

# Dyslexia Educator Guide:

## What Every Teacher Should Know.



### What is Dyslexia?

According to the **International Dyslexia Association (IDA)**, **dyslexia** is:

“A specific learning disability that is neurobiological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.”

These difficulties often result from a deficit in the phonological component of language and are **unexpected** in relation to other cognitive abilities and effective classroom instruction.

### Recognizing Dyslexia in the Classroom

#### Common signs in students:

- Difficulty learning letter-sound correspondences
- Trouble segmenting or blending sounds in words
- Slow, labored reading
- Poor spelling and written expression
- Avoidance of reading aloud
- Low self-confidence around reading tasks

Early identification is **critical**. Oklahoma’s law requires that schools screen students for risk factors in **kindergarten through third grade**.

# Effective Instructional Strategies

The **Oklahoma Dyslexia & Dysgraphia Handbook** and **IDA** both recommend: **Structured Literacy** – an evidence-based approach that is:

- **Explicit** – Directly teaches concepts (e.g., phoneme-grapheme relationships)
- **Systematic** – Follows a logical order
- **Cumulative** – Builds upon previously taught material
- **Diagnostic** – Informed by ongoing assessment
- **Multisensory** – Engages visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities

💡 Programs aligned with structured literacy include:  
*Orton-Gillingham, Wilson, Barton, Take Flight, and S.P.I.R.E.*

## Legal Responsibilities & Guidelines

### Oklahoma Requirements:

- All certified staff must receive **dyslexia awareness training** (per Oklahoma Statute Title 70 § 6-194).
- Schools must provide **screening and intervention** for students who show characteristics of dyslexia.
- Dyslexia may qualify under:
  - **IDEA** (as a Specific Learning Disability)
  - **Section 504** (as a disability impacting learning)

## Supporting Students

Use **accommodations** such as:

- Audiobooks (e.g., Learning Ally)
- Text-to-speech tools
- Extended time
- Reduced spelling load or alternatives for writing tasks

Create a **literacy-rich environment** that supports all learners

Maintain high expectations while providing **scaffolded support**

## Resources for Educators

- [International Dyslexia Association](#)
- [Oklahoma State Dept. of Education – Dyslexia Resources](#)
- [The Reading League Oklahoma](#)
- [Decoding Dyslexia OK](#)