Identifying and Supporting Learners with Dyslexia in the Mainstream Classroom

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What is dyslexia? The Rose Definition

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.

Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.

Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities.

It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points.

Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration and personal organisation, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia.

A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well founded intervention.

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Learning difficulty or learning difference?

Dyslexia is a learning difference, a combination of strengths and weaknesses which affects the learning process in reading, spelling, writing and sometimes number and calculation.
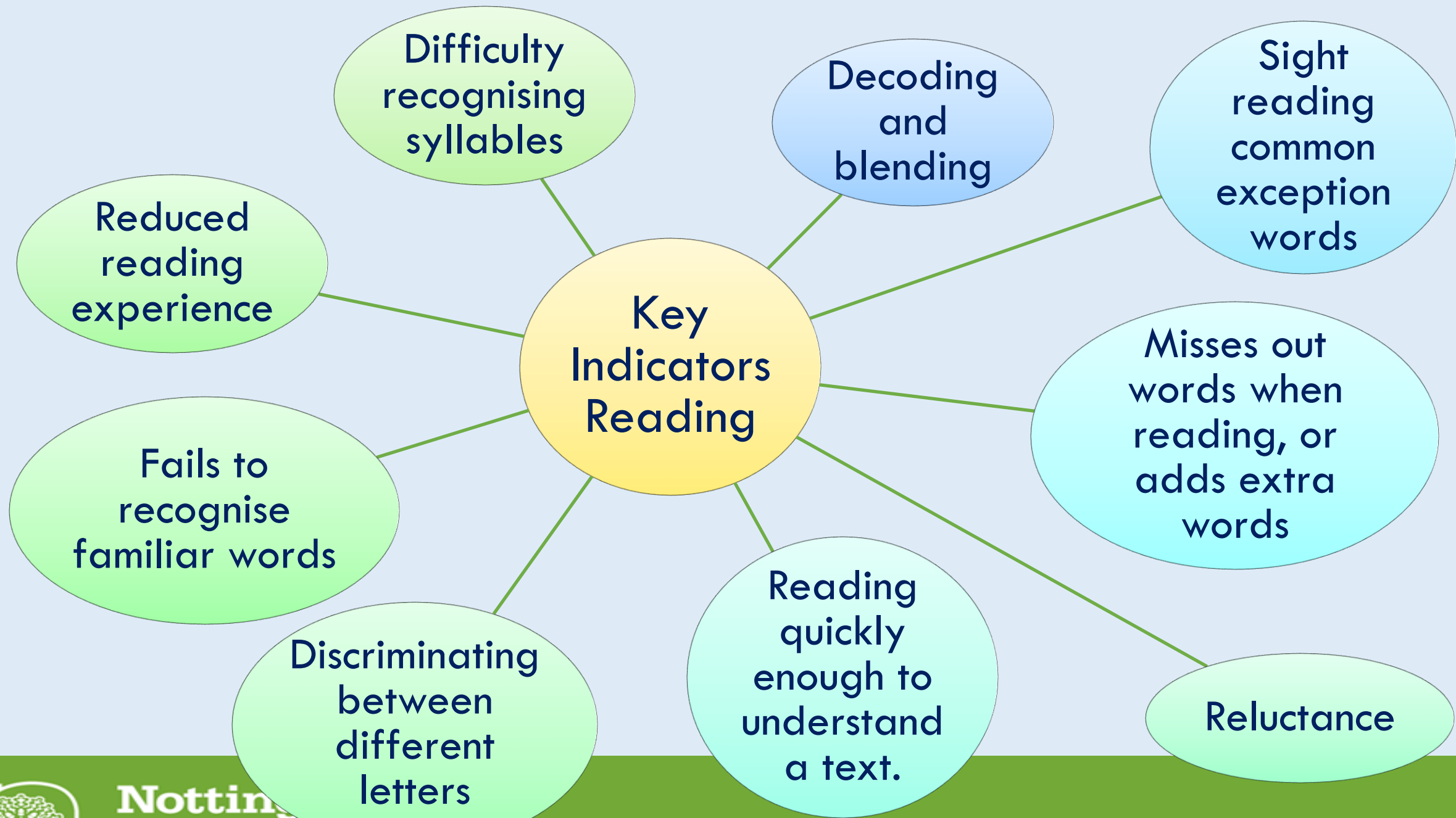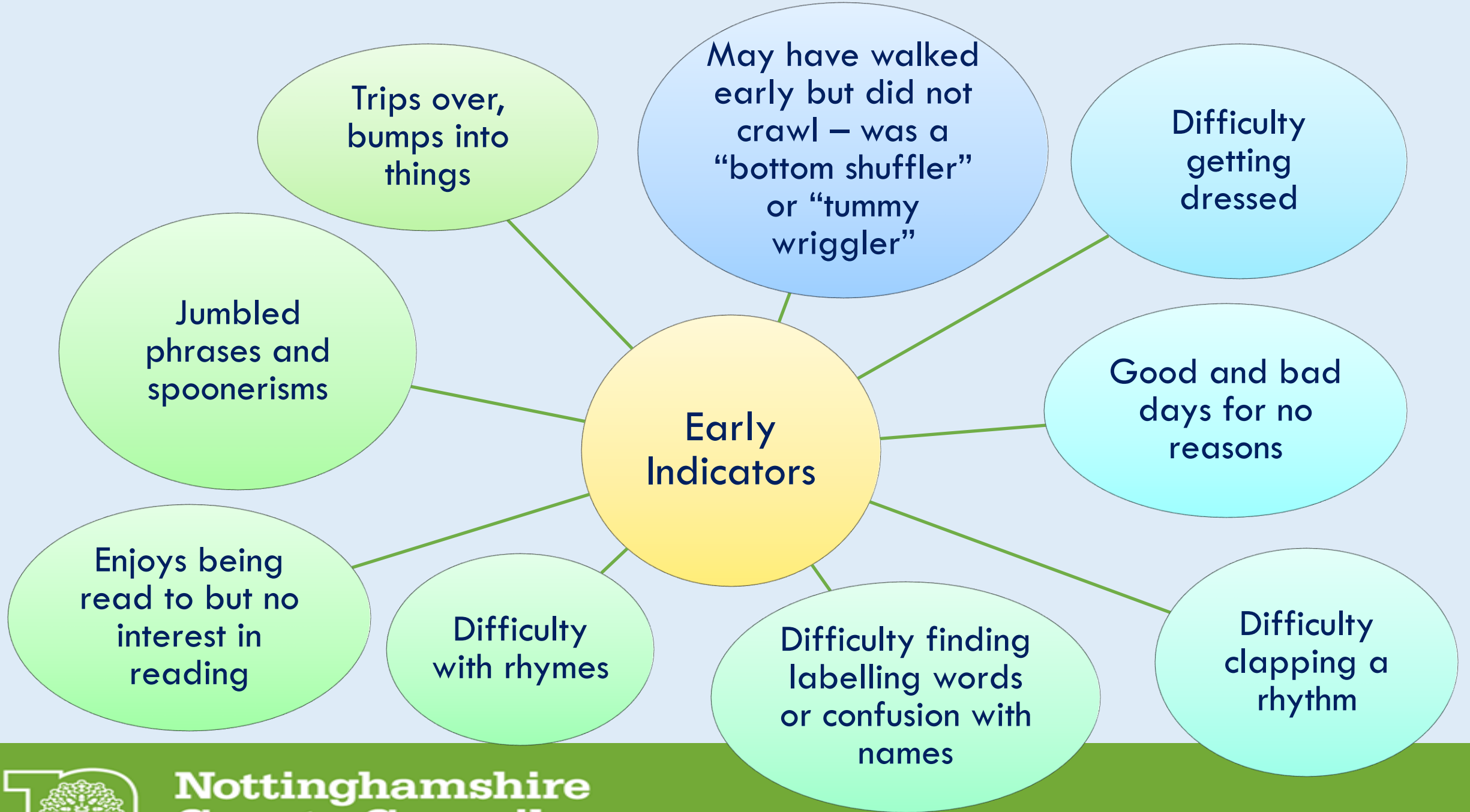
(185) What is dyslexia? - Kelli Sandman-Hurley - YouTube
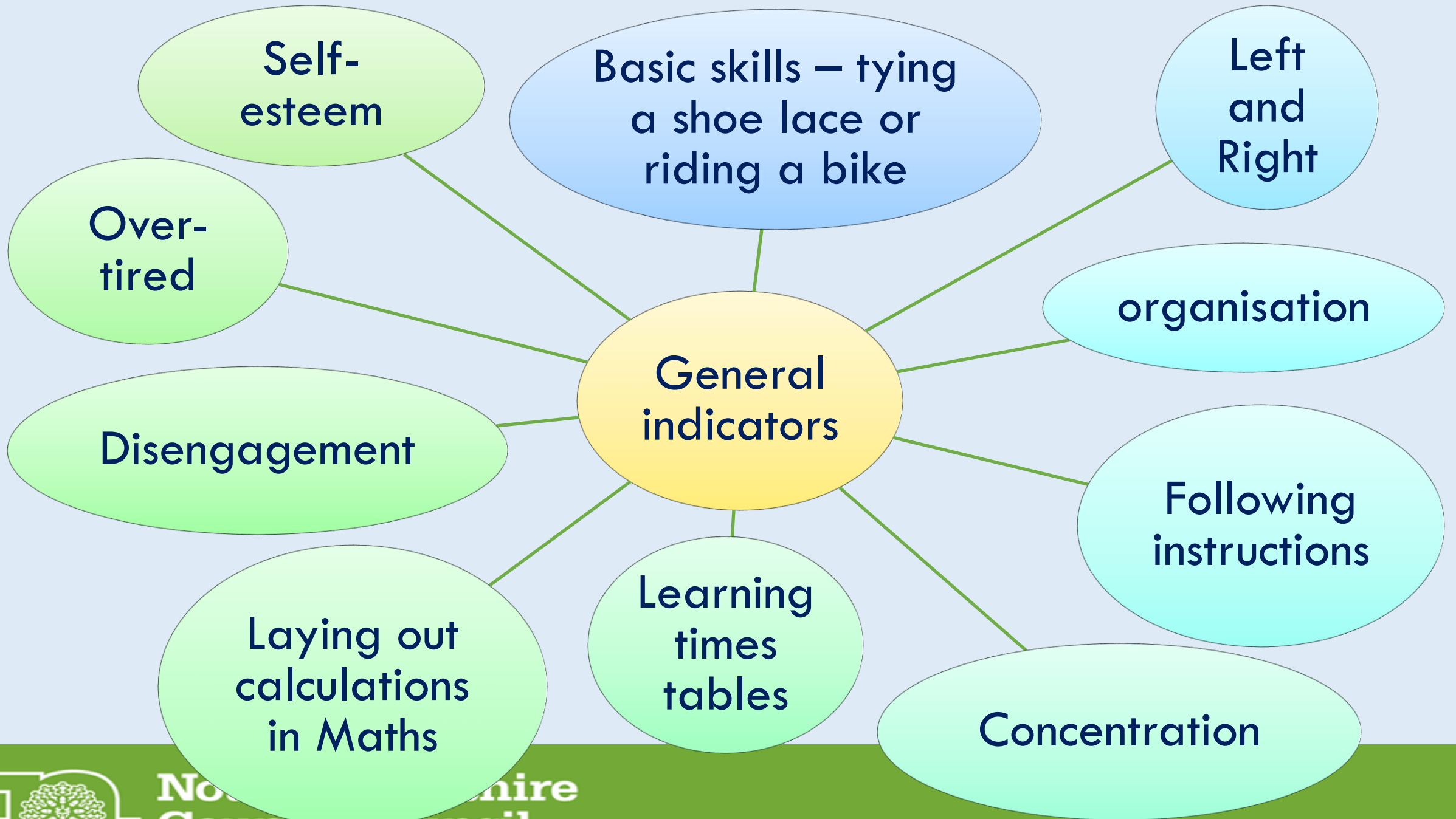
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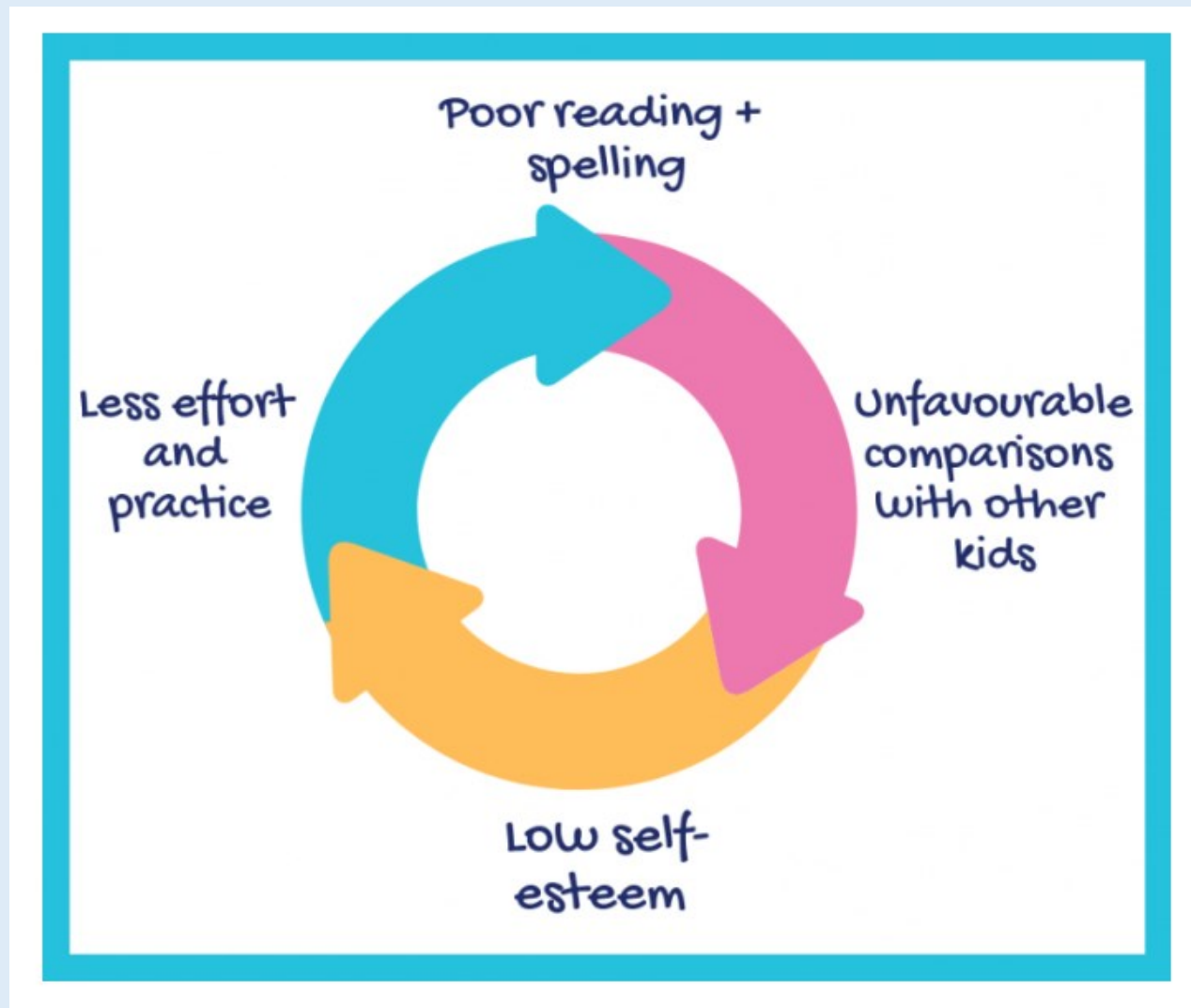# Discussion – what difficulties do you associate with dyslexia?
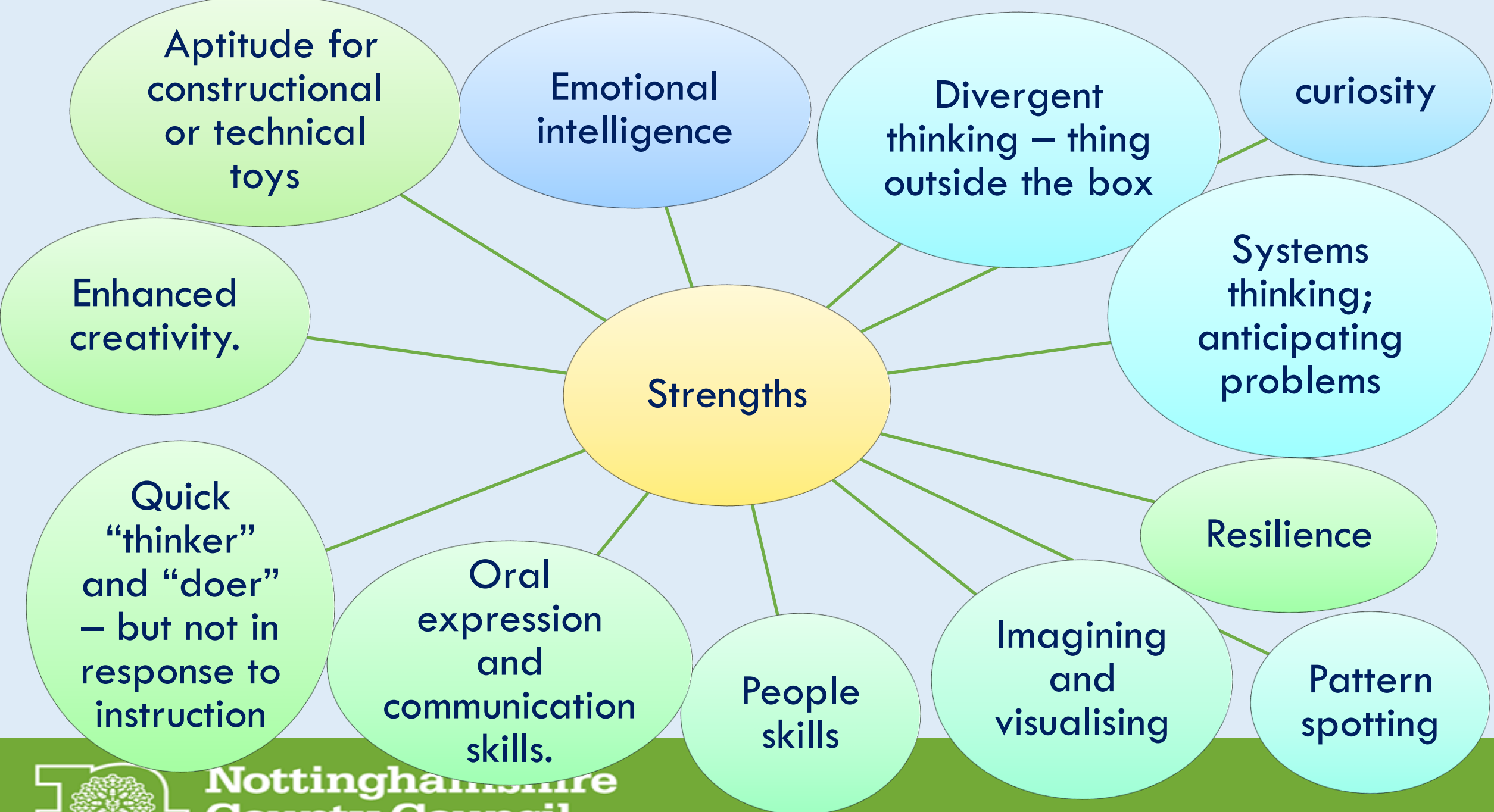
Key Indicators Reading

- Difficulty recognising syllables
- Decoding and blending
- Sight reading common exception words
- Reduced reading experience
- Misses out words when reading, or adds extra words
- Fails to recognise familiar words
- Discriminating between different letters
- Reading quickly enough to understand a text.
- Reluctance

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Early Indicators

- Trips over, bumps into things
- May have walked early but did not crawl – was a "bottom shuffler" or "tummy wriggler"
- Difficulty getting dressed
- Jumbled phrases and spoonerisms
- Good and bad days for no reasons
- Enjoys being read to but no interest in reading
- Difficulty with rhymes
- Difficulty finding labelling words or confusion with names
- Difficulty clapping a rhythm

Self-esteem

Discussion – what strengths do you associate with dyslexia?

"I have recently got a diagnosis of dyslexia and dyscalculia since I started university. These difficulties were not detected during my school years resulting in low grades and low confidence in learning."

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When can we identify learners as dyslexic?

Dyslexia can be assessed with more confidence after the age of 8

Need to give children time to gain reading and writing skills.

Early assessment of children does help to establish their strengths and weaknesses and put appropriate support in place.

We're going to be noticing, recording and supporting in EYFS and KS1, but we're not going to be labelling.

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What is it like in a dyslexia friendly classroom?

The 'Five-a-day' principle: High quality teaching benefits pupils with SEND

1 Explicit instruction

2 Cognitive and metacognitive strategies

3 Scaffolding

4 Flexible grouping

5 Using technology

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Explicit Instruction
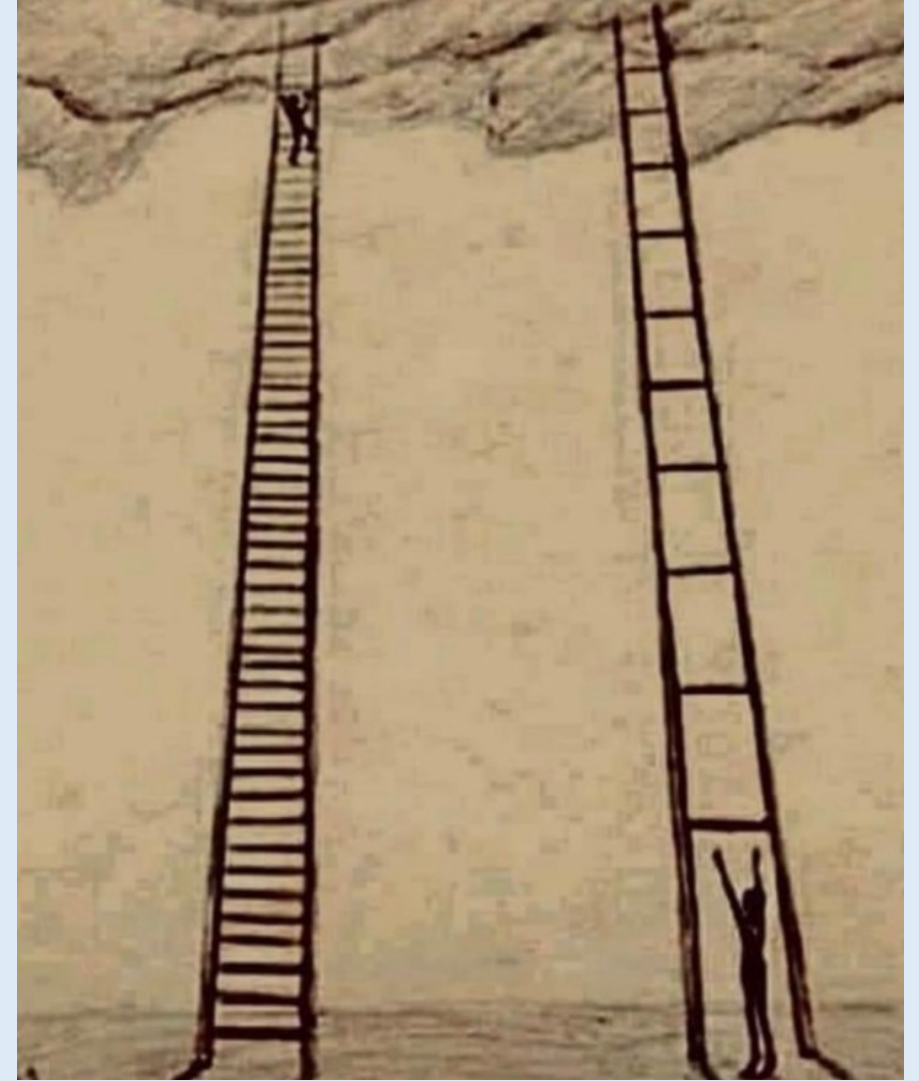
High expectations for all learners.

Small steps, carefully sequenced.

Teacher modelling.

I do, we do, you do

Processing time when questioning

Multisensory teaching – models, manipulatives, dual coding

Metacognitive and cognitive techniques

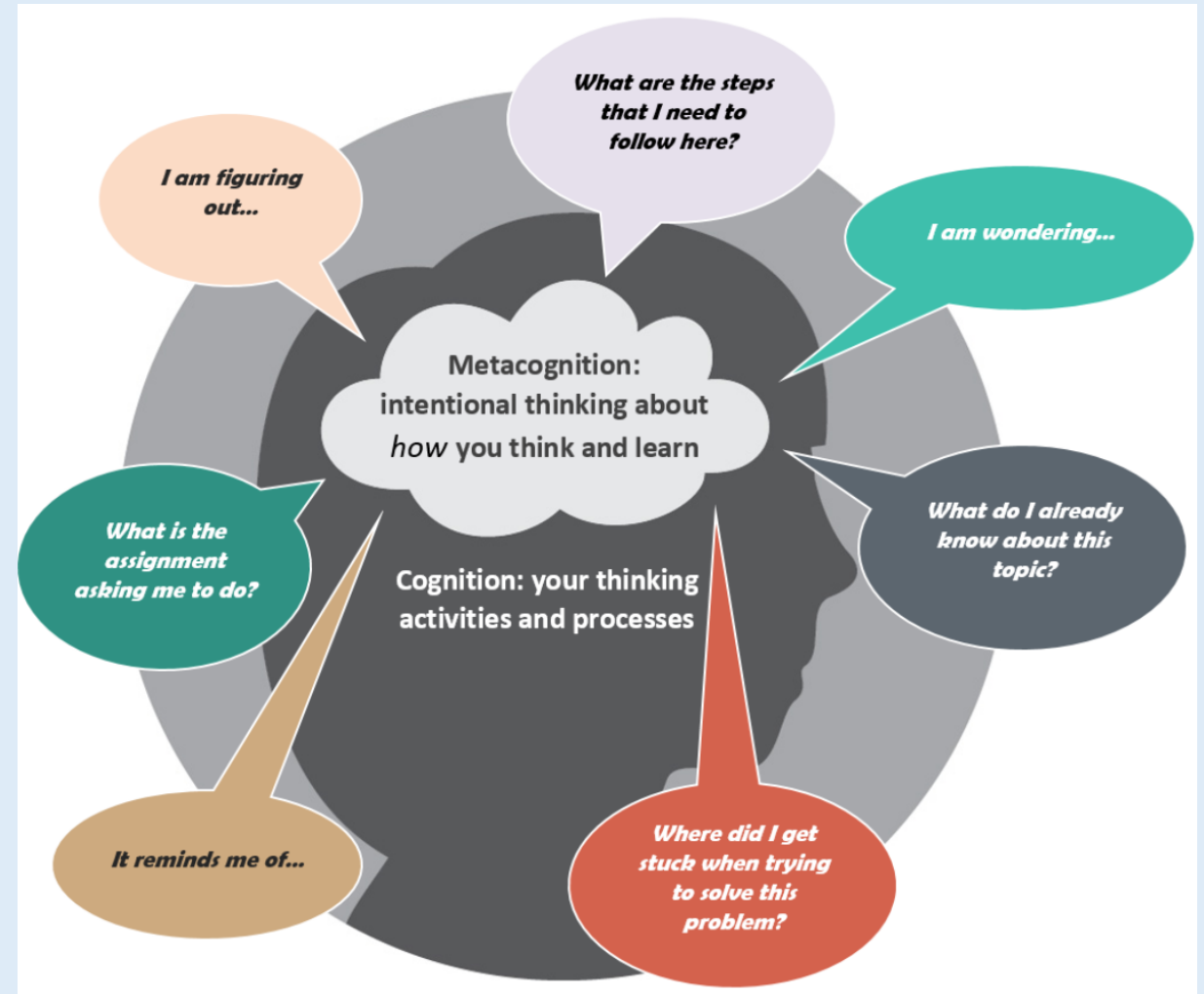Activate prior learning – what do I already know about this?

Retrieval and spaced learning – opportunities for overlearning

Model thinking and problem solving

Reduce cognitive load

Teach transferable skills e.g TCP-QR

Cued Spelling

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Metacognition

"Intelligence is knowing what to do when you don't know what to do."

Neil Mackay

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Cognitive techniques: multi-sensory learning

Multi-sensory learning makes use of all the senses. Multi-sensory methods are effective for learners with dyslexia because they allow learners to use the methods they are good at while at the same time exercising the methods they are weaker at.

Multisensory is not VAK (futurelearn.com)

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Flexible grouping

Peer support – good role models, support with reading and spelling.

Improved behaviour in the classroom.

Higher ability learners are challenged to articulate and explain their ideas.

Learners with literacy difficulties can use their strengths.

Scaffolding and support rather than differentiation by task.

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Seating

At the front, facing the board

Near to the class teacher where possible (so help can be offered readily)

Seated to minimise disruption and concentration maximised

not 'crowding out' (left handers clashing with right handers)

Sitting with good posture, request footrest/writing slope/seat wedge if posture is poor.

Seated in well-lit areas.

Scaffolding Early Reading

Lots of sound talk

Rhyming

Teach how to chunk – practise spotting where the syllables are.

Morphological approaches for suffixes and prefixes as per NC.

Re-read familiar books

Using a following finger

Reading ruler

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Scaffolding Reading

Readability of resources – font, size of font, unnecessary graphics, background colour, increase line spacing, colour coding, bullet points.

Pre-reading of texts – before school or sent home.

Reading rulers, coloured overlays

Reading books – hi lo e.g Barrington Stoke

Don't rely on written texts to impart information – use videos, captions, graphs, diagrams

Give own version of presentation

Vocab – explicit teaching of meaning.

Scaffolding Writing

Talk for Writing

Smiley Sentences for self assessment

Pobble 365 for caption writing/reluctant writers

Reduce cognitive load wherever possible – do you need to write the date first?

Writing frames, sentence starters, cloze activities, paragraph planners

Draw first, not afterwards.

Say your sentence out loud.

Say it again. Count the words.

Start with capital letter.

Use finger spaces.

Finish with . ? !

Read it out loud.

Capital letter   Full stop

Finger spaces

Does the whole thing make sense?

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Scaffolding Writing

Mind mapping – plan the whole thing but just write up one paragraph – popplet app
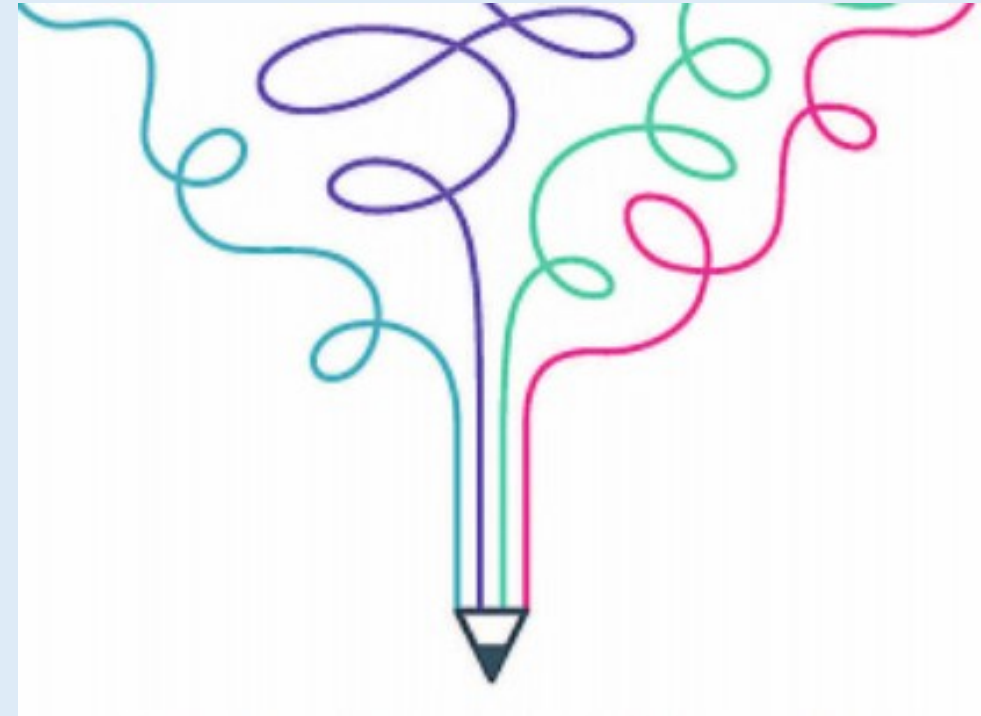
Avoid copying from the board.

Multisensory – use post-it notes for ideas then select and order.

Scribing – but make them do some of the work

Does it need to be written? Bullet points, diagrams, oral presentations, posters

EXTRA TIME!

Spelling

Common exception words need overlearning

Multisensory spelling – magnetic letters, wooden letters.

Look cover write check doesn't work for everyone – spend some time finding out how your learner learns best.

Morphology for those over-reliant on phonics– health/heal

Mnemonics – multisensory, actions, funny voices, children to make up their own. Do they understand how the mnemonic works?

Marking – only mark target words. How do you do corrections?

Spelling is difficult challageng hard.

Using Technology

Speech to text tech

- Dragon
- Speechy
- Siri
- Google voice typing
- Texthelp –read&write toolbars

Spelling

- Electronic spell checkers
- Word processing tools
- Dictionary.com

Text to speech

- Texthelp
- Immersive reader
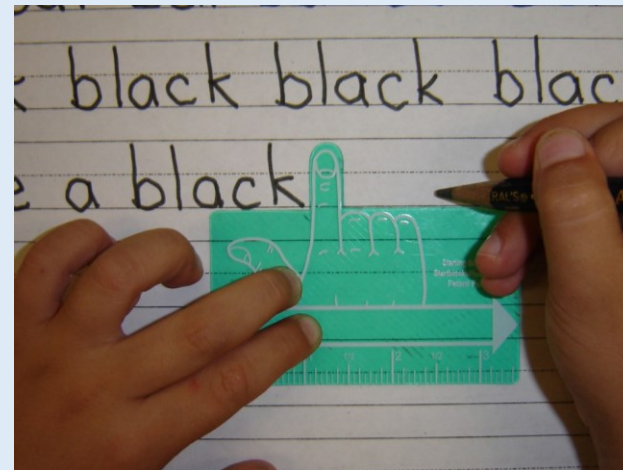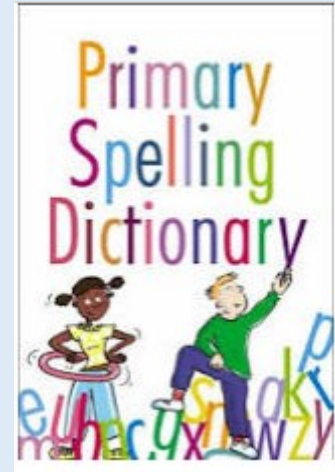- Scanning pens
- Google accessibility features

Writing

- Clicker 8
- Touch typing tutorials

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Essential Kit

Phase 2 to 5 Tricky Words

Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
I	he	said	oh
no	she	have	Mrs
the	we	like	people
to	me	so	their
go	be	do	called
into	you	some	Mr
	are	come	looked
	her	little	asked
	was	one	could
	all	were	
	they	there	
	my	what	
		when	
		out	

Primary Spelling Dictionary

Speed Sounds Set 2 / Speed Sounds Set 3

bed

black black black
e a black

All About Ella — Sally Nicholls

BLUE JOHN — BERLIE DOHERTY

HENRY POND the Poet — Dick King-Smith

Promoting Self esteem

Use the things they are good at to help with the things they find difficult.

Help them understand properly what dyslexia is, that it does not mean that they are stupid.

Encourage them to focus on something they are good at, such as a sport or another hobby.

Praise them for effort and don't always point out mistakes.

The emotional climate in the classroom is the number one priority.

The knowledge that their teacher likes them and recognises and respects their strengths.

Calmness and security

Low-key, unostentatious scaffolding & support

More time to process information and complete tasks

The knowledge that their teacher (quietly) understands their learning difference.

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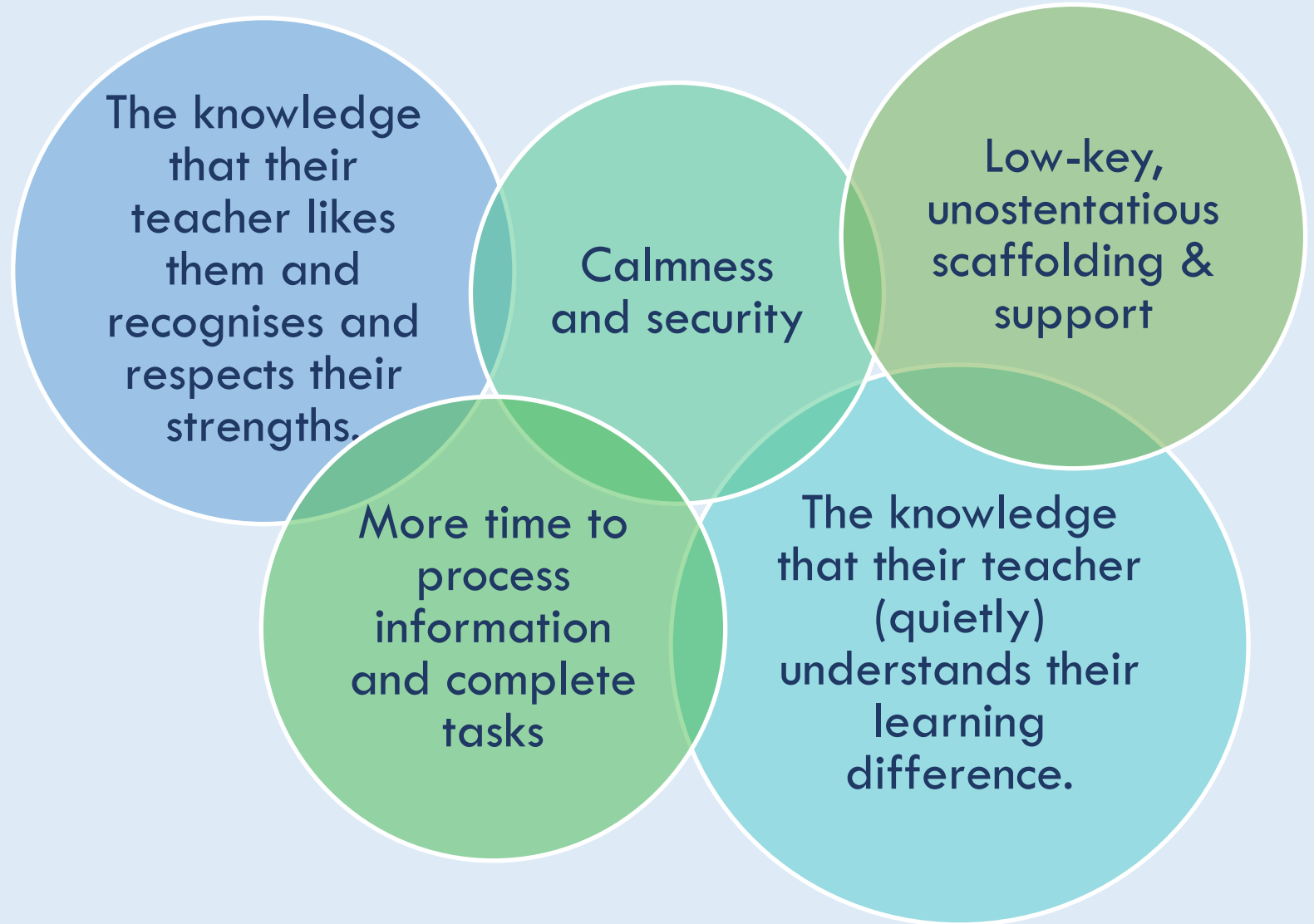
Reflection

Can you think of 2 things you could change about your practice to make it more dyslexia friendly?

Evaluation Time!

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