



DEFINITIONS

Specific learning disorder: selective impairment in reading, writing, or math

- With average or above average intelligence

Dyslexia: specific learning disorder in reading

- Difficulty with recognizing sounds of letters and phonemes in words
- May also include poor spelling and decoding skills
- Most common learning disorder; persists lifelong

PRESENTATION

Pre-School

- Unable to learn nursery rhymes, pronounce words, or remember letters

Kindergarten

- Unable to learn letters or read words

School Age

- Difficulty in school
- Avoids reading
- Compensates by listening carefully & memorizing familiar stories
- Difficulty building vocabulary
 - Hence difficulty retrieving words to say

DIAGNOSIS

Gold standard: history & psychoeducational test

- ❑ History from caregivers ± teachers
- ❑ MD can listen to child read aloud
 - ❑ Assess for fluency and understanding issues
- ❑ Psychoeducational testing by educational psychologist
 - ❑ Compares child's IQ and scholastic abilities
 - ❑ Via publicly funded school system (years long wait time) or privately paid for by caregivers
- ❑ Investigate for other diagnoses (see differential diagnosis) as clinically indicated

DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS

Vision/hearing impairment

Fatigue

- Secondary to disordered sleep, hypothyroidism, etc.

Difficulty focusing

- Secondary to ADHD, poor nutrition, mood disorder

Social determinants of health: barriers in learning/social environment to learn to read

Neurological: absence seizure

MANAGEMENT

Multidisciplinary Approach

- ❑ **Psychologist:** provides recommendations for caregivers & school
- ❑ **Pediatrician:** manages common comorbidities (e.g., ADHD, depression, anxiety)
- ❑ **School:** learning supports for child
 - ❑ Special education program
 - ❑ Accommodations (e.g., extra time for tests)
- ❑ **University:** continue accommodations
 - ❑ Lecture recordings, audio books

IMPORTANT

- If delay is not properly addressed:
 - Fall behind their peers
 - Difficulty in school
- Benefits of timely intervention:
 - Learn to read
 - Reach full academic potential
 - Boost self-esteem

