

Meet Daniel

He is a visual thinker

He is sociable and a good talker

He can be highly creative

He can achieve impressive results

But Daniel can't always make sense of letters or words

Understanding Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a neuro-developmental condition - which means that it is part of the make-up of the brain. It is the most common cause of reading, writing and spelling difficulties. As many as 1 in 10 people are thought to be dyslexic, and it can run in families.

Dyslexia is best described as a combination of abilities and difficulties that affect reading, writing and/or spelling. It is often a result of not being able to sort out the sounds that make up words. Some people with dyslexia have associated difficulties with processing information, short term memory and organisation.

Although dyslexia can cause significant problems, especially if not spotted early, it is no reflection of intelligence. People with dyslexia may have challenges with literacy, but can excel in other subject areas.

Dyslexia commonly co-exists with any of the other neuro-developmental conditions.

Similar Conditions

Dyscalculia is a condition which causes specific difficulties in maths. Those affected have particular difficulties in learning 'basic' arithmetic facts, performing calculations and estimating amounts.

Dysgraphia is a condition which causes difficulty with handwriting, affecting the ability to write fluently. It is more than an untidiness in writing and can worsen when under time pressure.

Dyslexia: strengths and challenges

Daniel needs you to make the most of his social, visual and creative talents and to minimise his reliance on text and documents.

Daniel will achieve most in a position that maximises his creativity. He is likely to enjoy varied tasks and has a capacity for lateral thinking. Though he may find purely academic situations challenging, projects using computers suit him well and technology can help him to do his best work.

Take advantage of Daniel's creative ideas and don't hesitate to put him in charge of projects. He has the capacity to do this and just may need some support with his note taking.

Remember that although Daniel may have difficulty with simple writing challenges, he will have many compensatory strengths. These strengths are incredibly valuable if you work with Daniel to profit from them.

Here are a few ways we can all support Daniel:

General

- Use as much visual information as possible
- Make sure written information is easy to read with big clear fonts and printed on non-white paper
- Be direct and to the point - avoid long sentences

At home

- Provide reassurance and encouragement
- Plan for breaks when doing tasks involving reading or writing
- Encourage Daniel's creative and visual talents

At school

- Use verbal instruction rather than written
- Let Daniel use a computer for written pieces of work
- Ensure planned and appropriate adjustments are in place for exams
- Use Daniel's creative capacities

At work

- Take time to discuss the best ways of working
- Avoid 'paper work' as far as possible
- Go through new tasks and duties face to face
- Build in time for breaks throughout the day

At the hospital

- Talk to Daniel instead of giving written information
- Provide help with forms or paper work
- Explain any medical procedures clearly