay in Learning to talk				
Difficulty with rhyming				
Difficulty pronouncing words (e.g., “pusgetti” for “spaghetti,” “mawn lower” for “lawn mower”)				
Poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants				
Difficulty in adding new vocabulary words				
Inability to recall the right word (word retrieval)				
Trouble learning and naming letters and numbers and remembering the letters in his/her name				
Aversion to print (e.g., doesn’t enjoy following along if book is read aloud)				

Please include any additional information about this student that would indicate a need for dyslexia assessment:

Student: _____ Teacher completing the checklist: _____ Date: _____

Risk Factors Associated With Dyslexia – Middle School and High School

Please indicate how often the student exhibits the following behaviors.

Middle School High School	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Difficulty with the volume of reading and written work				
Frustration with the amount of time required and energy expended for reading				
Difficulty with written assignments				
Tendency to avoid reading (particularly for pleasure)				
Difficulty learning a foreign language				

Students in **middle school and high school** may continue to find the following behaviors problematic. Please indicate how often the student exhibits the following behaviors.

Fourth Through Sixth Grade	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Difficulty reading aloud (e.g., fear of reading aloud in front of classmates)				
Avoidance of reading (e.g., particularly for pleasure)				
Acquisition of less vocabulary due to reduced independent reading				
Use of less complicated words in writing that are easier to spell than more appropriate words (e.g., “big” instead of “enormous”)				
Reliance on listening rather than reading for comprehension				

Second and Third grade	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Difficulty recognizing common sight words (e.g., “to,” “said,” “been”)				
Difficulty decoding single words				
Difficulty recalling the correct sounds for letters and letter patterns in reading				
Difficulty connecting speech sounds with appropriate letter or letter combinations and omitting letters in words for spelling (e.g., “after” spelled “eftr”)				
Difficulty reading fluently (e.g., slow, inaccurate, and/or without expression)				
Difficulty decoding unfamiliar words in sentences using knowledge of phonics				
Reliance on picture clues, story theme, or guessing at words				
Difficulty with written expression				

Kindergarten and First Grade	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Difficulty breaking words into smaller parts (syllables) (e.g., “baseball” can be pulled apart into “base” “ ball” or “napkin” can be pulled apart into “nap” “kin”)				
Difficulty identifying and manipulating sounds in syllables (e.g., “man” sounded out as /m/ /ă/ /n/)				
Difficulty remembering the names of letters and recalling their corresponding sounds				
Difficulty decoding single words (reading single words in isolation)				
Difficulty spelling words the way they sound (phonetically) or remembering letter sequences in very common words seen often in print (e.g., “sed” for “said”)				

Preschool	Always	Sometimes	Never	IDK
Delay in Learning to talk				
Difficulty with rhyming				
Difficulty pronouncing words (e.g., “pusgetti” for “spaghetti,” “mawn lower” for “lawn mower”)				
Poor auditory memory for nursery rhymes and chants				
Difficulty in adding new vocabulary words				
Inability to recall the right word (word retrieval)				
Trouble learning and naming letters and numbers and remembering the letters in his/her name				
Aversion to print (e.g., doesn’t enjoy following along if book is read aloud)				

Please include any additional information about this student that would indicate a need for dyslexia assessment: