



Learning Characteristics Related to Dyslexia Frequently Asked Questions

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has created this resource to outline common questions regarding learning characteristics related to dyslexia and answers based on Indiana Code 20-35.5 Level 1 dyslexia diagnostic and intervention process.

Number	Question	Answer
1	What is dyslexia?	Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. ¹
2	How do people develop dyslexia?	The causes for dyslexia are neurobiological and genetic.
3	Can individuals diagnosed with dyslexia learn to read?	Yes, with appropriate help and interventions, individuals that display learning characteristics related to dyslexia can achieve literacy success. Early diagnosis and targeted academic interventions can assist students with reading ability.
4	What are some signs of dyslexia?	Some signs of dyslexia include, but are not limited to: difficulty spelling, identifying letters and sounds, producing rhyming words, deciphering between similar letters, and memorization.
5	Who can diagnose dyslexia?	While only a licensed medical professional can diagnose individuals with dyslexia, a medical diagnosis is not required to determine eligibility for special education and related services for students exhibiting characteristics of dyslexia. It is the position of the Indiana Association of School Psychologists that school psychologists and educational teams may use diagnosis or related terminology in psychoeducational evaluation reports, including those determined and provided by school psychologists, including terms such as ADHD, depressive and/or anxiety conditions, dyslexia, dyscalculia, and/or dysgraphia.
6	What grades must receive the universal screener for dyslexia?	Indiana Code 20-35.5 requires all students in kindergarten through grade two be given a universal screener for dyslexia. Students in grade three or higher must be screened if a teacher notices they have difficulty with phonological and phonemic awareness, sound symbol recognition, alphabet knowledge, decoding, rapid naming, and encoding.
7	How long do schools have to administer dyslexia assessments?	The universal screener and diagnostic assessments must be given in the first 90 days of school. (Weekends and breaks are included in the 90-day administration window).
8	Can dyslexia be cured?	No. Dyslexia can not be cured, but with early screening and intervention, individuals with learning characteristics related to dyslexia can have academic and post-secondary success.

For additional information, please contact IDOE's [Office of Teaching and Learning](#).

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Indiana Department of Education

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