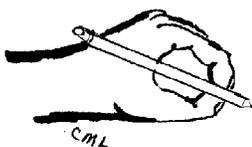


Possible Accommodations to Consider for Children with Dysgraphia

1. Until the child has mastered writing the lowercase alphabet from memory, minimize the amount of handwriting required of the child. (Uppercase letters are only used in 2% of writing.)
2. Be sure to allot additional time for the student to do his or her writing. One way to do this is to allow the student to start early on the assignment.
3. Help the child break the writing task into simple steps. Writing places demands on memory, motor function, language and organization all at the same time. Help the child to focus on specific tasks to lead to the finished product.
4. Do not depend totally on computers to bypass handwriting, there is a need to fill out forms and write notes throughout one's life. Computers can become an individual's primary method of writing, however the children will still need explicit instruction in keyboarding. Keep in mind that normally developing children will show more complex syntax, and express more ideas when writing with a pencil than with a computer. The same processing skills that interfere with children learning to write, will interfere with their learning to use the computer to write. (Berninger 2019, pp, 92, 96).

To help with some of these difficulties, try software such as *Co-Writer* or *Write: Outloud*. In Google Documents, voice typing may be used to get a child's thoughts on paper. The document can then be edited for punctuation, organization of thoughts, capitalization etc. Another app to explore is *SnapType for Occupational Therapy* for help in taking a picture of handouts and then using it to type in the answers.

5. Provide alternative assignments such as fill in the blank or multiple choices versus requesting an essay.
6. Don't chastise –more often than not, children are doing the best they can given the situation.
7. Explore the use of visual organizers such as webs, concept maps, time lines, charts, chaining to help the student to organize his or her thoughts.
8. Provide the student help with note taking. The teacher can provide a full copy of his or her notes or just partial ones that the student can fill in. Another student's notes can also be photocopied.
9. Allow the student to use a scribe. This could be another student or allowing his or her parent to help with writing on homework.
10. Provide information to the student in his or her three ring binder on how to be successful at writing. This could be a template on how to structure the writing, or showing the student how to form the letters.
11. Use lined paper, Redispace paper or graph paper to write on. This will help to students with visually organizing the space on their papers.
12. Beginning writers may benefit from the use of space retainers. Try using a pop cycle stick or Spaceman from Really Good Stuff.



13. Try a number of grips to see which one works the best for the student to support an "O" formation with the index finger and thumb. The Pencil Grip Crossover and Grotto grips work well



for children who write with a wrapped thumb. As a child's fine motor skills improve, Stetro Grips can be used to transition children away from bigger grips.



14. Shop for pens and pencils that the student likes. Try experimenting with the weight and diameter of the pen. Wider, heavier pens may be easier to control. Also using pens with a triangular shape can make it easier to hold. Try an adapted pencil. A wish bone shaped pencil, such as Twist N' Write Pencils may help a student maintain a tripod grasp.

15. Try holding the pencil with a modified pencil grasp or Monk's Grasp.

16. For children who struggle to sit up at their seats, allow them some movement by letting them to sit on an air filled cushion or on a therapy ball. (The ball should sized so the child sits with slightly more than a 90 angle at the knees.)



Bouncing (seated on a therapy ball or on a mini-trampoline) helps to elicit the vestibulospinal reflex. This reflex causes the spine move into extension, so the child is able to unconsciously sit upright. Teachers can tell children to sit upright, and they can comply, however the child will be using mental energy to complete the task. It is much better to help support posture through a movement break.

All children benefit from mini movement breaks, it helps to reset the nervous system. Without novel sensory inputs, the body goes into a "low arousal state," just like the energy saving state on a computer. This can be seen by when children start slumping in their seats. As a general guideline, a child is able to sit, listen or work for a minute per year of age (Schneider, 2016). For example, a child, 7 years old would benefit from doing some movement every 7 minutes. This could be simply doing jumping jacks at the side of the desk or carrying books or papers to a different location in the room.

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