

Components of Testing to Assess Dyslexia

Category	Includes
Family and Individual History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other family members who had difficulty learning to read, write, and spell • Health or medical impairments to learning • Any delays in speaking • Parents' concerns about speech, language, motor skills, or attention span
Cognitive Ability, or Intellectual Aptitude (IQ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either a Weschsler or Stanford Binet IQ test • Test should measure individual's aptitude for learning in verbal, logical, mathematical, visual-motor, visual-spatial, symbolic, memory, and attentional domains
Specific Language Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech sound and syllable awareness • Word pronunciation and retrieval • Rapid naming • Knowledge of word meanings • Comprehension and production of sentence structure (syntax) • Expressive verbal ability, including organization of ideas, elaboration, and clarity of expression • Comprehension of what is heard and read
Single-Word Decoding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to read single words out of context • Apply phonic word attack to reading nonsense words • Oral paragraph reading fluency and accuracy
Reading Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timed readings of longer passages • Evaluation of whether individual appears to use context and good reasoning skills to guess at meanings when reading silently
Spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dictated spelling test (not multiple choice) • Analysis of errors for speech sound omission, letter sequence confusion, and poor memory for common words
Written Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of a story or essay for students capable of writing more than sentences • Analysis of word choice, conceptual organization, sentence quality, elaboration or ideas, grammar, and use of punctuation and capitalization • Informal tasks such as writing a paraphrase, combining simple sentences into compound and complex sentences, writing an outline and summary of a passage, or writing part of a structured paragraph • Ability to form letters, both alone and in words
Handwriting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of writing to see if it sits consistently on the baseline • Consistency and slant of letters • Right- or left-handed • Appropriate pencil grip • Appropriate rotation of paper • Ability to review work previously written (especially for left-handed)