



HOW DOES PRESS SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSLEXIA?

The International Dyslexia Association defines dyslexia as:

a specific learning disability... characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by 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 growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.¹

Many states have their own definition, but they all focus on early identification of and intervention for students with characteristics of dyslexia. For specifics in your area, refer to your state department of education.

Despite these state-specific variations, there is a body of research that supports best practices for identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia and addressing their instructional needs. The following tables demonstrate how the Path to Reading Excellence in School Sites (PRESS) framework closely aligns with these research-based practices for both identification and instruction.

IDENTIFYING Students with Dyslexia

Recommended Practice	PRESS
Universal screening is the first step in identifying students who are not reading at grade level, including students with characteristics of dyslexia. ^{1,2,3,4}	PRESS outlines processes for data-driven decision making, including the use of screening data to identify and serve students who need additional supports.
Find specific, targeted areas of educational need using diagnostic assessments . ^{1,2}	The PRESS decision making process includes diagnostic inventories that provide data for instructional decisions.
Document the results of tiered interventions with progress monitoring . ^{2,3}	PRESS provides a systematic process to analyze progress monitoring data and make ongoing instructional decisions for individual students.
Evaluate for a disability (section 504 or special education services) if a student is not progressing. ^{2,3}	PRESS protocols and processes assist educators in documenting students' response to intervention through ongoing data collection and analysis.

“Although dyslexia affects individuals over the life span, . . . reading skills can be increased with the right early intervention and prevention programs.” ⁵

All students need quality core instruction, including those demonstrating characteristics of dyslexia. The first step to helping children with characteristics of dyslexia is to provide literacy instruction that is explicit, systematic, and sequential and includes instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics. The quality core instruction section in the PRESS Intervention Manual outlines recommended content for each grade level. Beyond that, the following table explains recommended practices for instructing students with characteristics of dyslexia and describes how PRESS aligns with these practices.

INSTRUCTING Students with Dyslexia

Recommended Practice	PRESS
Provide quality core instruction in literacy AND interventions that are targeted to student needs. ^{2,3,4,6}	PRESS delineates both the components of quality core instruction at each grade level and specific interventions that are matched to individual student needs. Additionally, PRESS offers classwide interventions that provide quality, skill-based instruction for all and can, therefore, help identify those who are not responding to instruction.
Teach phonemic awareness and phonics systematically, sequentially, and explicitly within the context of rich and deep language instruction. ^{1,2,3,7,8,9,10}	Systematic phonemic awareness and phonics interventions are offered in PRESS, each targeting specific skills that are aligned with student needs as identified in the decision-making process.
Provide opportunities for students to read texts using the decoding and word recognition skills they control and also read instructional-level material with teacher support, to build automaticity and fluency . ^{3,7,11,12,13}	PRESS fluency interventions promote prosodic and fluent reading through repeated reading, supported cloze and partner reading.
Teach syllable and morpheme analysis (i.e., word parts) so students understand the orthographic patterns of written language. ^{1,9,10,14,15}	All PRESS interventions are built upon the principles of beginning to more advanced orthographic development.
Use multisensory instructional techniques (visual, auditory, kinesthetic-tactile) when instructing students. ^{3,5,6,16}	PRESS interventions include a variety of ready-made picture cues and auditory input and output. Interventions may be flexibly adapted to students' kinesthetic needs.
Provide students with characteristics of dyslexia evidence based instruction that is prescriptive and individualized . ^{1,3,4,14,17}	PRESS processes help educators identify students in need of more intensive intervention through the MTSS/RtI process, using skill-based tier 2 interventions, progress monitoring, and data analysis. This information can help determine if a student needs to receive a tier 3 (intensive) intervention.

References

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