



Fall 2008 Newsletter

*The Northern California Branch of
The International Dyslexia Association (NCBIDA)
presents*

Study Skills for Teens!

The Magic of Success

Amazing, Almost Magical Study Strategies that Really Work

with Diane Shepard

Using fun and interactive strategies, Diane helps teens develop essential study skills that can be used in learning settings such as classrooms, lectures, labs, study groups and testing situations. This workshop is specially designed to help high school students improve their study skills. Parents are invited, too!

- When** **Saturday, Oct. 25**
10:30 am-1:00 pm (includes smoothies for a light lunch)
- Where** **Sacred Heart Preparatory** (Room 32S)
150 Valparaiso Avenue, Atherton, CA 94027
- Cost** **\$40 individuals, \$75 families**

To Register or for more information
www.dyslexia-ncbida.org or 650.328.7667

Diane Shepard specializes in teaching and learning strategies for diverse learners, faculty, and staff at Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque, New Mexico. A certified Learning Disability Specialist and Educational Diagnostician, Diane brings her skills as a special educator and faculty development specialist—and as an honest-to-goodness magician!—to work with students to help them become more effective learners.

President's Letter

October is Dyslexia Awareness Month and several upcoming conferences offer an opportunity to learn more about ways to help students who struggle with language skills.

Locally, there is our branch's fall program for teens, which will be held on Saturday, October 25, at Sacred Heart Preparatory School in Atherton from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm. Diane Shepard, a New Mexico-based specialist in

teaching and learning strategies, will present a fun workshop on study skills that really work. The workshop is called "The Magic of Success" for a very good reason—Diane is a magician as well as a learning specialist! This program is designed to give teenagers hands-on practice with strategies they can use right away in their classrooms. Although the workshop is designed for teens, parents and educators are welcome as well.

I also urge you to take advantage of the fact that IDA's national conference is in Seattle this year from October 29 to November 1. Why not get together a group of friends and colleagues and make the trip up? The program includes more than 150 education and professional development sessions. You can register online at www.interdys.org.

More upcoming programs

Mark your calendars with the dates of two upcoming branch programs. On January 31, 2009, noted educator Marcia Henry, PhD, will speak at The Nueva School in Hillsborough on "Ways with Words: Effective Vocabulary Instruction." We are also excited to be collaborating with Palo Alto Unified School District to bring out Maryanne Wolf, EdD, director of the Center for Reading and Language Research at Tufts University and author of *Proust and the Squid*. She will present two programs in Palo Alto on March 12 and 14, 2009. One will be a Thursday afternoon workshop for teachers; the second will be a Saturday morning program for parents and educators. Check our website for details as they become available.

Branch teacher training scholarships awarded

Thanks to our scholarship committee chair Jennifer Rabalais and committee members Cathy Dunn, Andrea Shuel and Cathy Robinson, who oversaw the awarding of seven scholarships to teachers participating in Slingerland training this summer. Four applicants took the training in San Francisco, two in San Jose and one in the East Bay. Applicants included classroom teachers, resource specialists, educational therapists and a doctoral student at UC Berkeley. The scholarships are designed to cover approximately half the cost of tuition and materials for these very worthwhile programs.

Thank you, Floy Marks!

Finally, I want to say a special thank you to outgoing Branch Advisory Board Member Floy Marks. Floy has tirelessly served our branch for years in many volunteer capacities. Most recently she was chair of our hospitality committee, which coordinates the food for our public events. She and her husband Ron have also put in untold hours assembling our branch's popular dyslexia simulation kits and working for us at local and national conferences. We cannot thank them enough for all their efforts!

Sincerely,
Leslie Lingaas Woodward

Creating and Using Effective Organizational Tools by Diane Shepard

Effectively organizing materials, creating learning tools, and identifying personal study areas can be one of the most daunting tasks faced by many students. With the start of the fall semester, parents and students are often scrambling to put together supply lists, shopping to find just the right backpack, and getting ready for the start of classes. Along with all the purchases to help create a more organized approach to improving success in the classroom, there are some practical strategies that may be of help.

Develop a personal student success “Tool Kit”

Going to school is work and requires specific academic tools and strategies to succeed. Using an effective “tool kit” helps students have the right tools at the right time. Here are some ideas students can use to improve organization at school and home:

- **Binders are Better.** Depending on specific class requirements, each student can use a medium-sized three-ring binder or series of smaller three-ring binders for each subject to keep different course topics organized. Three-ring binders allow students to add and delete materials as the course progresses. I don’t recommend spiral notebooks because they aren’t flexible for adding or adjusting paperwork. Having a binder for each subject allows for identification of each unit or subject topic, allows for the use of subject dividers that can be colored-coded and easily identified, and keeps all course handouts in one place. Having a course calendar or syllabus at the front of the binder makes it easy to know what is required each day, week, or semester. Keeping that course calendar in a plastic sleeve makes it even more noticeable and accessible.
- **“Five-Second Rule.”** A well-organized binder allows students to find essential course materials easily. I like to tell students about the “Five-Second Rule.” It simply means that if their course materials are organized, they should be able to find any piece of paper, handout, or assignment within five seconds. Many students struggle with finding the right piece of paper quickly. Often while they’re looking, the teacher goes on with instructions or course information. Students can quickly become frustrated and angry as a result. At home, practice finding course paperwork quickly. Parents can make a game of the “Five-Second Rule.”
- **The “Cockpit Office.”** Just pilots fly a plane using a variety of navigation tools, they also have those tools within arm’s reach. Using this same idea for organizing a personal study area can be very effective—especially for students who can be easily distracted. Moving around the house to find a stapler, paper clip, pen, pencil, or other materials can add up to lost time and loss of concentration. Consider developing a “cockpit office” that includes essential study tools in a brightly lit and personal setting. All students in the family can benefit by shopping for or re-organizing their materials for use at their own desk or study area. When using their own tools, they are less likely to have to hunt for those materials in other areas of the house. Using a zippered pouch in their binder or backpack can accomplish the same idea when at school. It’s important to remember that those tools are personal tools and are not to be borrowed by other family members. Students take pride in having their own materials at their desk.

An important aspect of using your tool kit or “cockpit office” successfully is to go through it daily, adding or deleting pages, updating projects, restocking supplies, and organizing so it’s ready for the next day. Students’ tool kit and personal study area may be their most important organizational tools. Materials and supplies kept within arm’s reach can be seen and used easily. Creating and using effective organizational tools and developing a “cockpit office,” or personal study space, can help improve grades, increase participation, and build confidence.

Please join Diane Shepard on October 25, 2008 to learn more about student success tips and strategies that can enhance learning and help students better accommodate and personalize their learning strengths.

About the Author: Diane Shepard specializes in teaching and learning strategies for diverse learners, faculty, and staff at Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque, New Mexico. A certified Learning Disability Specialist and Educational Diagnostician, Diane brings her skills as a special educator and faculty development specialist—and as an honest-to-goodness magician!—to work with students to help them become more effective learners.



MULTISENSORY TEACHING

What is meant by multisensory teaching?

Multisensory teaching is simultaneously visual, auditory, and kinesthetic-tactile to enhance memory and learning. Links are consistently made between the visual (*what we see*), auditory (*what we hear*), and kinesthetic-tactile (*what we feel*) pathways in learning to read and spell.

Margaret Byrd Rawson, a former President of The Orton Dyslexia Society (the precursor to The International Dyslexia Association), said it well:

“Dyslexic students need a different approach to learning language from that employed in most classrooms. They need to be taught, slowly and thoroughly, the basic elements of their language -- the sounds and the letters which represent them -- and how to put these together and take them apart. They have to have lots of practice in having their writing hands, eyes, ears, and voices working together for the conscious organization and retention of their learning.”

Teachers who use this approach teach children to link the sounds of the letters with the written symbol. Children also link the sound and symbol with how it feels to form the letter or letters. As students learn a new letter or pattern (such as **s** or **th**), they carefully trace, copy, and write the letter(s) while saying the corresponding sound. The sound may be made by the teacher and the letter name(s) given by the student. Students then read and spell words, phrases, and sentences using these patterns. Teachers and their students rely on all three pathways for learning rather

than focusing on a “sight-word” or memory method, a “tracing method,” or a “phonetic method” alone.

When and where was multisensory teaching introduced for children with dyslexia?

Dr. Samuel Torrey Orton and his colleagues began using multisensory techniques in the mid- 1920's at the mobile mental health clinic he directed in Iowa. Orton was influenced by the kinesthetic method described by Grace Fernald and Helen Keller. He suggested that kinesthetic- tactile reinforcement of visual and auditory associations could correct the tendency of reversing letters and transposing the sequence of letters while reading and writing. Students who reverse **b** and **d** are taught to use consistent, different strokes in forming each letter. For example, students make the vertical line before drawing the circle in printing the letter **b**; they form the circle before drawing the vertical line in printing the letter **d**.

Anna Gillingham and Bessie Stillman based their original 1936 teaching manual for the “alphabetic method” on Dr. Orton's theories. They combined multisensory techniques with teaching the structure of written English, including the sounds (phonemes), meaning units (morphemes such as prefixes, suffixes, and roots) and common spelling rules. The phrase “Orton-Gillingham approach” refers to the structured, sequential, multisensory techniques established by Dr. Orton and Ms. Gillingham and their colleagues.

“promoting literacy through research, education and advocacy”

What is the rationale behind multisensory teaching?

Children with dyslexia often exhibit weaknesses in auditory and/or visual processing. They may have weak phonemic awareness, meaning they are unaware of the role sounds play in words. They have difficulty rhyming words, blending sounds to make words, or segmenting words into sounds. They may also have difficulty acquiring a sight vocabulary. That is, dyslexic children do not learn the sight words expected in the primary grades. In general, they do not pick up the alphabetic code or system.

When taught by a multisensory approach, children have the advantage of learning alphabetic patterns and words by utilizing all three pathways. Orton suggested that teaching the “fundamentals of phonic association with letter forms both visually presented and reproduced in writing, until the correct associations were built up” would benefit students of all ages.

Is there solid evidence that multisensory teaching is effective for children with dyslexia?

There is a growing body of evidence supporting multisensory teaching. Current research, much of it supported by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), converges on the efficacy of explicit structured language teaching for children with dyslexia. Young children in structured, sequential, multisensory intervention programs, who were also trained in phonemic awareness, made significant gains in decoding skills. These multisensory approaches used direct, explicit teaching of letter-sound relationships, syllable patterns, and meaning word parts. Studies in

clinical settings showed similar results for a wide range of ages and abilities.

The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) thanks Marcia K. Henry, Ph.D. for her assistance in the preparation of this fact sheet.

Related Reading:

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- Putnam, L. R., 1996. How to Become a Better Reading Teacher. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Merrill.
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- Torgesen, Joseph, Ph.D., 1997. The “P” Book, Phonological Awareness: A Critical Factor in Dyslexia. Baltimore, MD: The International Dyslexia Association’s *Orton Emeritus Series*.
- Vail, Priscilla, 1996. Words Fail Me: How Language Works and What Happens When It Doesn’t. Rosemont, NJ: Modern Learning Press.

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International Dyslexia Association Definition of Dyslexia

- It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. This definition is also used by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).
 - Studies show that individuals with dyslexia process information in a different area of the brain than do non-dyslexics.
 - Many people who are dyslexic are of average to above average intelligence.
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More Upcoming NCBIDA Events

January 31, 2009

Ways with Words: Effective Vocabulary Instruction

Marcia K. Henry, PhD

The Nueva School, Hillsborough

Improving and broadening vocabulary for all students in all subject areas is a major goal of current research and the National Reading Panel. Dr. Henry will lead participants through interactive strategies that show how analyzing a word's structure can reveal its meaning. Anglo-Saxon, Latin and Greek roots, prefixes and suffixes will be presented in this review of English morphology.

Marcia K. Henry, PhD, has almost 50 years of experience working in the field of language acquisition and dyslexia as a diagnostician, tutor, teacher, and professor. She speaks frequently at regional, national and international conference on topics related to intervention strategies for dyslexic learners. She also writes for professional journals and is the author of several books.

March 12 & 14, 2009

Two Workshops on the Science of the Reading Brain

with Maryanne Wolf, EdD

Thursday afternoon, March 12 – teachers only

Saturday morning, March 14 – parents and educators welcome

Palo Alto (sites to be announced)

Presented in conjunction with Palo Alto Unified School District

Maryanne Wolf, EdD, directs the Center for Reading and Language Research at Tufts University and is the author of *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*.

More information coming soon!

IDA Conference

Sign up now for the IDA 59th Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington, on October 29-November 1, 2008.
To register, go to <http://www.interdys.org/AnnualConference.htm>.

Welcome to Our Newest Members!

Please welcome the following members who have joined our branch in March-August, 2008.

Kevin Barnes	Susan Miltner
Jessica Black	Allison Murray
Tanya Carrell	Joshua Newman
Susan Chait	Heidi Nord
Elizabeth Clifton	Katharine Novak
Megan Conroy	Ann Pereira
Brandy Echelberry	Jill Porras
Acenia Farrand	Verena Rau
Jennifer Fischer	Kathy Russell-Fernandez
Barbara Fourt	Nicole Sachar
Vicki Griffo	Jennifer Sandell
Jeannine Herron	Marni Sandoval
Candace Houghton	Harriett Schatz
Kathryn Johnson	Racheal Siegel
Maureen Johnston	Kristin Stanberry
Nancy Karon	Rhonda Stangrover
Naomi Kimmerling	Joy Tashjian-Carter
Bet Kolstad	Nila Taylor
Katie Lambert	Nupur Thukral
Laura Lawrence	Susan Tiffany
Jan Leuin	Leslie Valas
Marilyn Lynch	Renee Werner
Ann McCarty	Jeanne Wondra
Anna McDonald	Jinny Wong
Lois McPhillips	Jodie Yorg
Barbara McWilliams	Developmental Learning Solutions
Jane Milan	Saint Leo the Great School