

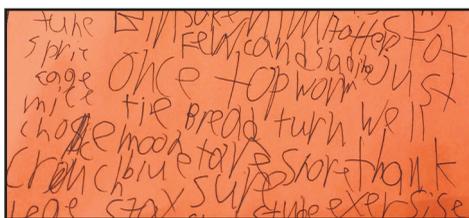
## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT DYSGRAPHIA?

(submitted by Stacey Popkin, OG Tutor)

Dysgraphia is a Greek word - DYS referring to impairment; GRAPH - referring to the hand function in writing and letter formation; IA referring to a condition; simply said dysgraphia is a condition of impaired handwriting. It is a neurological condition in which a child/adult has difficulty turning their thoughts into the written word. Researchers estimate dysgraphia to affect 5-20% of the population however larger numbers are estimated to be undiagnosed.

One of my students told me that: "When I write, it never looks right and is not what I want to say." So how does dysgraphia manifest:

- Issues with letter formation, letter size and spacing.
- Legibility is impaired
- Grammar and spelling are difficult
- Fine motor coordination and speed of writing is impaired



Handwriting sample from a student with dysgraphia.

There are many myths about dysgraphia: (1) it is not related to dyslexia - they are both neurological conditions and share a few symptoms; (2) it is a form of autism spectrum disorder - although it commonly occurs in the autistic population; (3) it is not hereditary - it runs in families and is more common in boys than girls; (4) it always occurs with other co-morbidities - it can be isolated as its own specific learning disorder but is commonly seen in people/children with ADHD, dyslexia, and speech and language impairments.

Dysgraphia can be diagnosed by many healthcare providers including but not limited to: occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, and neuropsychologists. Specific standardized tests (TOWL-4, Woodcock Johnson-IV, WIAT-3) are used to evaluate fine motor skills, handwriting mechanics, spelling, sentence structure and written expression. Other tests may be supplemented such as IQ and visual - motor tests, which will help identify or rule out other learning impairments. Students can be tested as early as 5 years old however the earlier the better. As writing demands in school increase so do frustration levels in the undiagnosed population.

Managing Dysgraphia after receiving official diagnosis is very individualized. There are no  
 (CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



We will be closed on Monday, February 16th and Saturday, February 21st.

February 17th - February 20th; Daytime Tutoring Hours Only

## FEBRUARY WRITING FUN



Take a heart.

Complete the sentence:  
I love.....

Drop your heart in the basket; we will hang it on the window in the tutoring center for you.

Watch our heart of things we love grow all month.



Join us at an open house to learn more about our

## Orton-Gillingham Summer Intensive Program.

Students work on OG principles in a small group setting to help improve their reading skills! Lessons and activities are guided by teachers who are certified through the Orton-Gillingham Academy.

(SEE BACK FOR DATES)

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: SOPHIA

(submitted by Lauren, OG Trainee)

Sophia is a sweet, funny, and creative learner. She fills her days with soccer practice, dance, and spending time with her friends. Sophia enjoys singing, playing soccer and tennis. She loves to collect elves that sometimes accompany her during our sessions together. We start off every session with a smile and her telling me about her day. She likes earning kit kats for working hard in her sessions.

Fun Facts About Sophia:

- ★ Age: 10 years old
- ★ Family: mom, dad, little brother, and 1 older sister and brother
- ★ Dream Job: a singer and actress
- ★ Favorite Animal: a hamster
- ★ Favorite Food: salchichón and tostones
- ★ Favorite School Subject: Art



## DYSGRAPHIA (CONTINUED)

medications to treat it, only specialized educational interventions. In a school setting students may need to receive accommodations as follows:

- Graphic organizers
- Teacher notes and outlines
- Extra time on exams
- Oral exams or reports
- Modified paper and pencil grips
- A scribe
- Focus on content not grammar and spelling
- Assistive technology
  - o Typing instead of writing
  - o Speech to text or text to speech

These accommodations will be implemented in the form of a 504 plan or Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Some schools may also offer Occupational Services to strengthen a child's hand which would in turn improve handwriting.

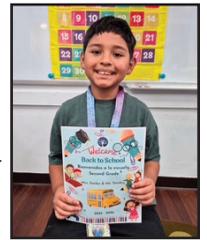
It is important that the student is aware of their diagnosis so they can become their own advocate. They need to have a list of their accommodations and know the limitations of their disability. Many teachers are unaware of this impairment and need students and parents to provide them with pertinent information to support the child's educational needs. The International Dyslexia Association has an overview of Dysgraphia with amazing references.

<https://dyslexiaida.org/understanding-dysgraphia/>

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: AIDEN

(submitted by Susan, OG Trainee)

Aiden is a hardworking, enthusiastic, and thoughtful second grader whose persistent attitude makes him a pleasure to teach. He combines academic focus, evident in his careful cursive writing, with active involvement in extracurriculars such as soccer, participation at Kid Strong with friends, and playing video games with his dad. His competitive yet respectful nature in games like memory and his strong personal interest in cars, further distinguish him as a student with both dedication and curiosity.



**Q: What is your favorite type of car?**

Bugatti but I also like the Supra, Lamborghini, BMW, and then a Ferrari. In that order.

**Q: Why do you like that type of car?**

Well because it goes fast.

**Q: How many cars would you like to have when you grow up?** Infinity.

**Q: What do you want to be when you grow up?**

I want to be rich by going to work.

**Q: What kind of work do you want to do?**

Work on cars.

**Q: What is your greatest success at Literacy Nassau?**

That it's fun, writing in script.

**Q: What do you want to get better at?**

I want to be a better soccer player.

**Q: Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?**

Yes, I love my family.



Reading For Life  
LITERACY NASSAU

Literacy Nassau's OG Summer Intensive Program

**HAVE FUN OPEN HOUSE**

Learn all about our Orton-Gillingham program and tour our center.

MONDAY, MARCH 16  
MONDAY, APRIL 13  
6:00-7:00PM

To sign up email Kate at:  
kquijano@literacynassau.org

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