

Reading Aloud and the Battle Dyslexia Lost [Video]

By Jomo Merritt -

September 25, 2016



Having dyslexia can be a pain. Most learn to live with it, and some have a hard time coping. For students, it can become a nightmare and terribly challenging in a world that moves faster than Speedy Gonzales. Trying to keep up becomes almost impossible. Frustration builds up, and before they know it, the struggle becomes real, and defeat

becomes unstoppable. However, thanks to reading aloud, this condition, called dyslexia, is gradually losing its hold.

Scientists call it a difficult condition because they are not sure what causes dyslexia, but have a few theories of their own. Some call it a curse, but it can be a blessing in disguise. There is no doubt that dyslexia is one of the most common disabilities that can be found in any part of this planet. What can be discovered is that reading aloud can improve dyslexia, just ask instructors at the Prentice School in Santa Ana, Calif.

Don Johnston started this school in 1980. He had the vision to assist students with writing and reading through the use of technology. Reading aloud helps children with dyslexia and other processing problems using such methods.

Most of the students that attend the Prentice School have either dysgraphia or dyslexia: two processing conditions that cause every literacy task to be taxing. These students often cannot keep up with their academic workloads.

Reading aloud is a godsend for every student because it focuses on an individual word at a time. Some people with dyslexia that are quietly reading in their heads can make inadvertent word guesses. Their eyes will, at times, be jumping around on the text, which can be nerve-wracking. Reading aloud aids in bringing discipline and focus.

Reading aloud also helps dyslexic students create a learning rhythm that is natural. This way, the information in the text becomes clearer; thus they can recall much more of the content. Possibly, this is associated with the idea of rhythm enhancement being helpful for conquering dyslexia. Before they know it, their aloud reading will begin to sound like an individual giving a speech instead of an ongoing sequence of words.

Of course, there are those who are not fans of reading aloud and believe that it is not effective, particularly for dyslexic students. According to researchers at the University of Michigan, reading aloud does not help a child sound out words that are unknown. They further their point by stating, instead, that a student suffering from the condition will continue to try to memorize the form of a word, and utilize images and context clues just to try and guess.

Researchers are saying reading aloud is a waste of time because, at the end of the day, it will not help their reading development. They assert in their argument that exposure to the same texts, of his or her friends, are reading and learning from is extremely imperative. Therefore, a dyslexic child should have someone read to them or just read along with a new audiobook every day.

Apparently, this theory does not hold water among supporters, who personally discovered the advantage of reading aloud. The point is that they walk away with the utmost confidence. According to one student, "I could read in front of my classmates and feel okay. Reading aloud made me feel like I didn't have dyslexia anymore. I didn't feel like I had anything to hide."

Being an educator, I have seen first-hand, how reading aloud is an amazing way to challenge students with dyslexia. It not only builds their reading skills but improves their self-esteem. It is a unique tool that tests those that feel that they have done less than the average amount of out aloud exercise, to go ahead and give it a try. There is no doubt if students with dyslexia get into the habit of reading aloud they will find it worthwhile.

Opinion News by Jomo Merritt

Edited by Cathy Milne

Sources:

PBSparents: The Facts About Dyslexia

Pediatrics Child Health: Perspectives on Dyslexia

Beating Dyslexia.com: Reading Aloud a Key Tool for Beating Dyslexia

The Regents of the University of Michigan: Debunking the Myths about Dyslexia

Image Courtesy of Sean's Flickr Page – Creative Commons License