

Characteristics of Dysgraphia

- Cramped fingers on writing tool
- Odd wrist, body, and paper positions
- Excessive erasures
- Mixture of upper- and lowercase letters
- Mixture of printed and cursive letters
- Inconsistent letter formations and slant
- Irregular letter sizes and shapes
- Unfinished cursive letters
- Misuse of line and margin
- Poor organization on the page
- Inefficient speed in copying
- Decreased speed of writing
- General illegibility
- Inattentiveness about details when writing

Students with dysgraphia, a learning disability that hampers written expression, often struggle with spelling because they write letters out of order, compose words backwards, leave out sections of words, or omit punctuation.

Causes

Because writing links many complex brain functions, dysgraphia can arise from any weakness in that link, including injury to parts of the brain.

People diagnosed with dysgraphia may exhibit dyslexia, auditory or language processing weakness, attention deficit disorder, visual processing issues, or sequential processing weakness.

Strategies

Successfully dealing with spelling dysgraphia takes time, effort, and a strong support system of students, parents, and educators.

Strategies include outlining thoughts before writing, dictating ideas into a tape recorder, practicing keyboard skills instead of handwriting, and using computer programs to check spelling.

Signs and Symptoms

Dysgraphic writers display early signs of spelling challenges by mixing up lowercase and uppercase letters, using illegible handwriting, holding a pen awkwardly, and appearing frustrated as they organize words and thoughts on paper.

Students with dysgraphia often show a marked gap between oral and written understanding--communicating thoughtfully through speech