

Dyslexia Comorbidity Symptom Comparison

Quick Reference Guide for Parents and Teachers

Area	Dyslexia Alone	Dyslexia + ADHD	Dyslexia + Dyscalculia	Dyslexia + DLD
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty decoding • Slow, effortful reading • Poor spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same reading issues • May avoid tasks entirely • Loses place frequently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same reading issues • Extra struggle with word problems in math 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same reading issues • Comprehension much worse • Vocabulary gaps
Attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention problems mainly during reading • Can focus on other tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention problems across ALL tasks • Fidgety, restless • Impulsive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical attention span • May lose focus during math 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May seem inattentive due to processing delays • Struggles to follow multi-step directions
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May struggle with memorizing facts • Generally understands concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careless errors • Difficulty showing work • May rush through 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't understand what numbers mean • Can't estimate or compare quantities • Both facts AND concepts are hard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math word problems very difficult • May struggle with math vocabulary
Oral Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking and listening typically OK • Can express ideas verbally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May interrupt or talk excessively • Can express ideas but may be disorganized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally normal oral language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty with vocabulary • Grammar errors • Trouble understanding complex sentences • Word-finding problems
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally organized • May have messy handwriting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very disorganized • Loses materials constantly • Forgets homework • Poor time management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization varies • May struggle organizing math work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May struggle with complex multi-step tasks • Otherwise generally OK
Emotional Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration with reading • May avoid reading tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher anxiety (40%) • Frustration across settings • May act out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration with both reading and math • May say 'I hate school.' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration with communication • May withdraw socially • Severe comprehension struggles
Key Difference	Struggles are specific to reading and spelling	Struggles happen everywhere, not just in academics	Both symbol systems (letters AND numbers) are affected	Language is affected across the board - reading, speaking, listening

• These are general patterns - every child is unique

From the Dyslexia District Podcast - Unlocking the written word, one conversation at a time