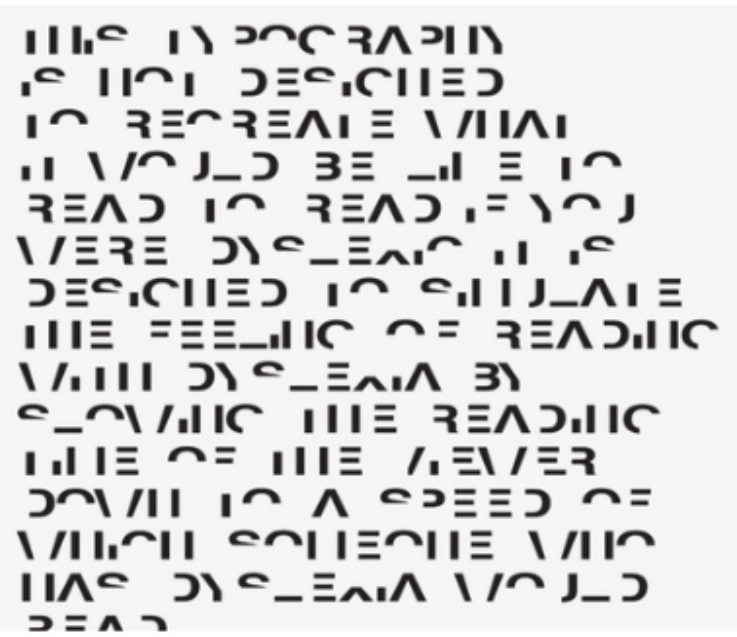


Helping Students with Dyslexia in the Writing Center: Awareness and First Steps

My goal: To raise awareness and provide initial steps for a complex learning disability that presents itself in many different ways.

What’s it like having dyslexia?

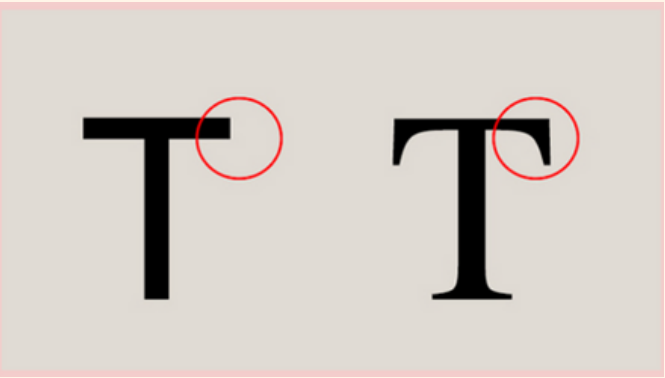


“What this typeface does is break down the reading time of a non-dyslexic down to the speed of a dyslexic.”

Research on Fonts

According to the British Dyslexia Association,

- Use Sans Serif such as Arial and Comic Sans,
- Font Sizes should be 12-14 points



Outcome

- You are more aware of how student writers experience dyslexia
- You know how to use different fonts and colored backgrounds
- You are ready for further conversations about dyslexia in the writing center!

Defining Dyslexia

Definitions from the survey

- “The brain reverses or mixes up letters when reading”
- “A difficulty interpreting the written word”
- “I think it is when you read or write words out of order”

International Dyslexia Association Definition:

- Neurobiological in origin
- Difficulties in word recognition
- Poor spelling
- Decoding abilities
- Challenges in reading comprehension
- Reduced reading experience

OpenDyslexic

Platforms such as OpenDyslexic provide a variety of fonts to help students with dyslexia. Try it out on the laptop in front of you!

Survey Responses of Faculty

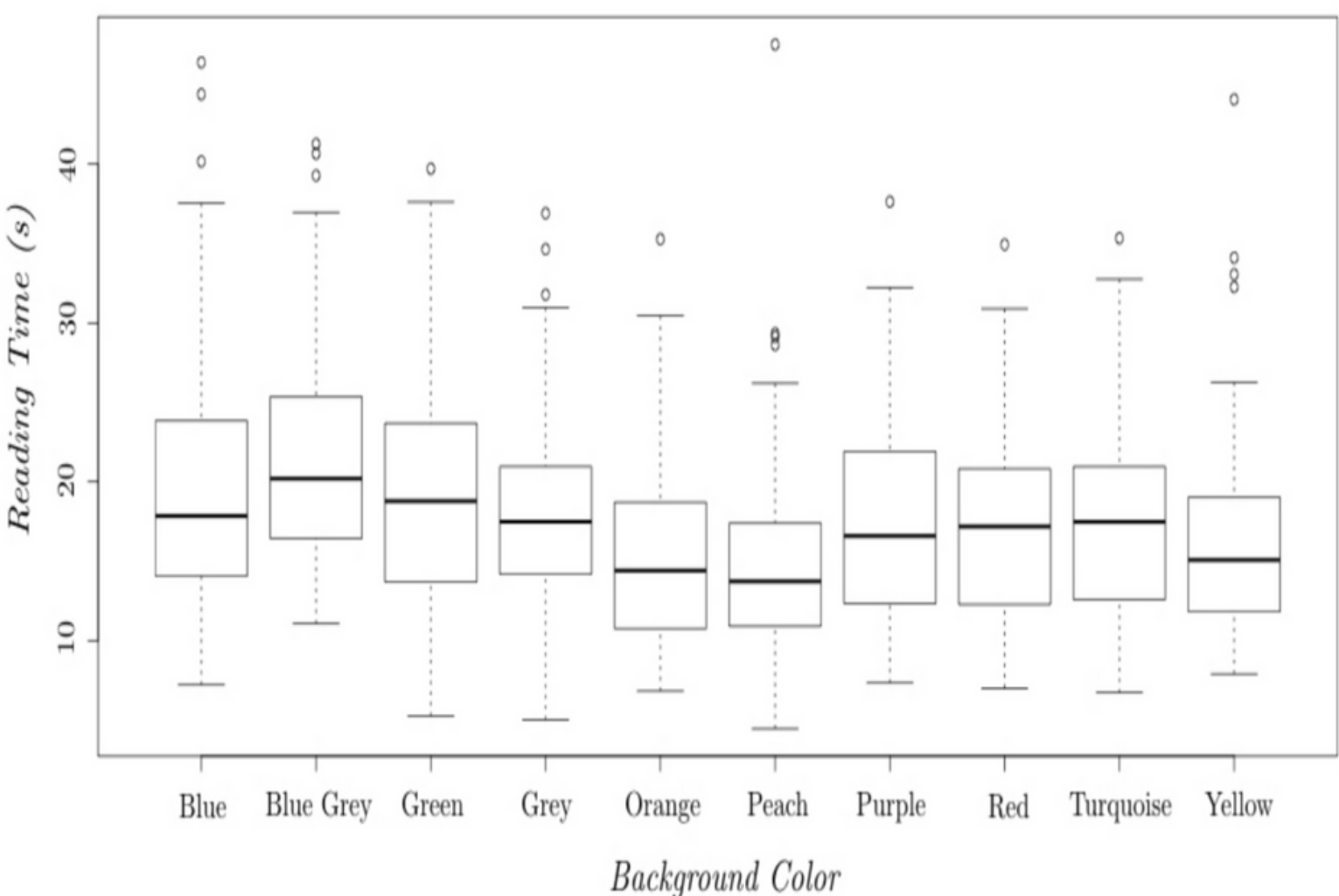
What strategies do you use to help students with dyslexia with their writing?

- “Based on what they tell me, I then try various approaches that might help”
- “I often read prompts out loud”
- “I can’t really answer this as I don’t know if I ever worked with someone with dyslexia”

If you type during your tutoring sessions, what font style/size do you use (Arial, Comic Sans, Times New Roman, etc)

- “Probably Times New Roman, as that’s what my default word doc setting is”
- “I just go with whatever font the student is currently using in their document”
- “Whatever the student’s document is in.”

CMU Research by Professor Luz Rello Sánchez: Warmer Colored Backgrounds Over Cooler Colored Backgrounds



Readers with dyslexia have a faster reading time with warmer colors (peach, yellow, orange) than cooler colors (turquoise, blue, green)