

# LOCKDOWN, HOMESCHOOL AND DYSLEXIA



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## INTRODUCTION

As schools remain closed and parents / guardians once again don their teacher's hats, some may feel overwhelmed.

Those who are teaching children with special educational needs may be particularly worried. Here at Princesses Can Wear Kickers, our aim is to ease the burden on parents of children with dyslexia and have put together this information to provide much-needed hints, tips and advice and highlight the best resources available for you and your children.

Let's remember, homeschooling gives our dyslexic children a temporary respite from keeping up with peers, endless tests and the pressure to succeed academically.

## Points to remember

- Homeschooling allows the chance to explore new ways of learning and finding what really suits their needs.
- Recorded lessons, videos and online platforms are great as they can be paused and rewind. Children with dyslexia will absorb much more information when learning at their own pace.
- Dyslexia-friendly technology and programs can be easily incorporated.
- For children who suffer from school-related anxiety, this is a chance to relax, regroup and focus on the learning once more.



## Reading

- Be positive, talk about books and make sure you are seen reading. Reading should be part of their daily routine.
- A good way to judge their level is to ask your child to cover the words they can't read on one page with their fingers. If they run out of fingers, it's too difficult.
- To foster a love of reading, kids have to read. Let them read what they feel most comfortable with. **AND TAKE BREAKS**
- Reading out loud to helps with their memory, vocabulary and listening.
- Always talk about the story you're reading as this will help them gain an understanding. Conversations will help their vocabulary.
- Black text on white paper can be too harsh for sensitive eyes? Off-white paper is a great alternative. I highly recommend printing onto different coloured paper and seeing which works best.
- Use technology to help them and use it together.



## Writing and Spelling

Kids with dyslexia respond far better to a multi-sensory approach to learning than learning by rote.

In layman's terms, this means using more than one of a child's senses at a time.

Learning this way is far more effective.

Any activity you plan for writing and spelling during lockdown should include at least two senses. Kinaesthetic (touch/feel) is a great option.

When learning the alphabet, you could use physical letters - singing the alphabet song while touching each letter in turn.

Writing in sand or shaving foam is another great way for early learners.

A whiteboard is a great alternative to a pencil and paper. Ask your older child to complete their spellings on the whiteboard instead and help them out if they get stuck. Try memory games and songs to remember certain spellings.

As your child gets older, technology will come into play far more for multi-sensory learning. Virtual tours and short video clips are a great alternative to reading pages of text to learn about a topic. Many museums offer virtual tours during lockdown. This is a fun way for your child to retain the information without putting excess pressure on them or yourself.

Multi-sensory learning is about using imagination to both teach and learn. There is no wrong way. Now is not the time to add pressure to yourself or your child. Encourage them to become an author - choosing any topic they like and write a short amount each day. By the end of lockdown, they will have a mini book!

## Kids who learn differently need to be taught differently

If your child has dyslexia, it might be tempting to see lockdown as a time when your child will fall further behind. However, this is a chance for them to shine. To learn in a way that actually suits them. To be an individual and to be themselves. They can finally work at their own pace without unnecessary pressure.

They can do anything they want to do - but sometimes it will just take a bit longer and they will have to work that little bit harder. In lockdown, they have the time, they have the flexibility and they have the means and support to achieve. Show them that you believe in them and give them the confidence to reach for those stars.

