

KS3-4

SEND collection



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KS3-4

ADHD

Supporting neurodiversity

SEND
TOOLKIT



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Introduction

This toolkit presents an overview of what ADHD is, how it is diagnosed and options for treatment.

It has been written for teachers of learners with ADHD and will provide you with:

- a variety of strategies to effectively teach students with ADHD
- an understanding of how exam access assessments can maximise outcomes for learners with ADHD
- reasonable adjustments that can be made to help learners with ADHD thrive in your classroom
- further reading and resources to enhance your understanding of ADHD.

About the author



The author, Elizabeth Swan, draws upon lived experience and professional expertise from over 20 years as a qualified teacher, SENDCo and headteacher in secondary and special schools. She exploits her postgraduate study of psychology to present the 'best bets' from research-informed approaches to supporting children and young people with ADHD.

What is neurodiversity?

by Abigail Hawkins and Helen Ross

Coined in the early 1990s by journalist Harvey Blume and Australian autism activist Judy Singer, the term *neurodiversity* can be defined as an understanding that neurological differences are to be honoured and respected just like any other human variation, including diversity in race, ethnicity, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, and so on (Armstrong, 2017).

When Singer originally coined the phrase, she was looking to move thinking from a medical model to a more social one. She wanted everyone to understand that there is no 'typical brain' or 'normal mind' and that everyone is different as part of regular human variation.

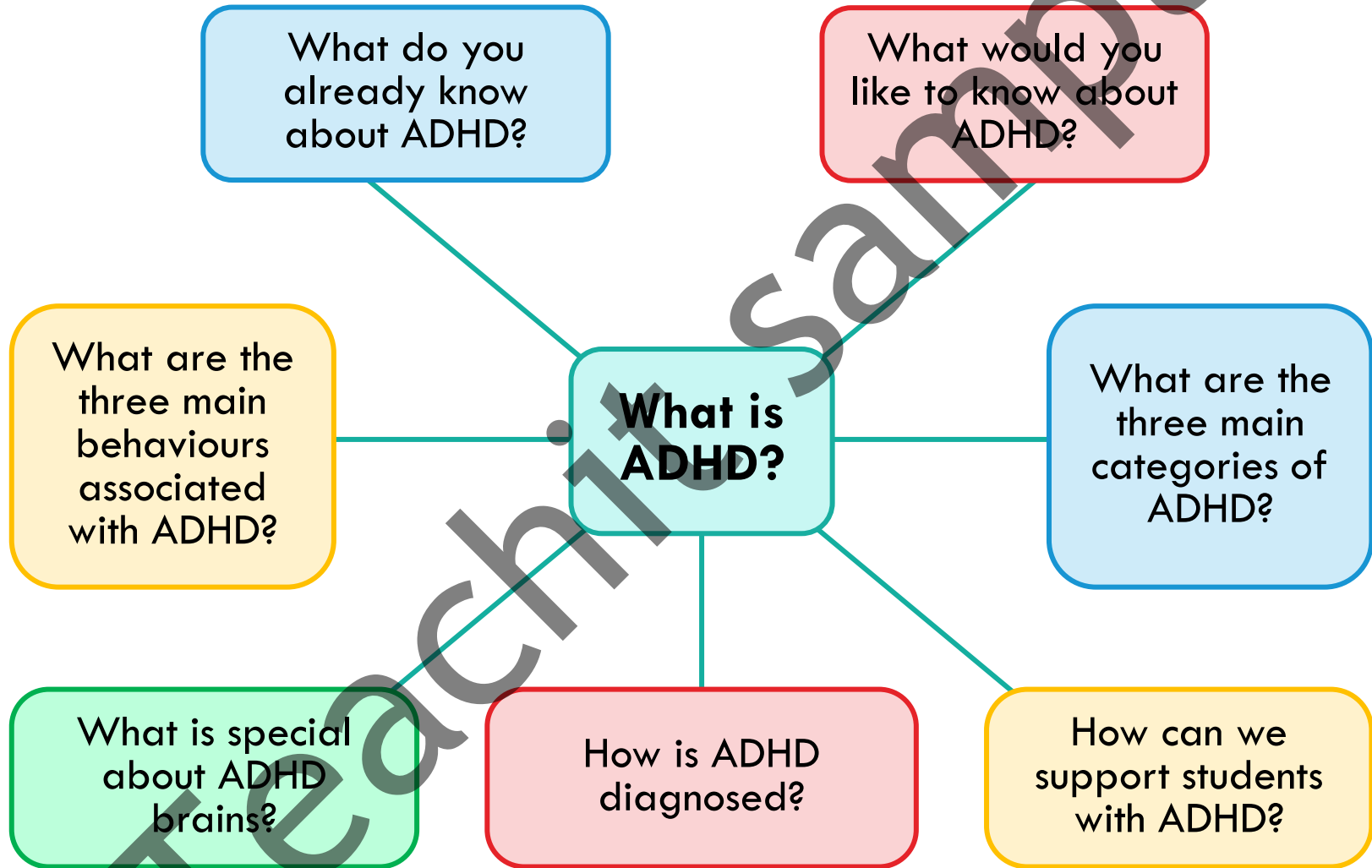
This standpoint has major implications for how we, as teachers, work to support young people in our care. Understanding and accepting that there are young people whose way of processing and engaging with the world is different from our own means that we, as professionals working to support them, need to update our knowledge and practice.

Although the term originated within the autism community, *neurodiversity* is now taken as encompassing a range of medical and educational needs, including ADHD, autistic spectrum condition (ASC) or autism spectrum disorder (ASD), dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia and Tourette syndrome. Dysgraphia and specific language impairment or developmental language delay may also be included. These needs are also referred to as *specific learning difficulties* (SpLD) as they affect the way in which information is learned and processed. All neurodiversities are independent of intelligence, are lifelong conditions that are likely to run in families and can vary in degree from one individual to the next.

Neurodiverse students may need some accommodations in school so that they can engage meaningfully in the curriculum and in wider social life. These accommodations may include wearing headphones to minimise sensory overload or having a coloured overlay when reading to reduce visual discomfort and imbalance. In school, some young people may need fidget toys or wobble cushions as an outlet for their need to move associated with ADHD, whilst others may need to have access to quiet spaces to reset because of ASD and other sensory needs. Those with dyslexia may need to have support in accessing the written word, whilst individuals with dyscalculia might find that having concrete objects to support them whilst engaging with maths problems transforms their ability to share their knowledge and understanding of those challenges they face.

The identifying features of various neurodiversities, and their commonalities, are shown below in a diagram adapted from (Colley, undated). However, it is important to consider that this diagram focuses on the negative aspects of neurodiversity, and, whilst this is important for pinpointing what students need to support them, there are also many positive attributes associated with neurodiversity and neurodiverse individuals.

ADHD toolkit



Printable resources

ADHD symptoms checklist

This list of ADHD symptoms is not exhaustive. Many people without ADHD will experience these symptoms. The difference is that for individuals with ADHD the symptoms are so significant that they impact their ability to function and perform day-to-day tasks. Girls with ADHD often do not present in the same way as boys with ADHD.

Inattention

- Difficulty getting started on activities
- Difficulty following instructions with more than one step
- Difficulty remaining on task (if the activity is not of their choosing or of particular interest)
- Avoids tasks that require sustained mental effort
- Difficulty moving on to a new task if they are in 'hyperfocus' on another task, causing them to 'zone out'
- Difficulty organising tasks and remaining on track to meet deadlines
- Fails to finish work (can be due to perfectionism)
- Forgetful – easily misplaces items that are needed for tasks (e.g. homework or coursework)
- Can be easily distracted
- Finds it difficult to listen when others are talking
- Does not seem to listen even when spoken to directly
- Makes careless mistakes in schoolwork
- Has difficulty with quiet/silent environments (conversely, can also struggle with certain sounds)
- Daydreaming

Hyperactivity

- Body is constantly 'on the go', as if driven by a motor
- Fidgets and squirms
- Twitches their leg constantly, or has 'disco leg'
- Leaves their seat often
- Runs about at inappropriate moments or climbs things
- Mind is constantly on the go
- Often talks excessively
- Hums or sings during lessons, appearing not to realise
- Has songs or dialogue running through their head constantly
- Has difficulty sleeping or getting to sleep
- Experiences peak periods of activity, followed by periods of lethargy

Impulsivity

- Has difficulty waiting
- Interrupts others
- Speaks without seeming to think first
- Blurts out answers before questions have been finished
- Has difficulty with turn-taking in conversations and games
- Has little awareness of personal space

ADHD and education

The impact of ADHD will vary from student to student and will depend on a range of factors, including the length of time since diagnosis, their sex, and the support and interventions in place to meet their needs (including medication). The most powerful way to improve educational outcomes for ADHD learners is to improve training and understanding of ADHD for professionals.

ADHD learners may take significantly longer to read and process learning than their neurotypical (non-ADHD) classmates due to their slow speed of processing and the extent to which they are distracted.

ADHD learners may take longer to produce pieces of extended writing, due to difficulties with:

- speed and legibility of handwriting
- planning, organising, ordering and structuring writing and ideas
- retaining and manipulating long lists of instructions that are delivered orally
- 'holding in mind' ideas
- proofreading
- sentence structure
- listening and taking notes simultaneously
- summarising from source material
- scanning and skimming material rapidly
- maintaining focus and focusing accurately on the text for a sustained period
- task and time management – including planning and structuring time
- meeting deadlines.

Support with written work

In the requirement to generate text, the specific skills of transcription and the more general executive function skills – including initiating tasks, sustaining effort, time management, sequencing ideas and working memory – are some of the reasons why the skill of writing proves a challenge for so many learners with ADHD. Knowing the challenges provides teachers with the opportunity to identify potential strategies and tools for the learner to adapt and apply to help them to commit their ideas to paper. Research from Reid *et al.* (2014) suggests that a combination of explicit instruction and fluency practice will prove the most beneficial for improving writing skills for learners with ADHD.

Case studies

Case study 1: Ollie (year 5, assessed in year 2)

Ollie is a nine-year-old boy who attends a mainstream primary school. He was diagnosed with ADHD at age six and takes modified-release Concerta each morning. He is currently working two years behind his chronological age in literacy and three years behind in numeracy. He has significant gaps in his knowledge and understanding due to the disruption to education caused by school closures during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cognition and learning support

In lessons, Ollie has support from an additional adult for numeracy, and they also work together outside the classroom addressing common misconceptions and gaps in learning. However, these withdrawal sessions make it hard for him to catch up with his peers. In group work, other students are reluctant to work with him as he finds it hard to take turns and talks over his partners.

Physical and sensory support

Ollie is unable to remain seated for longer than a few minutes and needs to pace at the back of the classroom or in the corridor to remain calm. However, this distracts both his group and the neighbouring class.

The occupational therapy team has received a referral, and the school is awaiting the support and advice.

Social and emotional support

Unstructured times such as break and lunchtime can find Ollie talking to adults or playing alone rather than with peers as other children find his boisterous behaviour difficult to navigate. Not all his peers share his interests, and he tends to fixate on one interest at a time, such as planes or Lego. Meltdowns can happen if he feels overwhelmed by tiredness, hunger or frustration. The speech and language therapist is training the teaching assistants in therapeutic interventions that can be used weekly.

Case study 2: Emily (year 11, assessed in year 10)

Emily is a 15-year-old girl who attends a mainstream secondary school. She was diagnosed with ADHD at age 14 and is not medicated. She is currently making expected progress for her age, but cognitive assessments completed when she was at primary school, in addition to teacher assessments, suggest that her attainment in formal assessments does not accurately reflect her true ability. Her favourite teacher describes her as a 'very bright girl'. During the period of school closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic, she was unable to return to school due to severe anxiety. After a

Printable resources

Cloze activity

Sam and Ahmed play in the park every after school.

One day, kicked the ball really, and it landed high

..... in a tree. Ahmed a long stick and to

push the ball of the tree. Sam to shake the branches

..... the tree, but the was stuck.

Ahmed then to climb up into tree and

along the until he was able reach

the ball. Sam standing underneath so that

..... was able to catch ball when it fell.

..... and Ahmed were careful to kick

the football hard again.



Word bank

as	ball	branches	day	decided	football	found
hard	he	never	of	out	Sam	Sam
the	the	to	tried	tried	up	was

My planner

Use this template for planning a group learning activity.

Name: **Date:**

What topic have you been learning about?

What has your teacher asked your group to do?

Who is in your group?

What is their job in the group?

Your top three priorities:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Burning questions:

?

?

?

What has worked well?

KS3-4

Dyslexia

Supporting neurodiversity

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Introduction

This toolkit is designed to give you a general overview of neurodiversities, how they affect students, and how to recognise them within students in your classroom. The primary focus is to look at what dyslexia is and how it affects young learners. Dyslexia is a complex and varied condition that impacts various processing skills and consequently students' outcomes.

The first section gives a rundown of current research on dyslexia, and then links to how it can be defined, how it manifests in learners and how it can be identified. There are activities that can help you as a teacher to qualify your professional knowledge of dyslexia in the classroom, and activities that can help learners to articulate their own areas of challenge and learning preferences, as well as presentation resources to help others understand dyslexia and its impacts. The subsequent sections of this guide offer insight into the different areas of processing and attainment that are commonly affected by dyslexia. The effects of dyslexia on students' memory and sequencing, reading, writing, spelling and maths are explained and linked to common classroom behaviours/responses to tasks. Tips and strategies for general classroom teaching are given, with printable materials for use with your students. Additional reading suggestions, alongside links to research articles and organisational websites, are given to signpost you to further sources of information about dyslexia and support for young people in school.

About the author



Dr Helen Ross is a leading voice on dyslexia within UK education. She is an experienced public speaker, international consultant and researcher, and contributor to a wide range of publications; Helen is also dyslexic.

Helen's passion for supporting young people with dyslexia and literacy difficulties started early in her teaching career when she worked in some challenging but invigorating schools in South Yorkshire. Some of Helen's students found literacy, and engaging with the written word, very challenging. Helen's passion for supporting young people who find learning tricky continued, and she now supports families, teachers and organisations to better understand the implications of dyslexia, neurodiversity and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

In this toolkit, Helen draws on her experiences as a classroom teacher, SENDCo and dyslexia expert to help you to understand what dyslexia is, which aspects of learning can be affected by dyslexia and what you can do to support dyslexic learners. Whatever your role in supporting young people with dyslexia, this toolkit will give you understanding, tangible ideas and practical support strategies to enable those young people to flourish.

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When Singer originally coined the phrase, she was looking to move thinking from a medical model to a more social one. She wanted everyone to understand that there is no 'typical' brain or 'normal' mind and that everyone is different as part of regular human variation.

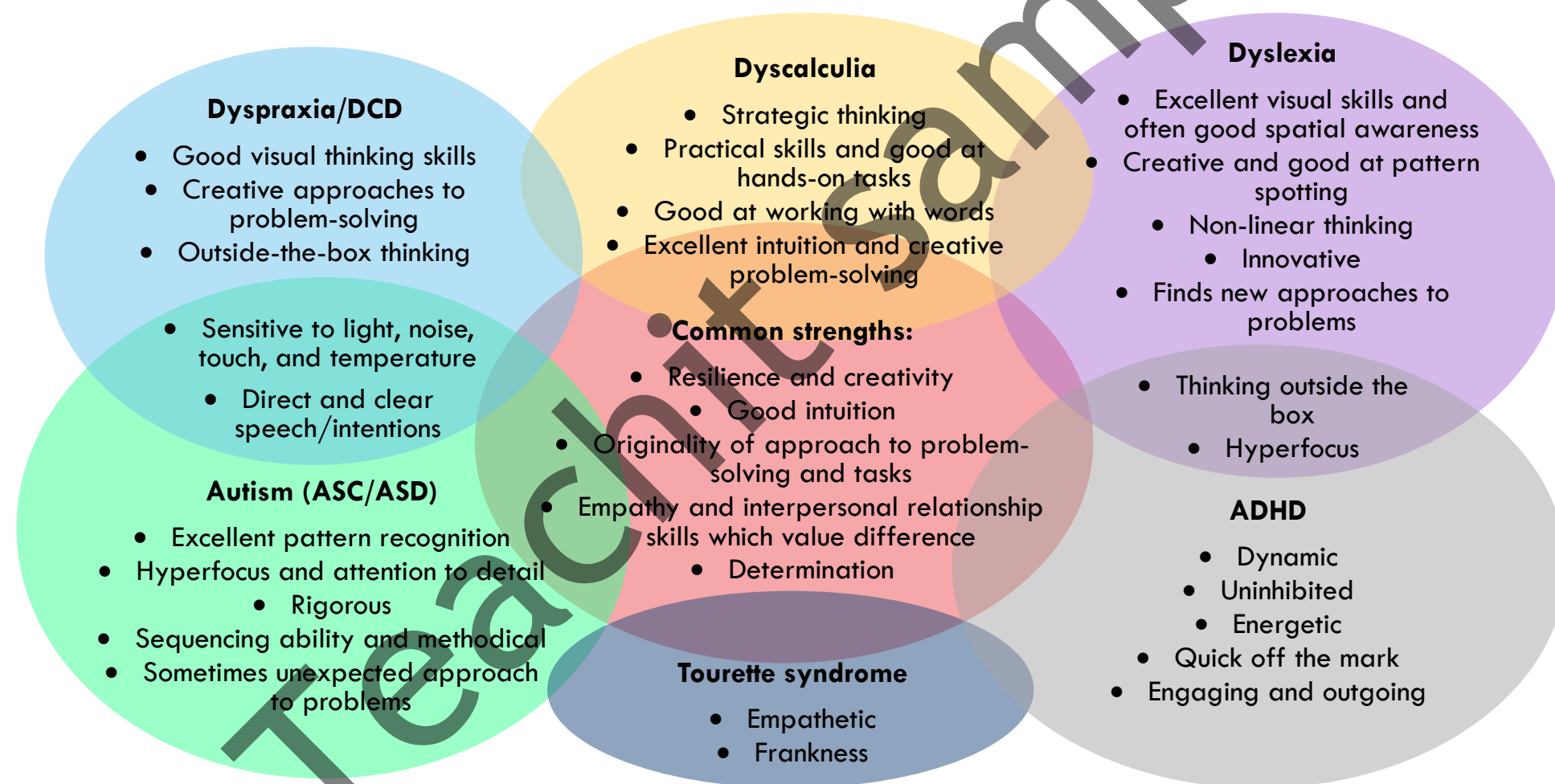
This standpoint has major implications for how we, as teachers, work to support young people in our care. Understanding and accepting that there are young people whose way of processing and engaging with the world is different from our own means that we, as professionals working to support them, need to update our knowledge and practice.

Although the term originated within the autism community, *neurodiversity* is now taken as encompassing a range of medical and educational needs, including ADHD, autistic spectrum condition (ASC) or autism spectrum disorder (ASD), dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyspraxia / developmental coordination disorder (DCD), dyscalculia and Tourette syndrome. Dysgraphia and specific language impairment or developmental language delay may also be included. These needs are also referred to as *specific learning difficulties* (SpLD) as they affect the way in which information is learned and processed. All neurodiversities are independent of intelligence, are lifelong conditions that are likely to run in families and can vary in degree from one individual to the next.

Neurodiverse students may need some accommodations in school so that they can engage meaningfully in the curriculum and in wider social life. These accommodations may include wearing headphones to minimise sensory overload or having a coloured overlay when reading to reduce visual discomfort and imbalance. In school, some young people may need fidget toys or wobble cushions as an outlet for their need to move associated with ADHD, whilst others may need to have access to quiet spaces to reset because of ASD and other sensory needs. Those with dyslexia may need to have support in accessing the written word, whilst individuals with dyscalculia might find that having concrete objects to support them whilst engaging with maths problems transforms their ability to share their knowledge and understanding of those challenges they face.

Whilst there are challenges associated with neurodiversities, there are also many strengths linked to the different ways in which neurodiverse individuals process and engage with information about the world around them. Those strengths are shown here in a re-envisioned, updated version of the diagram:

Neurodiversity: strengths and gifts



Identifying dyslexia

Dyslexia is a relatively common phenomenon, affecting roughly one in 10 people (NHS, 2018), which means that in any class of 30 students, there are likely to be three students who have dyslexia.

Fairly commonly known signs of dyslexia are that young people experience difficulties in literacy acquisition. Whilst there is a lot of information given in the definition above, sometimes a more practical, tangible understanding of what it looks like in a classroom setting is needed so that we, as educators, know how to support our students. This toolkit is largely focused on addressing the challenges that students with dyslexia have, but we will also talk about the strengths associated with dyslexia; knowing these can empower our students and help us to help them. Here, a broad overview of different elements of dyslexia is given, then, briefly, pathways for identification of dyslexia are discussed – these do differ according to local authority in England and other countries/jurisdictions, so it is not possible within this toolkit to give specific guidance.

Dyslexia can affect spelling, reading, writing and general engagement with the written word. Often, educators and those working to support young people with dyslexia / literacy difficulties are aware of the vulnerabilities in literacy acquisition associated with dyslexia. However, they may not know what underpins those challenges and how those challenges can manifest in other elements of students' attainment and their wider experience of school. Memory can often be affected so that young people may not look as if they are paying full attention in class or may appear just 'forgetful'. Where memory is implicated, maths and sequencing of information may be impacted, so that young people find processing questions and facts tricky. Difficulties in sequencing information can have wider implications for students too; they may not always follow conversations fully or may miss things when talking to their peers. This can have a huge impact on their wellbeing as well as academic outcomes (Sainio *et al.*, 2021). Phonological awareness is a key feature of dyslexia, and vulnerabilities in this element of cognitive processing differentiate dyslexia from other neurodiversities (Colley, undated). Phonological awareness can be defined concisely as 'the ability to analyse the sound structure of oral language' (Krajewski and Schneider, 2009) and is fundamental in the development of literacy skills. Where students experience challenges in processing and manipulating sounds in words, there is often an impact on their reading, spelling and writing. They are likely to need support in developing their phonological awareness and learning other approaches to literacy that draw on their strengths to help them to decode and make sense of the written word. Below, general support strategies for young people with dyslexia are given, followed by strategies directly connected to each area of difficulty linked to dyslexia, building on their dyslexic strengths.

Printable resources

Memory support – task map

This sheet is for using with students who may have support from a TA so that they can chunk down a task they have to do. It will help them to know what they are doing in a task and what is expected. Their TA can help them to break it down into stages. They also have a 'now' and 'next' space so they know what is coming up. You may want to tweak the headings, depending on what your students are working on in their lessons.

Task title:

Type of task: Creative story writing / science report / poem / book report / fact file

Success criteria

1.
.....
2.
.....
3.
.....

Equipment needed

Now

Next

Task stages

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

For example, a completed sheet might look like this:

Subject/topic	New word(s)	Meaning
Geography	Antarctica	The continent around the South Pole
Geography	Tributary	A smaller river that flows into a larger river

Formal spelling (draw lines between syllables)

Ant | arc | tic | a

Looks like (draw a picture to represent each syllable as you hear it and extend the lines down)

Ant | arc | tic | a



Formal spelling (draw lines between syllables)

trib | u | ta | ry

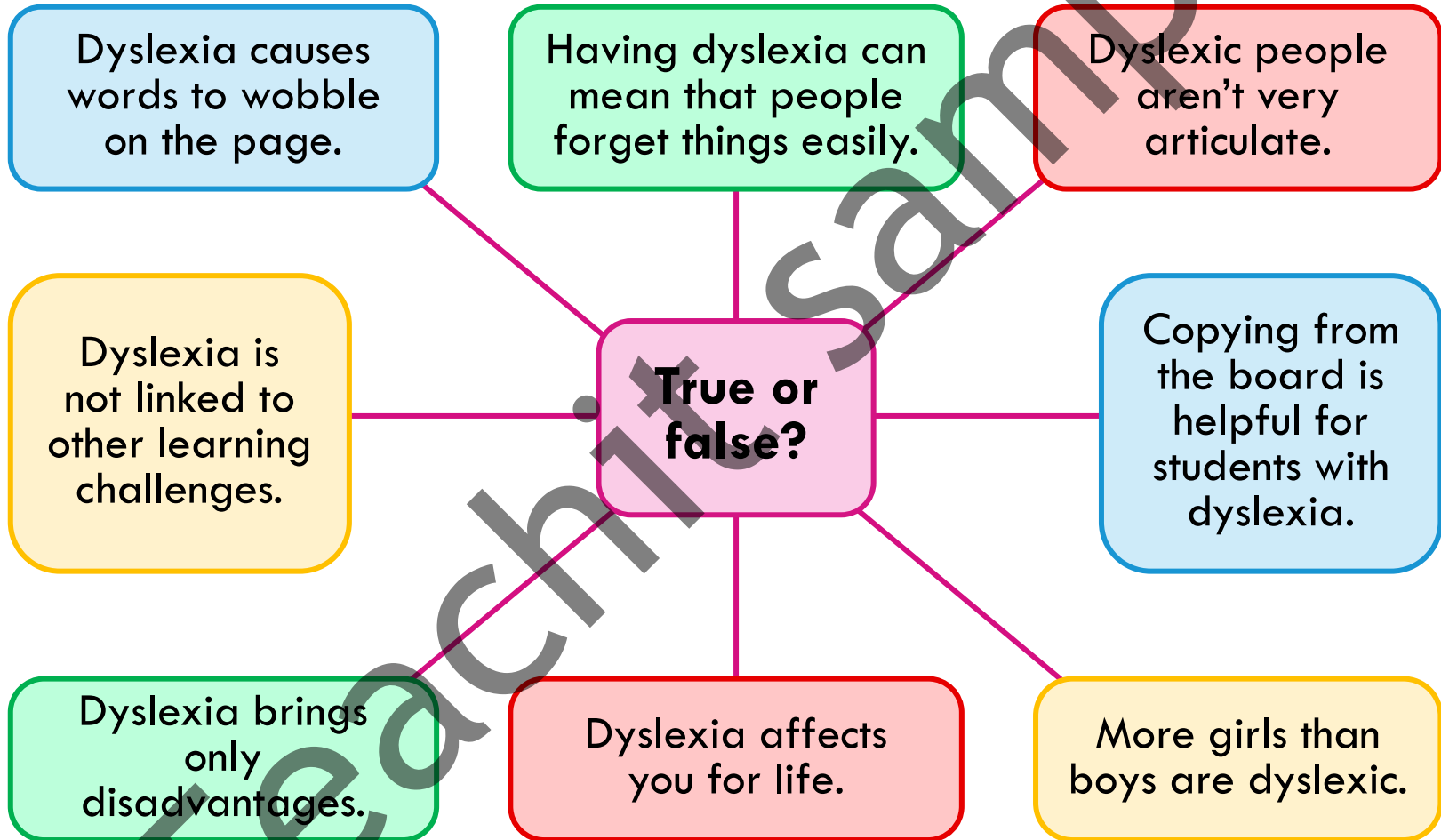
Sounds like (write what the syllables sound like and extend the lines down)

Looks like four syllables; sounds like three syllables:

trib | u | tary

trib | you | tree

What is dyslexia and how can we support our students?



Task 1 – What does dyslexia feel like?

A missing letter: finding ways round things

Describe an activity that you undertake regularly – something like:

- going to school
- your morning routine
- how to make a cake.

However, you are not allowed to use the sound /s/.

Discuss:

What does this illustrate about how dyslexic people may feel?



KS3-4

Dysgraphia

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Introduction

By the time children join secondary school, we expect that they have developed a basic skill set. One of the things expected is fast, fluent, legible and neat handwriting. Whilst secondary teachers are less focused on the development of cursive handwriting (they are generally satisfied with legible print), they do require students to be able to produce class notes quickly. Unlike the primary environment, where the students can quickly finish off a prior lesson before moving on, secondary school is ruled by bells and chimes and the need to move from one task to another rapidly.

As each new year arrives, so too do a number of students who just haven't got a fast, fluent handwriting style and, with little time to deliver an intervention, it is up to the subject teachers to find methods that work.

This pack has been written for the staff in secondary schools who want to support students with handwriting difficulties. It explains the potential causes of handwriting difficulties and offers classroom support strategies. For those students who need more, there are additional suggestions around intervention and how this can run alongside lessons rather than withdrawing students from the class.

About the author

Abigail Hawkins runs SENDCO Solutions, an SEN consultancy, and SENSible SENCO CIC, a not-for-profit networking support group. She has been a SENCO for over 25 years and has taught a multitude of subjects across all phases, from two-year-olds to adults. Abigail works with software companies developing supportive software for SEN and safeguarding purposes, has developed and delivers a teaching assistant apprenticeship programme, has authored several books on SEN and exclusions, and runs a support network for over 10,000 SENCOs. She still works as a SENCO for part of her week. Abigail has a no-nonsense, practical approach to SEN issues faced by schools, believing that many high-incidence needs can be met in the classroom with basic teaching tweaks.



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When Singer originally coined the phrase, she was looking to move thinking from a medical model to a more social one. She wanted everyone to understand that there is no 'typical' brain or 'normal' mind and that everyone is different as part of regular human variation.

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Neurodiverse students may need some accommodations in school so that they can engage meaningfully in the curriculum and in wider social life. These accommodations may include wearing headphones to minimise sensory overload or having a coloured overlay when reading to reduce visual discomfort and imbalance. In school, some young people may need fidget toys or wobble cushions as an outlet for their need to move associated with ADHD, whilst others may need to have access to quiet spaces to reset because of ASD and other sensory needs. Those with dyslexia may need to have support in accessing the written word, whilst individuals with dyscalculia might find that having concrete objects to support them whilst engaging with maths problems transforms their ability to share their knowledge and understanding of those challenges they face.

There is a lack of official diagnoses of dysgraphia for the reasons cited above, alongside the lack of research and other factors often considered to be at play in generating 'messy writing' (gender, age, lack of opportunities, or 'another reason').

The education system

Handwriting is just one part of literacy, and difficulties may lead to problems in all areas of the curriculum. When students enter secondary school, there is a huge variation in their handwriting skills. Different feeder schools will have used different schemes, followed a different approach and policy, and had different attitudes towards the teaching of handwriting. The national curriculum at primary school encourages the use of fluent and legibly produced text in printed and joined writing. A competent writer is likely to have two styles: one is produced quickly, is used for note-taking and might appear untidy but is still legible; the other is a good-quality script used for more formal purposes.

What we see

Handwriting for the dysgraphic profile is generally illegible. As a quick assessment, take a piece of text written by a student and, starting at the last written word, read each sentence backwards. This takes the words out of context and forces the reader to 'read' the word rather than guess the word. If more than 25% of the words are illegible (due to handwriting or spelling errors), then there is an issue that could be regarded as dysgraphic in nature.

Theories

The causes of dysgraphia are not definitively known. What we can say is that if the poor handwriting can be attributed to something else (for example, a palsy), then it is labelled as 'handwriting difficulties', whereas dysgraphia is used only when no other reason can be found for handwriting difficulties and, despite targeted interventions, those difficulties persist, are present from school age and are not better accounted for by another diagnosis.

Various theories are proposed as to the underlying cause of handwriting difficulties. Some focus on a problem within the child, whereas others locate the problem within the structure of the education system. The education system may result in inadequate teaching, a failure to provide opportunities to consolidate learning and provide efficient routines, and missed opportunities to practise. The Covid pandemic certainly saw an increase in the latter.

Classroom strategies

Have you ever wondered at what rate the average secondary student produces legible handwriting?

Average words per minute	
Year 7	13.8
Year 8	14.3
Year 9	15.6
Year 10	14.7
Year 11	16.1

(Note the dip in Y10, when the academic content gets heavier and expectations of a more complex technical vocabulary increase.)

Of course, this is affected by many factors, including any underlying learning difficulties, fatigue, the technical and creative content of the writing, whether English is the first language and whether students know what they want to write.

A survey of American adults suggests that 45% can't read their own writing, 7/10 find it difficult to read a co-worker's handwriting, and 23% are terrified to write in front of others (Sadlier, 2021). This has implications in the classroom when we ask students to mark peers' work, resulting in comments and embarrassment – and further consequences when students produce work for their final exams that may not always be legible without mediation.

In the reality of the regular secondary classroom, we don't have the time to teach handwriting alongside our curriculum content, but we can encourage and support students to develop fluency and legibility.

Handwriting difficulties assessment record

Name:		Age:	
Concerns:			
Date of initial assessment:		Work attached:	
Interventions and provisions put in place:			
Date of reassessment:		Work attached:	



Aspect	Never/NA	Rarely/Mild	Often/Moderate	Frequent/Severe
Spacing				
Drifts away from the margin				
Inconsistent letter spacing				
Inconsistent word spacing				
Layout of the page is confused				
Writing is not 'on the line'				

Visual motor skills

Hand-eye coordination is required in order to develop fluent writing. Visual processing is a collection of multiple skills.

Stage X

- Can draw left-to-right lines between the lines of tracks.
- Can link dots from left to right using only simple straight lines.
- Can link dots from top to bottom using simple straight lines.
- Can trace a finger from left to right under reading-related content.
- Can trace basic shapes (squares, circles, etc.).
- Colours inside clearly defined bold lines.
- Traces over basic writing designs.
- Is able to trace over simple shapes (squares, circles, etc.)

Stage Y

- Can depict a face with a mouth, nose and eyes.
- Can depict a human with at least six distinct body parts.
- Can draw a basic 2D form.
- Can generate/create pictures of recognisable items.
- Can reproduce intricate handwriting patterns below a given example.
- Can trace with a basic stencil.

Stage Z

- Can colour cleanly inside the outline of the borders of more complicated patterns.
- Can write on lines with adequate space between words.
- Colours within the lines of increasingly complex shapes.
- Can write numbers on squared paper (in the squares).
- Writes with finger gaps between words.

An intervention programme

Select the appropriate phase based on the student's assessment profile then use the relevant suggestions from the detailed list on [pp.38–69](#).

There are six phases in the proposed programme. Students may not need to access all phases. Use the assessment grid to help select activities that work on areas of weakness.

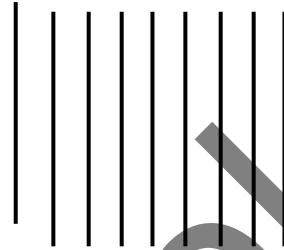
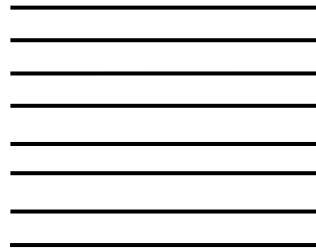
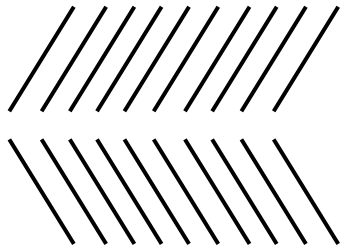
Visual motor skills	
Phase 1	Visual focusing
Manipulation	
Phase 2a	Gross motor skills
Phase 2b	Fine motor skills
Formation	
Phase 3a + 4a	Letters
Phase 3b + 4b	Words
Organisation	
Phase 5a	Planning sentences
Phase 5b	Memory
Adaptations/Technology	
Phase 6	Teach to use adaptive resources

A curated list of dysgraphia products is provided here: <https://amzn.eu/iU3hRol>

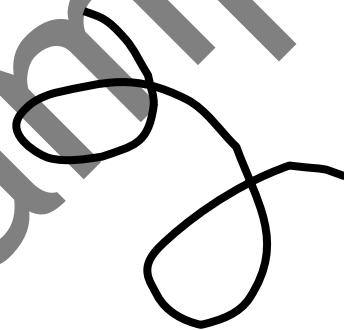
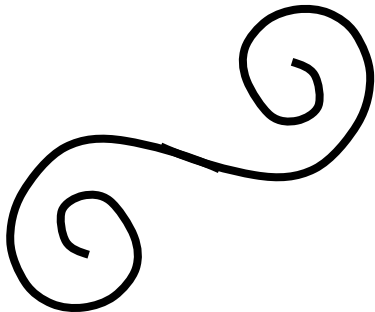
Other suppliers are available, and the list should be used only to identify and support the identification of the items.

Shapes, patterns and pictures

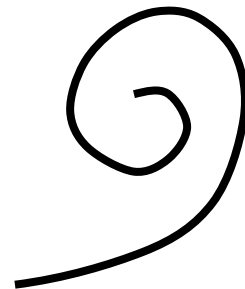
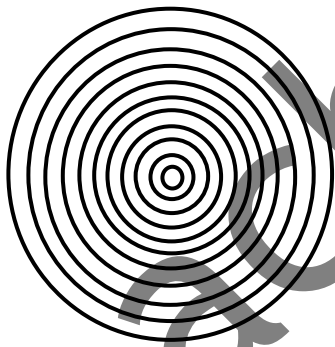
Straight-line patterns



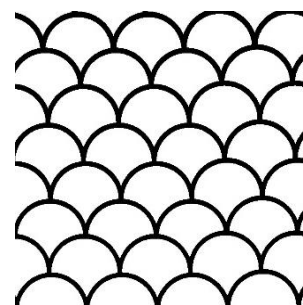
Curved patterns



Spiral patterns



Creative patterns



KS3-4

EAL

English as an additional language

EAL
TOOLKIT



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Introduction

EAL (English as an additional language) students are those who are learning the English language but already speak one or more other languages, although not necessarily fluently. It is crucial to recognise that students learning English as an additional language are not a homogeneous group; they come from diverse regions and backgrounds. Learners will be at different stages of English language acquisition (from complete beginner to advanced bilingual), but even those at the same stage of English language acquisition will have different needs.

What proportion of students have English as an additional language?

EAL students can be found in classrooms around the country. The document [Schools, pupils and their characteristics](#) published by the government on 9 June 2022 reports that in 2021/22 19.5% of pupils were recorded as having a first language known or believed to be other than English, up from 2020/21. If we look more closely at state-funded secondary schools, the percentage of students with EAL was 17.5%. Given such significant figures, understanding the needs of students learning the national language is absolutely essential.

How long does it take students to master English?

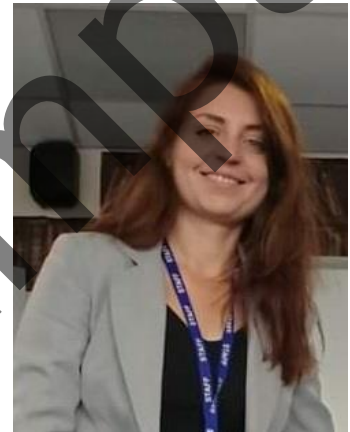
There is no unequivocal answer regarding how long it takes to learn the English language (see research by Feyisa Demie, '[English as an additional language pupils: how long does it take to acquire English fluency?](#)', *Language and Education*, vol.27, issue 1, 2013). Depending on their existing level of proficiency in English, and their general knowledge and abilities, all new arrivals joining KS3 and KS4 classrooms and preparing for their GCSE examinations will have three main barriers to face: the language barrier itself, curricular catch-up assignments and learning the current lesson content. Their future successes will be built on their efforts, skills and personal circumstances. Nevertheless, using appropriate teaching methods and resources will be essential to overcoming those barriers, to motivating students and to enhancing their learning. In some curricular subjects, such as geography, science and maths, EAL learners will need challenging subject content but simple language; in others, such as history and English literature, they will also require simpler subject content. As was noted in a report by The Bell Foundation, 'Attainment is also affected by arrival time' ([Educational outcomes of children with English as an additional language](#), Jo Hutchinson, February 2018), so it is a significant priority for secondary school teachers to ensure that they have developed a range of teaching strategies to work with EAL students joining their classes at various points throughout the year.

How can this pack help?

This KS3 and KS4 teaching pack is designed to introduce a variety of ways to support EAL students at secondary school. After discussing the challenges that EAL students may encounter, it recommends practical strategies for mainstream subject teachers and teaching assistants. As well as offering general advice on EAL support, it takes into account three key elements of language learning: vocabulary, oracy and literacy. For each of these components, a range of strategies and ideas are introduced, and printable classroom resources are included.

About the author

This EAL teaching pack was written for Teachit by Anna Czebiolko, who began her EAL career as a language support assistant but decided to develop her knowledge by training to teach. Since starting to work with EAL learners in 2009, she has worked with children in every year group from nursery to sixth form. Today, Anna is head of EAL in a secondary school in North Yorkshire. Previously, she coordinated the EAL provision for seven years in a large secondary academy in Leeds. She is always willing to try innovative methods with her students and to share her knowledge with teachers and other practitioners.



The challenges facing EAL learners

Students with EAL experience many challenges during their learning. New arrivals in particular may struggle with cultural differences and the language barrier. They need to develop their understanding of the national curriculum and adapt to the new education system. They may struggle with the curriculum gap and the unknown academic content. A lack of language for social purposes may lead to social isolation. If classroom routines differ from those familiar to the newly arrived student, they may lead to confusion or, in some cases, exclusion. Because of differences in school starting age or because of personal circumstances, some new students may have missed the experience of attending school or may have been in school for only a short period of time. The language of learning may be too challenging for learners and very different from social language.

These other challenges should be considered:

Personal challenges

- Personal circumstances – some students may have gone through traumatic past experiences, or they may be living with adults who are experiencing emotional difficulties. The pain of divided families or family problems may have had a

Introducing survival vocabulary (tier 1 words)

Tier 1 words are basic, everyday words that are part of the vocabulary of many young people. These are words that are used daily in conversation, and most of them are learned by listening to family, peers and teachers using them in their conversation. These words are very important for English language learners, who may be unfamiliar with them.

Examples of tier 1 words include *clock, baby, happy, family, big and small*.

Classroom strategies and activity ideas

Flashcards

Flashcards are sets of small, single- or double-sided cards used to learn and revise facts, keywords and vocabulary. [See the tier 1 vocabulary flashcards on pp.24–26](#) (Everyday objects, Animals, People, Emotions and feelings, Places, Food). Here are some ideas for how to use them:

Translation and retrieval practice

Students can write the translation of each word on the back and then use the cards to test their vocabulary recall, from English to their first language initially, and then from their first language to English.

Sorting

Flashcards can be used for sorting activities. For example, students could sort the people words on p.25 into 'male/man', 'female/woman', and 'male or female/man or woman', or the emotions and feelings into 'positive/good' and 'negative/bad'.

What is missing?

This game can be played in students' families or with their language buddies. The student is presented with three to six flashcards to remember. Ask them to close their eyes while their partner takes away one of the cards. The student has to identify the missing card.






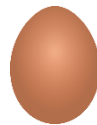

















Word mats

Word mats are ideal scaffolding for writing and speaking tasks as they can help learners to describe something effectively, possibly using words that they have never tried to use before. They are also useful for presenting alternative words and the

Printable resources

Phonics mats

Phase 2 sound mat

<p>a</p>  <p>ant</p>	<p>b</p>  <p>bat</p>	<p>c</p>  <p>cat</p>	<p>ck</p>  <p>luck</p>
<p>d</p>  <p>duck</p>	<p>e</p>  <p>egg</p>	<p>f</p>  <p>fun</p>	<p>ff</p>  <p>puff</p>
<p>g</p>  <p>bag</p>	<p>h</p>  <p>hip</p>	<p>i</p>  <p>ink</p>	<p>k</p>  <p>kit</p>
<p>l</p>  <p>leg</p>	<p>ll</p>  <p>bell</p>	<p>m</p>  <p>man</p>	<p>n</p>  <p>bin</p>
<p>o</p>  <p>dog</p>	<p>p</p>  <p>pen</p>	<p>r</p>  <p>run</p>	<p>s</p>  <p>sad</p>
<p>ss</p>  <p>boss</p>	<p>t</p>  <p>tin</p>	<p>u</p>  <p>sun</p>	

Improving general academic vocabulary and literacy (tier 2 words)

Examples of tier 2 words include *obvious*, *complex*, *establish* and *verify*. They are words that learners are likely to come across in a variety of contexts and across all subjects, but that are not used much in everyday conversation. As Beck, McKeown and Kucan (2002) say, these words 'are not the most basic or common ways of expressing ideas, but they are familiar to mature language users as ordinary as opposed to specialised language'.

Classroom strategies and activity ideas

Visual stimuli

Visual support such as flashcards, word mats and labelling activities can be used for teaching vocabulary in books/texts before reading or listening and for providing useful vocabulary before writing or speaking.

Tier 2 word mats available on Teachit:

- Word class learning mat (KS3/KS4)
www.teachit.co.uk/resources/english/word-class-learning-mat
- Connectives writing placemat (KS3/KS4)
www.teachit.co.uk/resources/english/connectives-writing-placemat
- Punctuation writing placemat (KS3/KS4)
www.teachit.co.uk/resources/english/punctuation-writing-placemat
- SpaG mat (KS3/KS4/KS5)
www.teachit.co.uk/resources/english/spag-mat

The use of synonyms

EAL students can be exposed to multiple tier 2 words by identifying synonyms (words with a similar meaning) and antonyms (words with an opposite meaning) for those words. Students can be asked to list, for example, 10 synonyms and then use them in their writing. Specific word mats that include lists of synonyms can be also a useful aid in the classroom. The use of synonyms may be specifically fruitful when students recognise cognates (words that are the same) in their home language. Using synonyms can also open discussions about meaning of words and address any potential misconceptions.

Printable resources

Tenses table

Tense	Affirmative	Negative	Question
Present simple	I live in London.	I don't live in London.	Do you live in London?
Present continuous	I am living in London at the moment.	I am not living in London at the moment.	Are you living in London at the moment?
Present perfect	I have lived in London for a long time.	I haven't lived in London for a long time.	Have you lived in London for a long time?
Present perfect continuous	I have been living in London for a long time.	I haven't been living in London for a long time.	Have you been living in London for a long time?
Past simple	I lived in London when I was a child.	I didn't live in London when I was a child.	Did you live in London when you were a child?
Past continuous	I was living in London when the Queen died.	I wasn't living in London when the Queen died.	Were you living in London when the Queen died?
Past perfect	I had visited London before I moved here.	I hadn't visited London before I moved here.	Had you visited London before you moved here?
Past perfect continuous	I had been living in London for a long time before I went to Spain.	I hadn't been living in London for a long time before I went to Spain.	Had you been living in London for a long time before you went to Spain?
Future simple	I will live in London for ever.	I won't live in London for ever.	Will you live in London for ever?
Future continuous	I will (still) be living in London when I'm 18.	I won't (still) be living in London when I'm 18.	Will you (still) be living in London when you're 18?
Future perfect	By the end of February, I will have lived in London for more than three years.	By the end of February, I won't have lived in London for more than three years.	By the end of February, how long will you have lived in London?
Future perfect continuous	By the end of February, I will have been living in London for more than three years.	By the end of February, I won't have been living in London for more than three years.	By the end of February, how long will you have been living in London?

Improving subject-specific vocabulary and literacy (tier 3 words)

Tier 3 words are subject-specific terms used within a particular field. This is the language of scientists, mathematicians, historians and geographers. For maths, they include words like *multiplication*, while science lessons might require learners to understand *photosynthesis*. Often, these words are integral to teaching content for specific subjects.

Classroom strategies and activity ideas











Visual stimuli

As with tier 2 words, visual support such as flashcards, word mats and labelling activities can be used for teaching vocabulary in books or texts before reading or listening, and for providing useful vocabulary before writing or speaking.

Dual coding

Dual coding involves using different types of stimulus to help learners encode information in their brains more effectively, enabling it to be more easily retrieved later on. In the classroom, the main two types of stimulus that are used are visual and verbal. For many students, it is easier to remember a word's meaning by making a quick sketch that connects the word to something personally meaningful to the student.

See Teachit's [Take 10 collection](#) for geography resources that use dual coding:

Revision strips				
				
What are the impacts of UK climate change and what can be done?				
				

Source: www.teachit.co.uk/resources/geography/take-10-uk-climate-change

Improving listening and speaking skills (oracy)

Classroom strategies and activity ideas

Providing a range of opportunities to listen, including different speakers, accents, aural media and kinds of spoken language is essential for developing students' listening and speaking skills. Asking students to listen for a clearly defined purpose helps them to focus on specific parts of the spoken text and can provide opportunities for them to verbalise their language, meaning the most effective learning takes place.

Speaking prompts

Although EAL students' social language may be well developed, speaking frames are useful at any level to scaffold academic language.

Here is an example Teachit resource to scaffold debating expressions:

Debating expressions		
In my opinion...	Are you for or against...?	Nevertheless...
Well, I feel that...	Do you think we should...?	Yes, but remember that...
I strongly believe...	Do you think [the Government] should...?	That may be so but...
There's no doubt that...	What do you mean by that?	That isn't the point.
I suppose that...	I'll need time to think about that...	Come off it!
Well, if you ask me...	That's a very interesting question, because...	You may have a point but...
For example...	I'm beginning to think it would be a good thing...	I'm not so sure about that.
Well, firstly...	Well, it depends on what you mean.	Do you really think so?!
Furthermore...	Don't you think...?	I disagree entirely.
In addition...	That's a difficult question to answer, because...	Come on!
On the other hand...	Precisely. I would say the same because...	I think...

Source: www.teachit.co.uk/resources/elt/debating-expressions

Further support

Glossary

Acronyms

- BICS** = Basic interpersonal communication skills
Simple vocabulary and grammar structures for everyday life (tier 1 words).
- CALP** = Cognitive academic language proficiency
Language for studying in general and for specific subjects (tier 2 and tier 3 words).
- EAL** = English as an additional language
Used in the UK with reference to school-age children/students who live in the UK and whose first language is not English.
The term encompasses students who are fully bilingual and all those at different stages of learning English. EAL students may be:
- newly arrived from a foreign country and school
 - newly arrived from a foreign country but an English-speaking school
 - born abroad, but moved to England at some point earlier in their childhood
 - born in the UK, but in a family where the main language is not English.
- EAP** = English for academic purposes
English for studying at university level. Includes tier 2 vocabulary (English for general academic purposes) and tier 3 vocabulary (English for specific academic purposes).
- EFL** = English as a foreign language
Used mostly in the UK with reference to people of any age who are learning English for their studies, jobs or general interest but who do not live in an English-speaking country.
- ELLs** = English language learners
Used in the USA to refer to school-age children/students whose first language is not English – the US term for EAL student.
- ESL** = English as a second language
Used in the USA and internationally with reference to people of any age who are learning English for their studies, jobs or general interest but who usually do not live in an English-speaking country.