


Jenny Wright
SpLD Outreach

Support for pupils
with Specific
Learning Difficulties




HERA & Evers Multi-Academy Trust

Top Tips for Support
Staff



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Support for pupils
with Specific
Learning Difficulties




HERA & Evers Multi-Academy Trust

- Jenny Wright
- Employed by HEMAT
- Plus outreach work – assessments, training, advice.

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WHAT WILL WE
COVER?



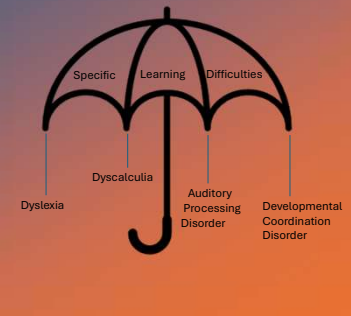
- Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) explained
- The importance of support staff
- Memory and processing
- Writing and spelling
- Reading
- Case Studies and questions

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SpLD

- SpLD is an umbrella term
- Neurological condition
- Often runs in families
- Affects how information is learned and processed.

ADHD can occur alongside an SpLD



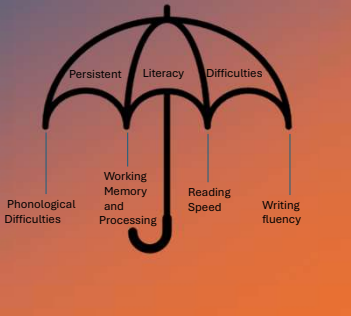
The diagram shows an umbrella with the canopy labeled 'Specific Learning Difficulties'. Four lines extend from the canopy to labels underneath: 'Dyslexia', 'Dyscalculia', 'Auditory Processing Disorder', and 'Developmental Coordination Disorder'.

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Persistent Literacy Difficulties

- Persistent despite good teaching
- Often history of speech and language difficulties
- Often family history of literacy difficulties
- There may be a mismatch of skills



The diagram shows an umbrella with the canopy labeled 'Persistent Literacy Difficulties'. Four lines extend from the canopy to labels underneath: 'Phonological Difficulties', 'Working Memory and Processing', 'Reading Speed', and 'Writing fluency'.

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The image shows the cover of the 'Effective Deployment of TAs' report, which features a large number '1' and the title 'Effective Deployment of TAs'.

EEF – Effective Deployment of TAs

Education Endowment Foundation

- Independent charity
- Breaking the link between family income and educational achievement
- Using evidence to guide practice
- Effective deployment of TAs – taken from 52 studies of good practice.

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Deployment of Teaching Assistants
Summary of recommendations

Effective practices

TAs should supplement – not replace – the teacher.

Teacher is responsible for ALL pupils

SEND pupils should spend at least as much time with the teacher if not more.

Teacher to lead some intervention groups.

Teacher to spend 1:1 time with struggling pupils.


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Deployment of Teaching Assistants
Summary of recommendations

Effective practices

What does good TA support look like?

Please pop any ideas in the chat.



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Deployment of Teaching Assistants
Summary of recommendations

Effective practices

TAs should scaffold and promote independence


Whole class – mind maps, word banks, words for cut up sentence

Remove scaffolds over time.

Set pupils up for success.

Ensure periods of independence in each task, no matter how short

Less is more!




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Deployment of Teaching Assistants
Summary of recommendations

Effective practices

- Pre-teach concepts, vocabulary, or skills before the lesson
- Deliver specific interventions
- Observe and re-direct pupils
- Adapting materials for a lesson




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Deployment of Teaching Assistants
Summary of recommendations

Effective practices

- Structured interventions
- Evidence based with baselines
- Monitor regularly
- Structured and cumulative
- Bridging to the classroom




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Deployment of Teaching Assistants
Summary of recommendations

Effective practices


In what ways can support staff can inhibit pupil learning?

Pop any ideas in the chat!



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Deployment of Teaching Assistants
Summary of recommendations

 Education
Endowment
Foundation

Effective practices


Support staff can inhibit pupil learning:

- Encouraging pupils to copy writing
- Encouraging over-reliance on TA
- Providing misconceptions
- Contradicting the teacher



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Working Memory




The brain's mental workspace – limited capacity

Think of a post-it note!

Crucial for learning

Eg; mental maths, following directions, reading comprehension

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Checklist of possible memory difficulties in the classroom

Indicator	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently
Is easily distracted when working on or doing something that is not highly interesting			
Has trouble waiting his/her turn, for example in a conversation or when waiting in line to get help			
Struggles with reading comprehension and has to read through texts repeatedly to understand			
Struggles with problem solving that requires holding information in mind, for example mental maths calculations			
Is inconsistent in remembering maths facts			

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Processing Speed

How quickly the brain receives, understands and responds to information.

Crucial to keeping up in a fast paced classroom, following instructions, class discussions.



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Checklist of possible processing speed difficulties in

Indicator
Pupil puts up hand but slow to produce answer or can appear to forget answer
Answers can appear to be 'at the tip of the tongue' but difficulty finding the correct word / answer
Can appear overwhelmed when presented with a lot of information
Difficulties keeping up with oral instructions in class
Can't make decisions quickly



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WORKING MEMORY AND PROCESSING SPEED –

What can you do to support these learners in the classroom?

Pop your ideas in the chat.



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WORKING MEMORY AND PROCESSING SPEED – Reasonable Adjustments

There is no magic fix! Keep pupil in mind.

Never talk too much.

Visual support for all oral information – pictures, sketches, scaffolds....



Reduce distractions, consider seating – in or out of class?

Cumulative, over-learning embedded – do it again and again!

Encourage metacognition – what works best? – draw a picture? Record my ideas? Use post-it notes? A mind map?

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WORKING MEMORY AND PROCESSING SPEED – Reasonable Adjustments

Cut-up sentence, sentence frames, writing frames – to come!

Pupil repeats back instructions or information

Use clear, concise language and chunk instructions

Give plentiful time to process, avoid putting on the spot

Brain/movement breaks

Stop/review/talk/edit

Create an inclusive, safe space



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WRITING

Can the child construct a sentence using punctuation and conjunctions correctly?

No

Yes

- Use cut up sentence, sentence frames, talk buttons/ipad.
- Consider colourful semantics/colour coding.
- Consider using a flip up in their books to remind them of punctuation marks and conjunctions.

Use timed paragraph writing, paragraph prompt strips, writing frames, mind maps, talk for writing, Widget, triple take, immersive reader

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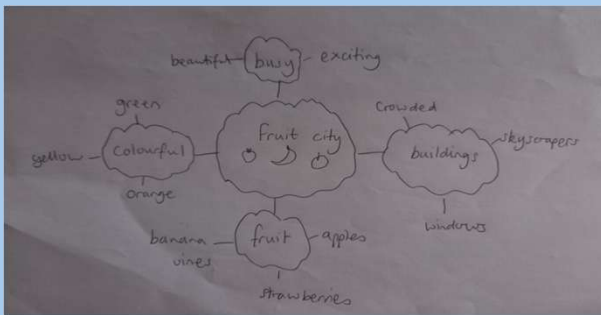
IN ALL WRITING TASKS

- Avoid pupils copying whenever possible – they will never learn to independently construct a sentence.
- The aim is for the pupil to create a sentence that they can read back to you today, tomorrow and next week!
- If the pupil is strong verbally, let them tell you their ideas. Create a mind map with an individual or group.



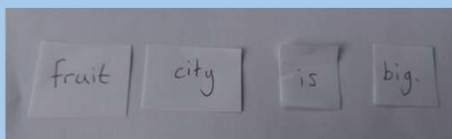
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CREATE A MIND MAP



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Cut up sentence



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Cut up sentence

fruit city is big.

fruit | city | is | big.

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Label and Write

Let them be independent!

Could start with 2 words.

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Sentence frame

F _ _ C _ _ b _ _

Fruit City is big

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Triple Take

☒

1

☒

2

☒


3

1. Does it make sense?

2. A _____.

Capital letters and full stops?

3. Spellings?



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Triple Take

☒

1

☒

2

☒


3

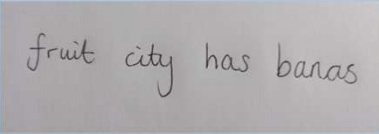
1. Does it make sense?

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Capital letters and full stops?

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Triple Take

☒

1

☒

2

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3

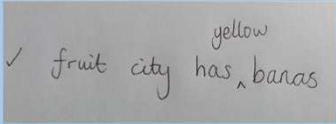
1. Does it make sense?

2. A _____.

Capital letters and full stops?

3. Spellings?





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Triple Take

✓

✓

✓

1

2


3

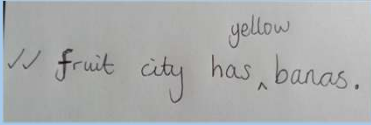
1. Does it make sense?

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Capital letters and full stops?

3. Spellings?





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Triple Take

✓

✓

✓

1

2


3

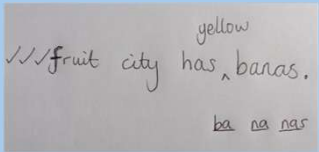
1. Does it make sense?

2. A _____.

Capital letters and full stops?


3. Spellings?





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For older learners



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Paragraph prompt strip

LO: To write a letter from the point of view of a soldier in the First World War

Dear —

1. Firstly, family worried.
2. afraid, hiding trenches

What is your news?

1. friend, George brave, courageous
2. Sadly, died fighting

LO: To write about Fruit City

Fruit city is...

Fruit city has...

Fruit city feels...

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Timed Paragraph Writing

Name:

Date:

--	--	--



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Timed Paragraph Writing

Name:

Date:

apples	bananas	strawberries	busy
exciting	beautiful	buildings	crowded
skyscrapers	colourful		

Fruit city has:...

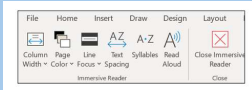
Fruit city is:...

Fruit city feels:...



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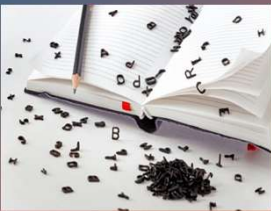
Immersive reader, touch typing, clicker.



TypingClub

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SPELLING



- ☐ Phonological skills
- ☐ Phonics skills
- ☐ Common exception words

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Phonological Awareness


The ability to recognise and work with sounds in spoken language.

- ☐ Phonological skills include:
 - memory
 - speed
 - awareness
- ☐ Begins with rhyme, syllabification, counting words, alliteration
- ☐ Phonemic awareness – being able to tune into the individual sounds in a word.

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Phonological Awareness progression – from Teach Phonics



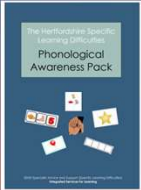
- 0 – 1 years: Begin to recognise and make sounds, expressions and gestures. Begin to recognise words.
- 1 – 2+ years: Start to recognise individual words in a sentence
- 2 – 4 years – Enjoy nursery rhymes, alliteration, repetition.
- 3 – 5 years – Rhythm and syllabification, isolate individual words
- 4 – 5 years – Onset and rime, word families
- 4 – 6 years – Can verbally split words into sounds
- 5 – 7 years – Can substitute and delete sounds in words

Taken from teachphonics.co.uk

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TEACHING PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS



See Herts Local Offer - Cognition and Learning Team - Resources

- Twinkl phonological activity cards – include counting words in a sentence

Words in Sentences

Say the sentence and clap or hold up a finger for each word you hear.


Look at that grey cat.

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PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS - top tips




- Do not stop listening!
- Listen carefully to the sounds in new words before spelling.
- Use phoneme frames and counters.
- Blending and segmenting are key skills for reading and spelling.
- Continue into KS2 - syllabification.

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PHONICS





- Matching the sounds of spoken English with individual letters or groups of letters – grapheme-phoneme correspondence.
- For writing fluency – need to be able to form and retrieve letters, letter sequences and spelling patterns quickly and accurately.

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PHONICS - ESTABLISH A BASELINE

- Use school phonics programme: Little Wandle, Read Write Inc ...
- See Baseline assessments on Herts Local Offer – cognition and learning
- Start low – never presume.

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• Which

wh

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• Splat

h

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t



s

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PHONICS – top tips



- When marking work choose 2 phonically decodable words to underline ask pupil to spell again using a phoneme frame/syllable frame. Or just lines.


hos	pi	tal
-----	----	-----

- Phoneme mats in class.
- Try -it boards/jotters

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HIGH FREQUENCY WORDS



First 25 = third of all written English

First 100 = half of all written English

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HIGH FREQUENCY WORDS – keep it simple

- Many are phonically decodable – can, just

--	--	--

- Some are common exception words – said, the, was.

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HIGH FREQUENCY WORDS – cumulative, structured intervention

- Keep 3 words from previous weeks, add 3 more.
- SNIP literacy programme

Checklist

Session 1	Read	Spell	Session 3	Read	Spell
can			me		
like			am		
to			Dad		
went			my		
come			said		
was			look		
dog			boy		

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HIGH FREQUENCY WORDS – cumulative, structured intervention

- Rainbow writing, cursive
- Speed spelling
- Spelling games
- LSCWC
- Dictated sentences

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TOP TIPS FOR THE CLASSROOM

Commonly occurring words

Keep it simple – most words are partly decodable

- Flip outs – word walls.
- Wall displays, spelling books
- Concertina cards
- Underline 2 misspelt words – write them 3 times or put them in a sentence.

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TOP TIPS FOR THE CLASSROOM

For older learners

Subject specific word lists

Add before topic


Or during lesson

Aa	Bb		Cc
Adaptation Atmosphere	Barometer		Climate conservation
Dd	Ee	Ff	Gg
Drought	Environment	Flood	
Hh	Ii	Jj	Kk

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VISUAL DIFFICULTIES




- Missing lines
- Tired when reading
- Rubbing eyes
- Letters/words moving
- Skipping words/lines

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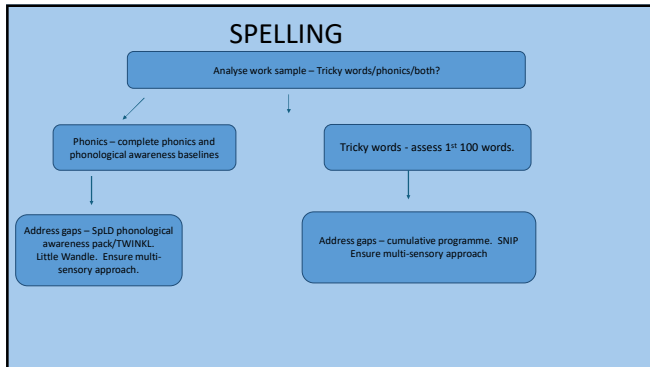
VISUAL DIFFICULTIES

TOP TIPS

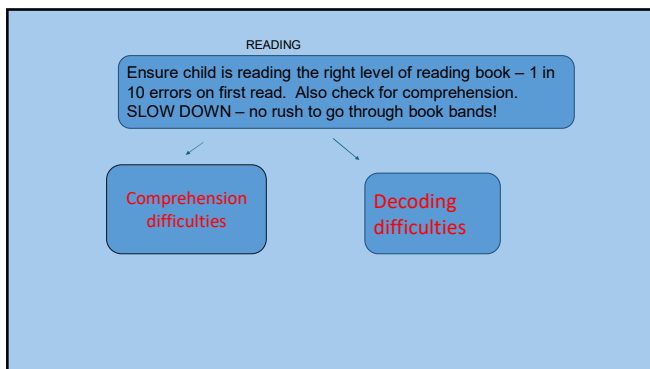


- Optician / optometrist
- Tracking text
- Not black on white
- Fonts and spacing
- Coloured rulers/overlays/glasses

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Reading – how can you support?

Pop ideas in chat



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Reading

- Try coloured ruler/overlay/glasses
- Echo/paired reading
- Always ask comprehension questions – progress to inference
- Always explain new vocabulary
- 3 reads – decoding, fluency, understanding
- Model how to find the answer in the text



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Reading

Book introduction, prediction, summarising

Reading to and with

Audio books – Oxford Owl

Good range of books, experiment with AI, graphic novels – ask school librarian.

The only point of reading IS comprehension



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BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER



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CASE STUDY 1




- Ryan can never remember what he wants to write.
- He will happily write a page but cannot read any of it back.
- He does not consistently use punctuation.
- He spells many commonly occurring words incorrectly.

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CASE STUDY 1




- Get his ideas down on a mind map.
- Then use a sentence frame.
- Ask him to read his sentence back.
- Use triple take.
- Underline one word to look at again.
- Write the word 3 times with eyes closed.
- Add the word to a word wall.

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CASE STUDY 2




- Jada finds reading in class really challenging.
- She cannot keep up with the other students.
- She easily loses focus and becomes distracted.
- The texts are often too difficult for her.

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CASE STUDY 2



- Help Jada to highlight the main points in the text.
- Try adapting the text using AI or use an alternative format.
- Try copying the text into word and use read aloud tool.
- Ask her to highlight any words she is unsure of and talk about the meaning.
- Give her additional time and smaller chunks of text.
- Expose her to the text before class.

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THANK YOU SO MUCH
FOR BEING HERE

YOU ARE ALL
WONDERFUL!

ANY QUESTIONS?

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