

10 Tips On Dyslexia Testing

1. Dyslexia screening is different from dyslexia diagnosis.

Diagnosis is a lengthy process and is extremely comprehensive. Diagnosis can be done by a licensed educational psychologist or certified dyslexia diagnostician. If your insurance does not cover these services, it can cost up to \$5,000. Screening can be done by a dyslexia specialist who has training as a dyslexia screener. This process is also very thorough and accurate, but less time consuming and a lot less expensive.

2. You do not need a dyslexia screening or diagnosis to pursue private teaching/tutoring.

Some families like to have a screening completed before starting private teaching. This may be beneficial because it will give you valuable information, but screening is not necessary to use an Orton Gillingham based reading program.

3. Public schools DO NOT test or screen for dyslexia.

It is a misconception that schools test for dyslexia. The testing provided by the public school system determines if a child qualifies as having a specific learning disability in a certain area, such as reading. If a child qualifies for special education in reading, the type of programming offered is left to the professional judgment of the special education team. Unfortunately, most public schools do not have Orton Gillingham (a.k.a. Structured Literacy) trained teachers. It is also common that personnel at public schools have been told not to use the word, "dyslexia" with parents, don't know what dyslexia is, and consider common myths about dyslexia to be fact. This is unfortunately more common than people realize.

4. A pediatrician or general practitioner does not diagnose dyslexia.

Although dyslexia is neuro-biological in nature and can be seen on fMRIs; a pediatrician or general practitioner does not make the diagnosis. The information needed to diagnose dyslexia is educational in nature. There is no single test that can be used to diagnose or screen for dyslexia. A battery of tests need to be used.

5. A child can be tested for dyslexia as young as 5 years old.

Yes! Dyslexia can be clearly seen by 5 years old if you know what to look for and what tests to give.

6. There is no single test to diagnose or screen for dyslexia.

It takes a battery of 10-12 tests and a skilled professional to interpret the tests to screen for dyslexia.

7. No one should go through dyslexia testing unless dyslexia is very probable.

It takes a lot of time and energy (student and tester) to screen and/or diagnose dyslexia.

8. Dyslexia testing is never covered by insurance.

You'll want to contact your insurance company about this. Depending on your insurance, there may be ways to get dyslexia screening or diagnosis paid for. Additionally, families are often able to use Health Savings Accounts (HSA) or Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) to cover expenses.

9. Carefully research before paying for dyslexia screening or diagnosis.

Always check and verify what you have read or been told about testing. Sometimes families pay for formal diagnosis because they think it's necessary to get special education services in the school system. Private testing (that you pay for out of pocket) is NEVER required for a student to qualify for special education.

10. A diagnosis of dyslexia will ensure specialized services in the school setting.

This couldn't be further from the truth. Intervention services through response to intervention (RTI), title services, or special education are not guaranteed with a diagnosis of dyslexia. More importantly, if you are offered any of these services, there are no guarantees that the type of reading intervention given will be Orton Gillingham (Structured Literacy) based. Ask what kind of reading/spelling intervention will be used. Make sure it's what research has shown works for kids with dyslexia!