

# Inclusive Developmental and Therapy Center

Reading, Writing & Spelling Help (School-Age)

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## ✓ Can I help my child at home?

Yes. To help an older child read, spell and write with more confidence — one small, doable step at a time, without the tears and the battles. This free program breaks it into simple weekly steps built from proven therapy techniques — things any parent can do at home, in everyday moments, at no cost. It doesn't replace a professional assessment where one is needed, but for many children it makes a real difference, and it never does harm.

Go at your own pace — a new, gentle focus each week.

Download the whole program as a printable PDF.

Includes the signs that mean it's worth seeking extra help.

If your child is bright, chatty and full of ideas but still stumbles over reading, spells the same word three different ways, or groans the moment you mention writing, you are not imagining it — and it is not laziness. Plenty of clever children find reading and spelling genuinely hard work, and by school age they often already know they are behind their friends. That knock to their confidence can hurt more than the reading itself.

This home program gives you calm, structured things to do together for a few minutes a day, built around how older struggling readers actually learn best. It sits alongside school — it does not replace it — and it is not a diagnosis. If the difficulties are persistent, a specialist assessment (an educational psychologist or specialist teacher) can look properly at whether dyslexia or another learning difference is part of the picture, and open doors to support at school.

## ♥ Who this program is for

- ✓ Reads slowly, word by word, and often loses their place on the line.
- ✓ Guesses words from the first letter or the picture instead of sounding them out.
- ✓ Spells poorly — even common words, and even words they got right yesterday.
- ✓ Avoids, delays or downright hates writing anything down.
- ✓ Is clearly bright in conversation, yet reading and writing are well below their class.
- ✓ A teacher has mentioned dyslexia, extra support, or falling behind.

### ⚡ Important — when to get professional help

This is a supportive home program, not a diagnosis or a substitute for an assessment. Please speak to a professional promptly if:

The gap between your child and their classmates is widening despite regular help at home and school.

Real distress around school — stomach aches, tears before class, or refusing to go.

A family history of dyslexia, reading or spelling difficulties.

They are also struggling with maths, attention, or staying organised, not just reading.

Their confidence and self-belief are dropping, and they have started calling themselves “stupid.”

### 📍 Getting help where you live

Everything here is free to use **anywhere in the world**. If you'd like a professional to take a closer look, the best next step is someone local to you:

**Work with us online, from anywhere.** We offer **online sessions and parent coaching** worldwide — book an online consultation and we'll guide you and your child directly.

Talk to your child's **doctor, pediatrician, GP or health visitor** — share what you noticed.

Ask about **free early-childhood or early-intervention services** in your area — many countries offer them for young children (e.g. Early Intervention in the US, NHS referrals in the UK).

Search “**child speech & language therapist near me**”, or ask your doctor for a referral.

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Near Multan, Pakistan? You're also warmly welcome in person at our centre — **contact us here**.

## ☆ Your step-by-step roadmap

Move at your child's pace, not the calendar's — the “weeks” are a gentle order, not a race. Repeat any stage as long as it helps.

### Stage 1 — Breaking big words into chunks

Long words feel impossible when met whole. Show your child that every long word is just small, manageable chunks — syllables — clapped and split.

Clap out longer words together — “fan-tas-tic,” “re-mem-ber,” “cat-er-pil-lar” — one clap per beat, so they can hear the chunks.

Write a long word on paper and draw pencil lines between the syllables, then read it one chunk at a time before saying it fast.

Play “squash and stretch”: stretch a word out slowly into its parts, then squash it back to normal speed.

⚡ **Try** Chin on the hand — count how many times the jaw drops when they say **this**: the word. Each drop is one syllable.

## Stage 2 – Sounding out and blending

Older children still need reliable sounding-out, just with grown-up words. Blend sounds left to right instead of guessing from the shape.

Practise the trickier letter teams — “ai, ee, igh, oa, ew, tion” — pointing, saying the sound, then finding it inside a real word.

Read a few short decodable sentences at their level, running a finger under each word and blending the sounds smoothly.

When they hit a hard word, cover it and reveal it sound by sound rather than telling them what it is.

⚡ **Try** Cover the picture. If they can only read it by peeking at the picture, they  
**this:** are guessing — sound it out instead.

## Stage 3 – Building reading fluency

Speed and smoothness come from re-reading, not from new-and-harder every day. Familiar text lets the reading flow so meaning can land.

Pick one short, comfortable passage and read it together three times across the week — a little faster and smoother each time.

Try paired reading: you read aloud together, then you go quiet and let them carry on solo when they feel ready.

Take turns reading a sentence each so your child hears a smooth, expressive model right before their go.

⚡ **Try** Time a re-read and celebrate the seconds saved — beating their own  
**this:** record beats competing with anyone else.

## Stage 4 – Spelling that sticks

Spelling improves with patterns and multisensory practice, not endless copying. Teach the “why” behind the letters and use tricky-word routines.

Group spellings by pattern for the week (“-igh,” “-tion,” doubling after a short vowel) rather than a random mixed list.

Use see–say–cover–write–check, and for tricky words trace the letters in the air, in sand or on their palm while saying them.

Highlight the “tricky bit” of a hard word in colour — the part they keep getting wrong — so their eyes learn where the trap is.

⚡ **Try** Say the word the way it is spelled — “Wed-nes-day,” “bus-i-ness” — to **this:** remember the silent, sneaky letters.

## Stage 5 – Getting ideas onto the page

Struggling writers often have great ideas but freeze at the blank page. Separate thinking from writing so spelling never blocks their story.

Plan out loud first — talk the whole answer through, or jot ideas as a quick spider-map before any full sentences.

Offer sentence starters (“First... Then... The reason is...”) so they begin instead of staring at the empty line.

Let them dictate while you scribe sometimes — capture their ideas fully, then read it back and let them copy or fix a part.

⚡ **Try** Say the sentence out loud in full before writing it — if they can say it, **this:** they can write it.

## Stage 6 – Understanding and studying

Reading the words is only half the job. Build comprehension by previewing, questioning and checking that the meaning actually went in.

Before reading, preview together — look at the title, pictures and headings and predict what it will be about.

Pause at the end of each paragraph and ask a quick “what just happened / what does that mean?” question.

After reading, have them retell it in their own words, or draw a quick picture, so you both know it landed.

 **Try** Turn each heading into a question, then read to find the answer — it keeps **this:** a wandering mind hunting for meaning.

## Tricks that make it work

- ✓ Try a coloured overlay or a plain reading ruler under the line — it steadies the text and holds their place for many children.
- ✓ Keep it little and often — five to ten focused minutes a day beats one long, tearful battle at the weekend.
- ✓ Cut the copying load — give a printed copy to stick in, or let them write less but write it well.
- ✓ Play the audiobook while they follow the same words in print — ears and eyes together build reading without the struggle.
- ✓ Praise the effort and the trying, not just the right answer — a brave attempt at a hard word deserves real credit.

## How you'll know it's working

- They reach for a book, or read a sign or a menu, without being nagged into it.
- Sounding out replaces wild guessing, and fewer words get skipped or swapped.
- Spellings from the week's pattern start turning up correctly in their own writing.
- The blank page causes fewer tears — they start a piece of writing with less coaxing.



**Is this based on real methods?** The steps here follow structured literacy — systematic, synthetic phonics taught in a clear order alongside multisensory (Orton-Gillingham-style) practice that links seeing, saying, hearing and writing. These approaches are widely recognised as evidence-based for children who find reading and spelling hard, including those with dyslexia. This program is a home support, not an assessment or treatment; if difficulties persist, a specialist assessment can confirm what is going on and guide next steps.



**Educational information, not a diagnosis.** Our guidance follows standard, research-based practice (CDC, NHS, ASHA and WHO), is written by our therapy team and **medically reviewed by a GMC-registered doctor**. Every child is different, so we can't promise specific results — always use your own judgement and speak to a qualified professional about your child. **Read our full disclaimer.**