

Dyslexia

Written by Peter

Note to Tutor: These activities have a focus on silent letters.



The hardest part about reading and writing, for me, is having dyslexia. I do not know when it is going to happen. It is very confusing sometimes, for me to read.

One of the hardest parts of having dyslexia, is that it happens when you least want it to. I feel all confused and I cannot understand what I have just read.

It all goes jumbly - but if I stop reading for a while, I can get back into it, again. This happens over and over and can be very frustrating, at times.

What makes reading and writing even harder for me, are silent letters. I wonder why English has silent letters. It makes things very hard, when you are trying to learn how to spell.

I have often wondered why they are there - because if they weren't, spelling would be easier and not so confusing.

I am a truck-driver and a bricklayer by trade, but I want to be better at reading and writing.

I love fishing, reading (even though it isn't easy) and surfing the net. Most of all, I love being a family man and I want my kids *not* to have the same struggle I've had. I think I'm getting there!



What is Dyslexia?

Dyslexia is not a disease!

The word **dyslexia** comes from the Greek language. It means difficulty with words. The difficulty occurs in the brain.

The main difficulty for a person with dyslexia is to convert letter symbols (the shape of the written letter) to their correct sound. This is called decoding. We do this when we read.

Dyslexics may also have difficulty converting sounds into their correct written symbol. We do this, when we spell.

People with dyslexia have trouble with aspects of reading, spelling and writing. No two 'cases' of dyslexia are alike.

Dyslexia is highly hereditary, and there is no cure.

Dyslexic people *might* have some very positive attributes that can occur with the dyslexia. For example, they might have an inquiring mind, creative or analytic thinking, or ability to 'see the big picture' (amongst other possibilities).

This information comes from the **Australian Dyslexia Association** website.



Activities



Fill in the blanks, by looking at the original text to check the correct spelling.

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Silent Letters

In this text there are 2 silent letters – 'w' in writing and 'k' in know. Circle the words **where the 'w' or the 'k' is silent**:

know	wrap	write	knight	wonder
why	knot	word	knit	wrong
knife	keep	written	nit	knee

So why are there silent letters in English?

Tutor may like to read this to student.

The English language is continually evolving and changing, to keep up with everyday use.

English has been written for about 1,300 years. Many words used in Shakespeare's time (for example) are not used any more.

(That's *only* about 400 years ago!)

And before our time, words like internet, computer, laptop, skydiving, high-rise, blockbuster, pro-active, and hacker weren't invented - and weren't needed!

People tend to think that the language that they grew up with, is THE language, and that anything that was *only* used before they were born, is old-fashioned!

We tend to not even notice, as new words creep into our vocabulary – words like mobile (for a phone), selfie, download, email, chargrilled, superfood, etc.

English is a very rich language, in that it picked up words from other languages, including Latin, (Old) French, Anglo-Saxon (Old English) and Norse. We still do this today. Examples are: television, pizza, café, salon, tsunami, doona, dinghy, zucchini, smorgasbord.

English spelling *can* tell you the sound of the word – but it can also give you hints about the history of the word, and where it came from.

Sometimes a silent letter tells you how to say the word – as long as you know the 'Rule'. For example, the "fairy 'e'" on the end of a word is silent – but it lengthens the sound of the vowel before it. (at + e = ate)

Other times, the silent letter tells you about the word's history. Apparently, before the 17th century, the silent 'w' at the beginning of written WAS pronounced. Try that! Silent 'k' (which usually comes before an 'n') often shows that the word came from German – where it was pronounced.



More Activities

How many words can you think of that start with 'kn'?

know
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How many did you think of?..... *More than 6 would be excellent!*

To see which words you might have missed, you can turn the page➤

Here is another word challenge.

How many words can you make, out of the letters in the word 'knowledge'?

You can only use each letter as many times as it appears – so you can use 2 'e's, but only one of all the other letters.

3-letter words	4-letter words	5-letter words	More than 5 letters

More Activities



Here is an answer to: **Words which start with 'kn'**

know	knowledge	known	knowing	knew
knee	kneel	kneeled	knelt	kneeling
knot	knotted	knock	knoll	knobble
knob	knead	knight	knave	knack
knife	knapsack	knell	knit	knackered

There are a few more, but these are the most commonly-used 'kn' words.

What other letters are often silent?

Did you know that almost any letter can be silent? Here are some examples, together with just one example of a familiar word, which uses that letter silently:

'b' in debt, 'c' in muscle, 'g' in sign, 'gh' in right, 'h' in when, 'l' in could, 'n' in hymn, 'p' in psychologist, 's' in island, 't' in often, 'u' in guess, 'w' in wrist

Of course, all of these letters can be silent in many other words, too.

Can you think of some more examples? Write some in this box:

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