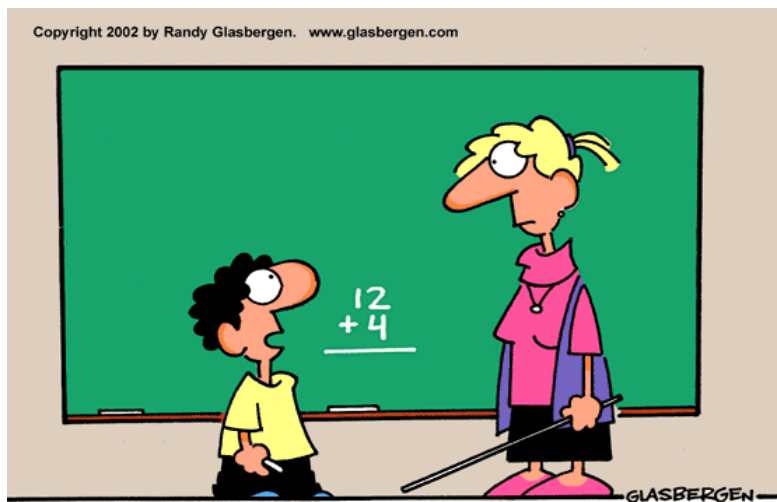




Welsh Dyslexia Project
Prosiect Dyslecsia Cymru

Working With your Child At Home



**“Do I get partial credit for simply having the courage
to get out of bed and face the world again today?”**

“Dyslexia Aware Parenting”

WORKING WITH YOUR CHILD AT HOME

Being a parent is stressful at the best of times – and none more so when helping a child with writing and learning tasks. If the child has learning needs the potential for stress can be much greater and there is always the risk of “tears before bedtime!”

Among the elements that can contribute to parents and their children working together are the child’s fear of failure and the emotional baggage that us parents carry along with us. Perhaps one of the greatest gifts we can give our children is the realisation that it is ok to find some things difficult and, even if we could, we would not change them. Put it another way – we love you as you are!

Having said all this, the situation will always arise when a child needs help and a parent does not know quite how to go about it. The focus of tonight is to give parents some of the “tricks of the trade.” Also it is hoped that you will develop the confidence to work at home with techniques you know to be appropriate and successful.

MARKING FOR IMPROVEMENT

In a paragraph:

- Tick all the words spelt correctly
- Express as a percentage of total number of words written

In a word:

- Tick all the correct letters
- Express as a percentage of total number of letters used

READING

Reading – accessing text

Supporting the “tired reader”

- Be aware of lighting/glare on page
- If possible try to photocopy materials on a pastel shade of paper – try asking your child for a preference
- Buy some coloured transparent wallets which are open on two sides
- Supply a guide or a reading ruler

Use TCP-QR to establish context

There are four things to do before a child starts to read. Looking at the title, captions, pictures and questions before beginning to read really helps when the child comes to unfamiliar words.

Title - what is it going to be about, what do we know already

Captions and Pictures - anything in bold, any pictures, footnotes, anything eye catching

Questions - To establish purpose for reading. How many questions can be answered without reading the text?

Reading - Skim and scan to find missing detail

Paired Reading

Paired reading is probably the most effective way of understanding text, especially for a child who thinks faster than s/he currently reads.

- The child chooses what to read. This is a key principle in terms of reading as a purposeful activity so be prepared to accept magazines, horoscope page etc
- Child and parent read out loud at the same time – the stronger reader may track the words with finger or marker if appropriate
- Unknown words are read without pause or comment by parent – s/he will slow down and point to words as s/he reads to enable the child to catch up
- No teaching, criticism, or learning points are appropriate during this activity – the emphasis is on reading for pleasure in a non-threatening and supportive environment

Cloze Reading

Parent reads a piece, leaving out key words – try leaving out every 10th word or choosing important words. Listeners fill in the missing words out loud. This is particularly effective when re-reading a piece

SPELLING

Health Warning

***Please never ever, under any circumstances, say “Look it up in a dictionary.”
If your child thinks “giraffe” begins with a ‘j’, a dictionary is not a lot of help!***

Instead:

- Say “You have a go and I’ll help”
- Ask “How many syllables can you hear? Can you clap/tap the word?”
- Suggest words that rhyme, for “light” try asking “Can you see fight, light” etc
- Look for words within words, for “department” start with “art” and build up
- Look for the root word plus prefix/suffix, “un-tidy-ness”
- Give magnetic/plastic letters to make the word, then do “Make and Break”:
 - Make – saying letter names as the word goes together
 - Break – into syllables
 - Jumble letters
 - Make again and then: Cover – Write - Check

WRITING

Writing tasks are often very difficult to start. It helps if your child can tell you the answers to three key questions:

1. What have I got to do?
2. What do I know already?
3. How can I organise it?

“What have I got to do?”

- Ask your child to:
- Explain the question/title you in her/his own words
- Suggest what the passage is likely to be about from the title
- How it fits in with current work/knowledge?

“What do I know already?”

- Brainstorm with your child – get her/him to shout out ideas and you write as a list or write individual points on to paper strips/post its etc
- Discuss

“How can I organise it?” Support your child to:

- Number list in order of use
- Colour code for paragraph content
- Cut list into strips and re-order

Then:

Offer the first sentence of a paragraph to get the writing going. Some effective “starter words are “First”, “Next”, “After that”, “Then”, “Finally”.

Neil MacKay
Action Dyslexia Training and Consultancy
Phone: 01352 715700
Email: info@actiondyslexia.co.uk

NB. All materials are copyright and may only be reproduced with the permission of the author