

Website and Apps for students with Dyslexia and spelling difficulties.

While people with **dyslexia** will all have different strengths and weaknesses, **spelling** is pretty much always an area in which dyslexics struggle. It is important to **teach spelling** in a multi-sensory, direct and explicit way with lots of review and practice. However, when my dyslexic kids begin writing in earnest – paragraphs and papers – I begin to teach them how to use technology, including spelling apps, to accommodate this ongoing area of weakness.

Isn't Using Technology Unfair?

Absolutely not! Here's the thing. Once we get past the **myth** that people with dyslexia aren't smart or aren't trying hard enough, we can begin to understand that just as it is perfectly acceptable for a blind person to use Braille to accurately express their thoughts and ideas, so it is perfectly acceptable for a person with dyslexia to use technology to help them accurately express their ideas at their intellectual ability.

Many people with dyslexia who have gone through the school system and been denied the use of accommodations, tell of their great shame and anxiety over receiving a paper back fairly bleeding with red ink marking their many spelling mistakes.

What is the point of writing? The point of writing is to express your thoughts on a particular subject in an organized and meaningful way.

How many of you, when faced with not knowing the spelling of a particular word, have chosen a different word instead? I know I have and I am a 'good speller'.

Many people with dyslexia struggle to correctly spell the words in their oftentimes advanced vocabularies and end up writing a paper that is either full of spelling errors or reflects a depth of thought far below that which they really possess.

The Truth About Spell Checkers

I'll never forget showing my first born what I thought was going to be life changing technology – the Word Perfect spell checker. I showed him how to right click on all of

the words with red underlining and offered for him to choose the correctly spelled word from the drop down menu.

There was a problem though. He couldn't tell which one of those words was spelled correctly! It is thought that having at least a 5th grade spelling ability is needed in order to use a regular spell checker.

Spell Checkers and Apps That Are Dyslexia Friendly

I chose the following apps and programs because of their sensitivity to the types of errors that dyslexic spellers frequently make.

American WordSpeller

American WordSpeller is an app that allows you to find words that you may not know how to spell, but can sound out phonetically.

Spell Better

This powerful app can not only help improve spelling, but it has word prediction and auto-completion features, text-to-speech with word highlighting, a built-in dictionary, and much more.

Spell Check

This app is a combination dictionary and spell checker, so you can make sure your e-mails, papers, and other important documents are error-free.

Typ-O HD

This app uses word prediction and has a sophisticated spelling error model to help you focus on the content of your writing. Typ-O is able to identify the most common spelling mistakes and will often suggest words.

Siri

Easy to use and convenient for iPhone users. Our kids have our older iPhones to use for the apps and of course Siri in a pinch!

Dragon Naturally Speaking

The best, most accurate speech to text program with voice recognition and the ability to create, format and edit documents by voice allows you to think out loud and break through many common barriers to creativity.

Dragon Dictate

A very basic app version of the Dragon Naturally Speaking program. Great for basic written assignments and FREE.

I begin to teach my kids with dyslexia to use spelling technology between 4th and 6th grade depending on when they are able to read and write well enough to warrant it. This age will vary from family to family.

I continue to remediate, or build on their foundation of spelling knowledge well into the high school years as necessary.

Spelling ability will continue to develop with more and more exposure to the written word. Keep them reading – every day – at what ever level they can read independently.

If you are looking for effective ways to teach spelling to your kids, you may be interested in my online class: [Teaching Spelling: From Remediation to Accommodation.](#)