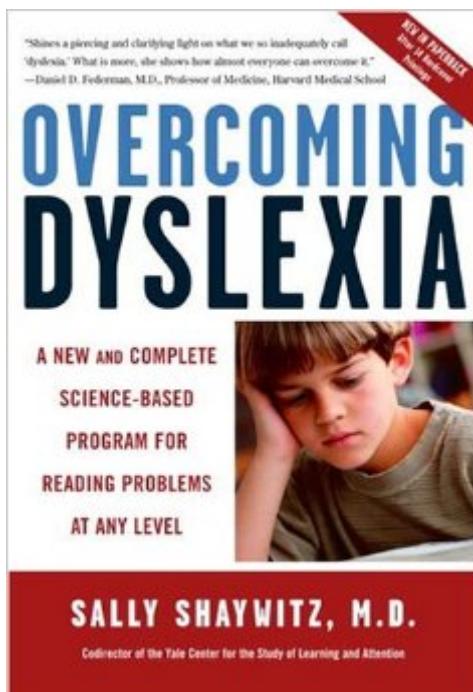


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Overcoming Dyslexia: A New And Complete Science-Based Program For Reading Problems At Any Level



Synopsis

FOR EVERYONE WHO STRUGGLES TO READ! Clear, practical, science-based information and advice for successful results One in five American children has trouble reading. But they are not stupid or lazy. In Overcoming Dyslexia, Dr. Sally Shaywitz, codirector of the Yale Center for the Study of Learning and Attention and a leader in the new research into how the brain works, offers the latest information about reading problems and proven, practical techniques that, along with hard work and the right help, can enable anyone to overcome them. Here are the tools that parents and teachers need to help the dyslexic child, age by age, grade by grade, step by step. --What dyslexia is and why some intelligent, gifted people read slowly and painfully --How to identify dyslexia in preschoolers, schoolchildren, young adults, and adults --How to find the best school and how to work productively with your child's teacher --Exercises to help children use the parts of the brain that control reading --A 20-minute nightly home program to enhance reading --The 150 most common problem words --a list that can give your child a head start --Ways to raise and preserve a child's self-esteem and reveal his strengths --Stories of successful men and women who are dyslexic

Book Information

Paperback: 414 pages

Publisher: Vintage; 1 edition (January 4, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0679781595

ISBN-13: 978-0679781592

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 0.8 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (323 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

As an adult and scientist with dyslexia, I always wanted to understand the physical mechanism behind the disability. I could never understand why I scored average to low in multiple-choice tests but scored high in reading comprehension. Why I excelled in physical science and math yet was constantly taking remedial writing and English? Dr. Shaywitz's book is excellent in answering these

questions. The first step in treatment is understanding the mechanism. A miswiring of the phonologic module explains so much and suggests likely remedies. Her book is written in layman's terms and is easy to read and understand. I wish I could give a copy of this book to all my friends and family it explains so much. Dr. Shaywitz knows her audience and writes with compassion and personal touch. The best part was learning that dyslexia can now be seen to have a physical manifestation by fMRI. Dyslexia is no longer a mysterious disability but has actual biological roots. Most disturbing to read was that in her estimates, 1 in 5 children have some form of dyslexia. As a child that almost slipped through the cracks, I failed kindergarten because I didn't know my ABC's, this is distressing to learn. How many intelligent and potentially successful adults were allowed to fail due to dyslexia? It was only through the diligence of my mother that I ever learned to read. Thirty years ago little was understood about "word blindness" but my mother did the primary research and tried every goofy theory on teaching including writing letters on my back with her finger and asking me to name the letter. Now Dr. Shaywitz gives good advice as well as current research and resources so parents have it all in one book. If you had only one book on dyslexia this would be it. I can't recommend this book highly enough. I give it many more stars then I'm allowed.

This would be a wonderful book - worth 5 stars - were it not for the title. This book is not about "Overcoming Dyslexia" so much as it is about "Coping with Dyslexia". There is no "New" Program for Reading Problems but rather a detailed description of a strong phonics and language-based curriculum that has been around for years -- and is geared to the needs of ordinary students, not dyslexics. This book does give a good overview of the process of learning to read in ordinary children, as well an explanation of some of the differences in the way dyslexic children learn and read, and an excellent overview of good curriculum materials available and in use in many schools today. It also give a wonderful and very readable summary of Dr. Shaywitz's own research into reading and dyslexia -- but Shaywitz's theories are not universally accepted, and the book does not analyze or compare the research done by the dozens of other prominent researchers in the field of dyslexia. As another review noted, the book also suffers from a sort of split personality -- in the first section it outlines the many aspects of the dyslexic learning style that are different from typical children, and then the section on reading instruction recommends many of the very same techniques that the first part said were inappropriate for dyslexics. For example, in one part the author points out the difficulty of rote learning for dyslexics; in the next part she recommends using flash cards for drill and memorization of common sight words. Ever since the pioneering work of Samuel Orton, educators have known that dyslexics learn best by "multisensory" methods -- but this

book does not include an explanation of the importance of such teaching, or even a list of the most commonly used tutoring methods for dyslexia. Worse - while parents are bombarded with information about one new approach after another --- this book barely mentions the availability of private tutoring or therapy, let alone give parents any means to evaluate the various competing approaches that might be recommended for their children. Dr. Shaywitz is one of a number of researchers who have contributed immensely to the understanding of dyslexia -- but she is only one, and this book happens to present an extremely useful but somewhat one-sided view of her work. That is certainly an appropriate book for her to write; but it would have been better with an honest title that didn't promise more than it delivered. The harm that this book can do is that it might mislead parents into being complacent when their children are struggling. At one point the author states that parents of children in California have nothing to worry about: their children will certainly learn to read because California has adopted her recommended curriculum. Needless to say, California test scores (among the lowest in the nation) do not bear out her contention. The reality is that dyslexic children, almost by definition, do NOT learn to read with ordinary instruction in regular classrooms -- no matter how good the curriculum. The dyslexic children are the ones on the tail end of the bell curve - the 20% who don't learn by the methods proven effective for the other 80%. They need specialized and individualized support and methods, geared to their unique learning style. While Dr. Shaywitz does a great job exploring that learning style, she fails to apply that knowledge to the art of teaching reading. Dr. Shaywitz is a doctor and a scientist, not an educator - so her book is long on theory and conclusions, short on practical advice. For anyone who understands enough about dyslexia to recognize the limits of this book, it is a valuable and essential read. If you want to understand about brain science and dyslexia, this book is a must-have -- AFTER you read the more comprehensive text "Brain Literacy for Educators and Psychologists" by Drs. Virginia Berninger & Todd Richards.

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