



Newsletter No 14 January 2024

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Adult Dyslexia Hub

In November 2023 the Dyslexia Association of Ireland launched an Adult Dyslexia Hub www.adulldyslexiahub.ie. The Hub has been developed to provide information and learning support for adults with dyslexia. It covers the areas of Literacy, Understanding Dyslexia, Education, Workplace and the Voices of Dyslexia. Much of the content is video led, making its contents very accessible. It complements their existing hub www.dyslexiahub.ie which is primarily aimed at parents and young people with dyslexia at primary level. However, the content will also be of interest to older individuals with dyslexia, educators, and others.

British Dyslexia Association New Technologies web address change

B.D.A. New Technologies Committee is a committee of the British Dyslexia Association which over many years have been concerned with all aspects of technology and how they can assist people with dyslexia. It has invaluable, comprehensive information on technology. I have given a link to the website many times over the years, but the link has changed to the following <https://bdanewtechnologies.wordpress.com/>

Coloured backgrounds on the computer/whiteboard

The B.D. A. recommends that designers of written materials for readers with dyslexia should 'avoid using contrast colours. Use dark (not black) text on a light (not white) background. Use less contrasted colours, such as cream – black. Avoid yellow – black, white – blue and a combination of grey. Each individual has their own most comfortable colours as long as it is not overly contrasted'.

To get a coloured background on the computer or for projecting to a whiteboard from Word, go to Design and then Page Colour. You can choose the colour background you want there.

Dyslexia friendly style guide and dyslexic friendly fonts

This link is a dyslexia friendly style guide from the British Dyslexia association: [Dyslexia friendly style guide - British Dyslexia Association \(bdadyslexia.org.uk\)](https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/dyslexia-friendly-style-guide). They also have a very interesting page discussing the different fonts which might be more appropriate for students with dyslexia.

www.bdanewtechnologies.wordpress.com/what-technology/typefaces-for-dyslexia. It suggests dyslexic readers liked the points below. It discusses fonts such as Comic Sans, Verdana, Calibri etc.

- Good ascenders and descenders, b, d, f, h, k, l, t, and all capitals; g, j, p, q, y.
- b and d; p and q distinguished, not mirror images.
- Different forms for capital l, lowercase l and digit 1.
- Rounded g as in handwriting. Most liked rounded a, although perhaps some felt that it may be confused with o.
- Letter-spacing, e.g. r, n together rn should not look like m, ('modern' may scan as, or sound like, 'modem'.)

Dyslexia and Music

This link is to an article from the British Dyslexia Association, [Music and dyslexia - British Dyslexia Association \(bdadyslexia.org.uk\)](https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/music-and-dyslexia). it discusses how dyslexia can affect students when learning music and the possible challenges they may face. It goes on to suggest practical ways teachers can help the student to overcome these.

Dyslexia and Self-esteem: Dyslexia Association of Ireland workshop for students

Students with dyslexia may experience low self-esteem, feelings of anxiety and/or a lack of motivation. They may feel they have failed to keep up with their peers from a very early age in achieving key skills. Teachers may not have understood their difficulties. Identification of dyslexia may have been delayed for some reason. Some may have been accused of being lazy. By the time they are in secondary school, such feelings may be deep-rooted having developed over several years. The Dyslexia Association of Ireland www.dyslexia.ie run a workshop in venues around the country called Dyslexia and Me which includes the following:

- Explains the facts and science of Dyslexia
- Boosts self-esteem by exploring the positive traits and talents that come with Dyslexia
- Acknowledges the tricky or challenging parts of dyslexia
- Explores the topic of resilience and how it can be used to help the individual cope

The workshop aims to introduce individuals to the idea of thinking differently and more positively about their Dyslexia, have an outlet to ask questions about it, and meet other individuals with similar experiences. It is offered to two age groups: 3rd to 6th class (Primary level) and Junior Cycle (1st to 3rd year at Second level). Dates and venues across the country have to be finalised but will be during the following:

- February mid-term (February 14-16)
- Easter (April 25-28)
- Summer (August 12-15)
- Halloween mid-term (October 29-31)

Latin and Greek roots and plurals

On many courses I mention how the knowledge of the Latin and Greek roots of words can help student pronounce and decipher new words they may encounter. The link below gives the 42 most common roots in both Latin and Greek. <https://newsletter.clfportal.org/UploadedFiles/5e8dc9ab-db2c-4b31-8e60-b02f1c39c112.PDF>

Latin and Greek plurals can cause confusion. Why does 'bacterium' change to 'bacteria' and so on. The list below is a very useful guide, particularly in LC Biology.

Singular ending		Plural ending
-a	→	-ae
-en	→	-ina
-ex	→	-ices
-is	→	-es
-itis	→	-itides
-ix	→	-ices
-on	→	-a
-um	→	-a
-us	→	-i

Neurodiversity

Neurodiversity describes the differences in the way people's brains work. The term was first used in the 1990's but is being used increasingly. There's no 'correct' way for the brain to work and instead, there is a wide range of ways that people perceive and respond to the world. These differences are to be embraced and encouraged, they are not deficits. Neurodiversity is an umbrella term used to describe alternative thinking styles such as Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Autism, ADHD, etc.

Some things historically identified as 'impairments' or behaviour problems are now more properly recognised as problems with people's environments — from kids' birthday parties to school classrooms to adult workplaces — which can be made more comfortable by making some changes and accommodations.

Neurodivergent people experience, interpret and interact with the world in unique ways — this can sometimes create challenges, but it can also lead to creative problem-solving and fresh ideas. In a world that needs more creativity, these perspectives can benefit everyone.

Here are some links that give further information.

- This link is to a British Dyslexia Association webinar on neurodiversity. [British Dyslexia Association Webinar Training: Teaching for Neurodiversity - British Dyslexia Association \(bdadyslexia.org.uk\)](https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/webinar-training-teaching-for-neurodiversity)
- An article on neurodiversity <https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2022/1011/1328464-neurodiversity-neurotypical-neurodivergence-neurotypical/>

Neurodiversity Celebration Week 18th – 24nd March 2024

Neurodiversity Celebration Week 2024 <https://www.neurodiversityweek.com/> is an event designed to recognise and celebrate the strengths of people who are neurodiverse, as well as challenge preconceptions of what they can or cannot achieve. This year, Neurodiversity Celebration Week is

from 18th March - 24th March 2024. Here is a link to resources at <https://www.twinkl.ie/event/neurodiversity-celebration-week-2024>. Schools and businesses are encouraged to participate.

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