



Youth with Dyslexia

Dyslexia may be described as “word blindness” because it causes difficulty with processing the written word. This difficulty may lead to problems with reading, writing, spelling, and short-term memory. Dyslexia may overlap with other conditions such as ADHD. About four percent of the population is affected by dyslexia to a significant extent.

Teacher/Catechist Considerations:

- Youth may try very hard to keep their dyslexia hidden.
- Don't ask a youth to read aloud before finding out if they are comfortable reading in a group situation.
- Present written hand-outs in a clear font, such as Arial or Verdana instead of a decorative font or handwritten.
- Use bullet points and lists rather than long paragraphs.
- Look at backgrounds in all written material for good color contrast with the text.
- Present material in a variety of formats, not only written text.
- Assist youth to highlight important words.
- Use pictures to supplement words.
- Allow extra time for youth to read and complete written assignments.
- Give oral tests.
- Allow youth to read softly to themselves instead of silent reading.

Sources: Simon Bass, *Special Children Special Needs*. Church House Publishing, 2003.
Strategies in Teaching Religion to Children and Adults with Disabilities. Office of Special Needs, Archdiocese of Dubuque, 1999.

For more information:

The International Dyslexia Association: <http://www.interdys.org/index.htm>
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