



The Unlikely Teacher Presents

UNSCRAMBLING DYSLEXIA



**From: Parent & Educator
To: Parents & Educators**

TIM CLUE

www.timclue.com | tim@timclue.com | 773.230.3989

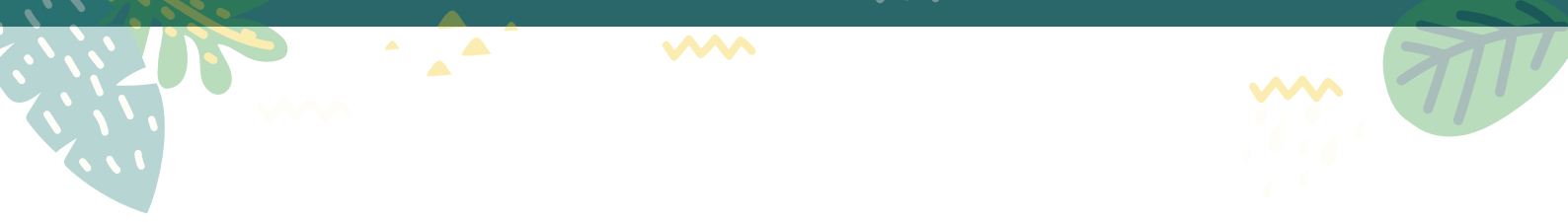


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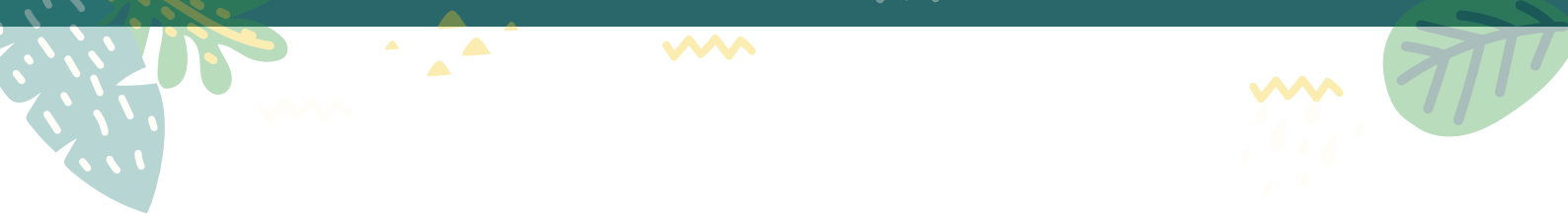
End Note

More Support Links

Dear Parents, Educators, and
Advocates,

As an educator, dyslexic,
and parent to a dyslexic
child, I'm sharing a resource
I wish I'd had when I
started to notice my kid
struggling with reading —
and that is a single place
with helpful links, creative
tools, a pathway for guidance and
encouragement to get started.





Diagnosis:

Cost, Delay & First Steps

Getting a diagnosis can be expensive and challenging—but waiting to intervene isn't an option. That's why after this section you'll find some practical ways to start building some momentum right away. But as for the weeds of diagnosis here are the basics to keep in mind.

Understanding Types of Reading Challenges

Phonological:

Difficulty connecting sounds to letters (sound-symbol decoding)

Neurological:

Visual processing, tracking, eye movement, or focus issues

..... *Often, it's a combination of both.*

Often ADHD is connected to this problem.

[3 minute video](#) explains but please seek trusted experts for clarity.

Understanding the root issue can help focus your approach and reduce frustration.

Finding Diagnostic Support

Decoding Dyslexia (DD)

A parent-led movement
with chapters in all

50 STATES



Click to view website

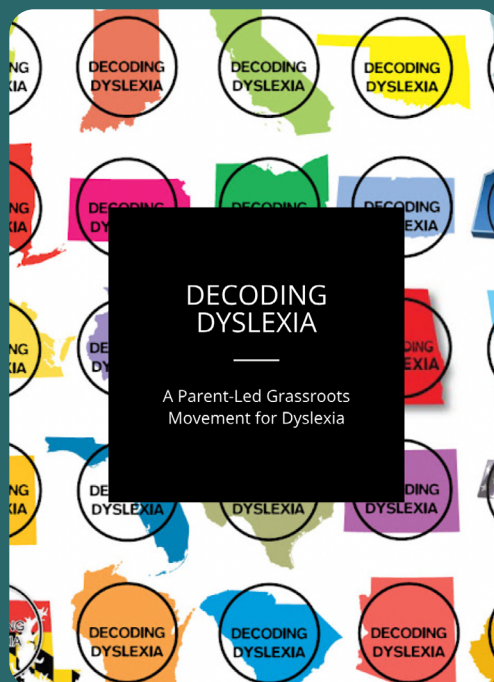


image source: Decoding Dyslexia

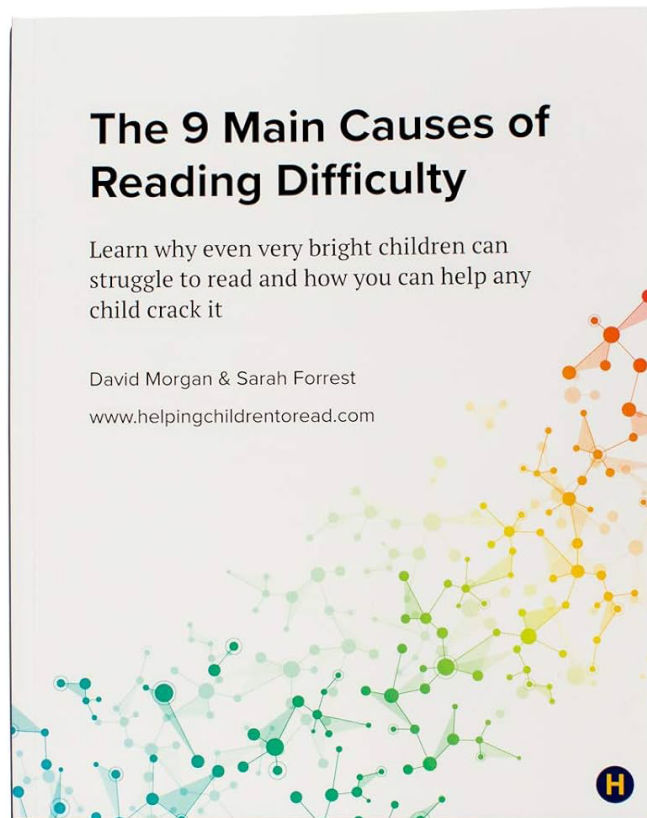
- ✓ Check local universities' psychology or education departments. Ask if they often offer evaluations or tutoring at lower cost.
- ✓ Ask a librarian! They're the most plugged-in people in town for referrals.
- ✓ [Use the IDA Provider Directory](#)

(Note: The site isn't designed with dyslexics in mind—you'll see. Ugh.)

Look for Assessment & Evaluation keywords in provider listings.

Great Results at
Northwestern University's READ Lab
ctd@northwestern.edu | 847-491-3782





For a deeper breakdown of reading challenges, I recommend [The 9 Main Causes of Reading Difficulty by David Morgan and Sarah Forrest](#)—it's one of the clearest, most practical overviews I've found.

Don't Wait to Start

Sorry to start off with what is often a costly and stressful challenge but please don't wait for a diagnosis to start prior to some stress-free engagement.



Activities & Tips

These activities can increase contact with words, sounds, letters, and reading while attempts to seek a diagnosis to clarify a path forward are made.

Remember the key is Fun and frequency without friction.



Fun Reading Activities



Bookstore Day Trip (even on a School Day)

Some parents may disagree—but swapping a day of school for a quiet book hunt was a trade we were willing to make. Think comics, joke books, illustrated novels... something that catches their eye. They may not finish it—or even get far—and that’s OK. We’re just creating patterns for the future.



Read-Along Audiobooks

These let your child hear the story while following the words on screen. Many kids will stick with the text for a while, then switch to just listening—and that’s perfectly fine.

Popular options: Kindle + Audible, Apple Books, and the Epic reading app.

Random Writing with Voice-to-Text

On a pad or computer, have them dictate funny words and sentences that may even build into paragraphs. Show them early on how to use voice-to-text, and encourage them to create stories, sounds, nonsense words, or ridiculous sentences. I could write a chapter on the benefits of this one—but how about just a few tips:



- ✓ Let self-correction happen naturally. Resist correcting mistakes. Flow is essential.
- ✓ Even if the fix isn't wholly right, it's the instinct to reshape that is the win.
- ✓ Show how to adjust font size, color, spacing—or help adjust it until they take over.
- ✓ Print out their work and, without commentary, place it around the house or by the bed.
- ✓ Dyslexics crave control—voice-to-text allows them to feel ownership.

Technology-Based Learning Opportunities



Cartoons or Shows with Closed Captions

Use favorite shows as a reward after more challenging efforts. Try pausing now and then to pick out a fun word or sentence—it's a low-pressure way to make something stick. Captions often move too fast for early readers, but even that background exposure can help over time.

Singing and Reading

Whether they sing along or just read the lyrics, it's still reading practice. Left-to-right tracking, sound-word connection, and a little fun—that's the goal.



Tip: When possible, use a wider screen instead of a phone to support visual tracking—but take what you can get!

Talking to AI (Yep, I said it)

Let kids— with a bit of supervision—ask AI questions and follow their curiosity. They're more likely to read what they care about. Ask AI to explain the “*superpowers of dyslexia*”—it might say just the thing your kid needs to hear.



Resources & Support

School Board Advocacy

Attend your school board meeting and suggest setting aside a small budget to support families with kids who need reading help.

Lakeshore Learning



Multisensory tools, reading games, and phonics kits

[View more links here](#)

Really Good Stuff

Early literacy tools and classroom



School Speciality

Multisensory tools, reading games, and phonics kits



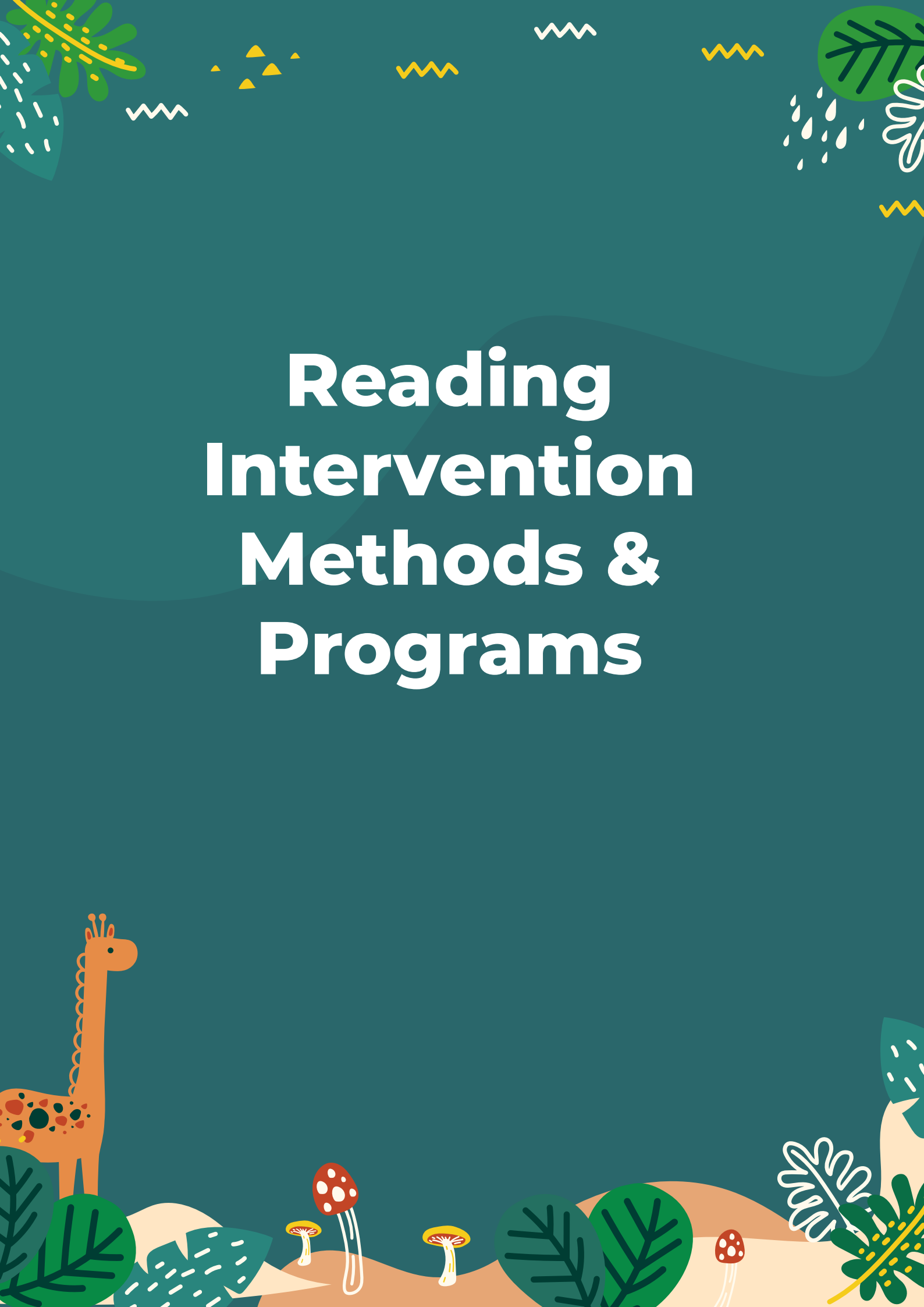
Beneficial Extracurricular Activities



If your child shows interest in a musical instrument, encourage and support it if possible.



Physical activities and sports can boost coordination—and may help with focus and reading fluency, indirectly.



Reading Intervention Methods & Programs

You'll likely hear about these methods from teachers, tutors, and reading coaches. A little vocabulary can help parents and educators advocate more effectively.

Orton-Gillingham (OG)

- ✓ OG is a strong foundation—one of the best, but rarely a panacea.
- ✓ Just be cautious of anyone treating OG as the only answer.
- ✓ Keep layering low-stress ways to engage with words and sounds.
- ✓ A structured, multisensory method focused on phonological issues.
- ✓ “Orton-Gillingham-based” just means phonics-based, multisensory instruction.
- ✓ Widely used by trained reading coaches and tutors.
- ✓ Can be effective—but may feel rigid or slow for some learners.



Orton-Gillingham.com



Easyread Program

Highly Recommended

(based on trainer text visuals approach)

- ✓ Combines phonological and visual strategies in a gamified system.
- ✓ Built around Trainertext—but adds structure and better engagement.
- ✓ Can be expensive—recommend asking schools to purchase for shared use.
- ✓ May feel too basic for older kids—but strong for early confidence-building.



Trainer Text Visual Phonics Approach

- ✓ Uses animated visual characters to support phonemic awareness.
- ✓ Includes eye-tracking games to reinforce left-to-right decoding.
- ✓ Lacks tactile or hands-on elements—engagement can vary.
- ✓ Forms the foundation of the Easyread system, which gamifies it in a software program.
- ✓ Engagement tends to improve when paired with movement or tactile support.

 [Learn More about TVP](#)

The
Monkey
Feeling
Funky



The
Oon on
the
Moon



The
Vulture
into
Culture



The
Lion
with a
Tie on



The
Umbrella
Man with
a Suntan



The Cat
Having a
Chat



The
Oak
Wearing
a Cloak



move love cove



Davis Method

Recommended with Adaptation

Davis is a 1-week training program designed to transfer practical exercises—for eyes, focus, and self-control—to a parent, tutor, or teacher.

It typically costs \$2,000–\$2,500, but can be impactful—especially when the tools are adapted to fit the learner.

 [Find a Davis Method provider near you](#)

..... **My Recommendation**

Have a teacher, counselor, or caring staff complete the training so tools can be reused, adapted, and shared long-term.

- ✓ The Davis mind-body approach supports kids with anxiety, focus challenges, or on the spectrum.
- ✓ The book can be optional. Focus on learning the exercises, especially those that help kids visualize smaller words in sentences. That focus was especially impactful for us.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to blend and adjust Davis tools creatively, for students with attention or regulation challenges.

 [Davis Overview](#)

 [Davis Symbol Mastery](#)



Wilson Reading System

- ✓ A structured, phonics-based program often used in schools.
- ✓ Shows quick progress for some students—especially with decoding and spelling.
- ✓ Popular among specialists but sometimes overused as a go-to fix.
- ✓ Best as a follow-up tool—not an initial intervention. It may reinforce coping strategies more than foundational reading growth.



Hardman System

Not a personal favorite—but the site is worth browsing for learning strategies and background.





Eye Therapy: What to Know

Eye therapy isn't a cure—but can make an impact when paired with low-stress reading, writing, and speaking. Eye therapy supports children with issues related to eye movement, a.k.a. Saccadic tracking issues.



Understanding Eye Tracking Issues



Here's a video for parents

[One example of an eye movement test but there are many.](#)

Finding the Right Specialist

Ask your child's optometrist about an eye tracking test (also called saccadic tracking). If they're unfamiliar, ask them to learn—or help you find someone who is.

Most eye folks by now should have an awareness as to how eye movement challenges readers to read. But this is still hit or miss in underserved areas.

The following link will help you in finding the eye center near you.

<https://www.covd.org/>

Appropriate Screening Age

Don't screen too early! 1st grade is fine. Eye movement is one of those 9 challenges and can be a big piece of the puzzle.

Catching it early can make a difference.

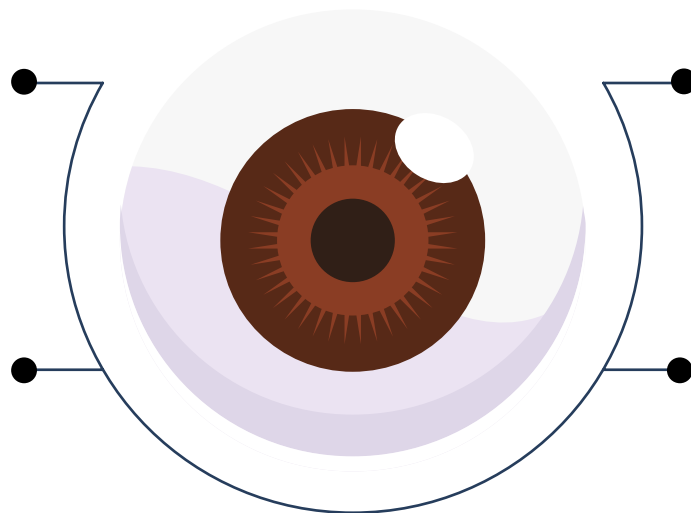
The Eye Therapy Process

Treatment Structure

What professional Eye therapy involves: Weekly in-person sessions (when available), plus short daily home exercises.

Service Availability

Eye Therapy services are difficult to access in rural or under-resourced areas. DIY eye training is available on the web.



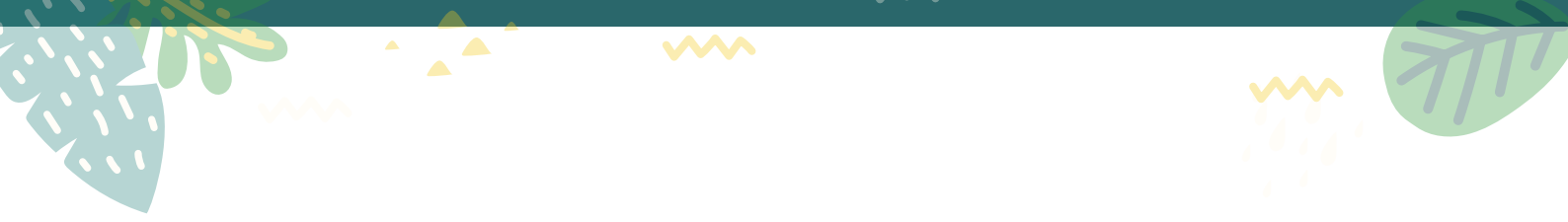
Insurance Coverage

May be covered by insurance with a doctor's note. Not for phonological issues—but can help readers struggling with visual processing or tracking.

Duration & Progress

In my research 8–12 weeks is a good window after this period begin to rotate in new strategies. Some kids may show pushback as therapy can become repetitive or tedious. The key is to avoid creating more stress around looking at words.

About Dyslexics:
Technical &
Personal



Technically

- ✓ Struggle with small, non-visual words (maybe, whenever, our, where, there, their...)
- ✓ Multiple-vowel words are always a challenge.
- ✓ Often reverse letters or numbers—especially early on.
- ✓ ADHD frequently overlaps with dyslexia.
- ✓ PIGBED – Write it at the top of the page for quick reference when flipping letters.

Personally

- ✓ Most dyslexics feel simultaneously unsure and secretly brilliant—like there's a hidden strength that hasn't fully emerged yet. These two forces often battle each other throughout life.
- ✓ Dyslexics can spot condescension, forced praise, or empty encouragement from a mile away. Breaking through that firewall takes time and trust.
- ✓ The dyslexics who succeed usually have adults who lower stress and notice strengths early.
- ✓ They may assume higher ed isn't for them—but all paths (college, trades, creative, or untraditional) are open. Many thrive outside rigid systems; they just need support to see it.
- ✓ Dyslexics often reject rigid systems and create alternatives—let them go where they will go.

- ✓ They crave control—let them make the rules, invent silly words, or steer the story. That freedom builds ownership.
- ✓ By third grade, they've already seen far more red marks and corrections than their peers.
- ✓ Spot and name a strength early—genuinely. That confidence often opens the door to everything else.





You've got this!

There's no single fix. What works is low-stress, consistent engagement that builds confidence—one small win at a time.

Don't overload your child. Too many programs, drills, or therapies at once can backfire.

**Calm, creative repetition works best.
Bribes are encouraged. So is laughter.**

Just remember: fun, frequency, and as little friction as possible—that's the foundation.

If you have a tip or tool that's worked for your family, please share it.
[email here.](#)

I'll research and include the best ideas in this living intro guide—so together, we can support more families and raise more lifelong, curious readers.

Thanks,

The Unlikely Teacher
Tim Clue

Lakeshore Learning Support Links

- ✓ <https://www.lakeshorelearning.com/products/language/reading-comprehension-fluency/building-fluency-card-bank-gr-1-3/s/EE501/>
- ✓ <https://www.lakeshorelearning.com/products/language/reading-comprehension-fluency/building-fluency-card-bank-gr-4-6/s/EE503/>
- ✓ <https://www.lakeshorelearning.com/products/language/phonics-word-building/snap-build-phonics-complete-set/s/EE700X/>
- ✓ <https://www.lakeshorelearning.com/products/language/phonics-word-building/snap-build-cvc-words/s/EE708/>
- ✓ <https://www.lakeshorelearning.com/products/language/phonics-word-building/double-sided-magnetic-phonics-tiles/s/TT841/>
- ✓ <https://www.lakeshorelearning.com/products/language/alphabet/construct-a-letter-activity-center/s/EE496/>

Assistive Tools for Dyslexia



libbyapp.com

A free app that allows you to borrow eBooks and audiobooks from your local library, making reading more accessible for children with reading challenges.



beelinereader.com

A game-based app designed to help dyslexic children and teens work on memory skills, phonics, and sequencing.



naturalreaders.com

A text-to-speech software with natural-sounding voices that can read various document types, aiding in comprehension and reducing reading-related stress.



voicedream.com

A versatile text-to-speech app that reads aloud documents, PDFs, web pages, and books, supporting multisensory learning approaches.