



Adaptation of the layout



Context

Students with Dys and other impairments often have a different grasp of the surrounding world. This is a key factor to remember when creating online content. Some of the most common organisational challenges for Dys students are:

Left/Right confusion Overlapping text Eye movement	Focus issues: Instructions need to be broken down	Short term memory Constant re-learning 'Lost' in the material	Poor self-organisation Poor time management and more.
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General Principles

Visual support, the way the information is absorbed visually, is one of the best way for teachers to ensure understanding and good communication. For students with DYS, but also visual and hearing impairments, using well-designed visual supports plays a role in understanding rules, increasing independence, making decisions, communication with people, organization, supporting transitions from one task to the next, and more.

However, while adapting content is paramount, remember that one type of adaptation doesn't necessarily fit all DYS. For this, it is important to chose a code, and be consistent with it. If a specific layout works with your students, keep a routine and maintain a structure.



Adaptation

Typography

Choose larger fonts, 12 or 14 points (not larger).

Use plain, evenly spaced sans serif fonts:

- Arial, Comic Sans, Verdana, Tahoma, Century gothic, Trebuchet.

Check OpenDyslexic, a font created for readers with dyslexia.

Spacing

Use spacing of at least 1.5 and clear separation between paragraphs.

Contrasting

Use paper and background colors that are soft on the eyes.

Colour code: D8D8D8 DAEEF3 F4F0BE

Color spacing

For younger students, separate the text with a color:

"Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice..."



Text organisation

What to do and not do when adapting text.

Do not use *Italics* or underlining: these make the text appear like it 'runs together'. Instead, use **bold** to emphasize.

Put important information in boxes or present with bullet points.

Do not cut words at the end of sentences, instead write the word entirely on the next line.

Do not justify the text. Always align left.

Avoid printing on both sides whenever possible. If not, use high quality paper to avoid seeing through it.

How to provide instruction.

- Break down the instruction into a step by step process. Make sure the steps are manageable and short.
- Do not provide only auditory information, provide them in multiple forms.
- Whenever possible, use visuals (think color codes, images, fill in blanks, boxes, etc.).

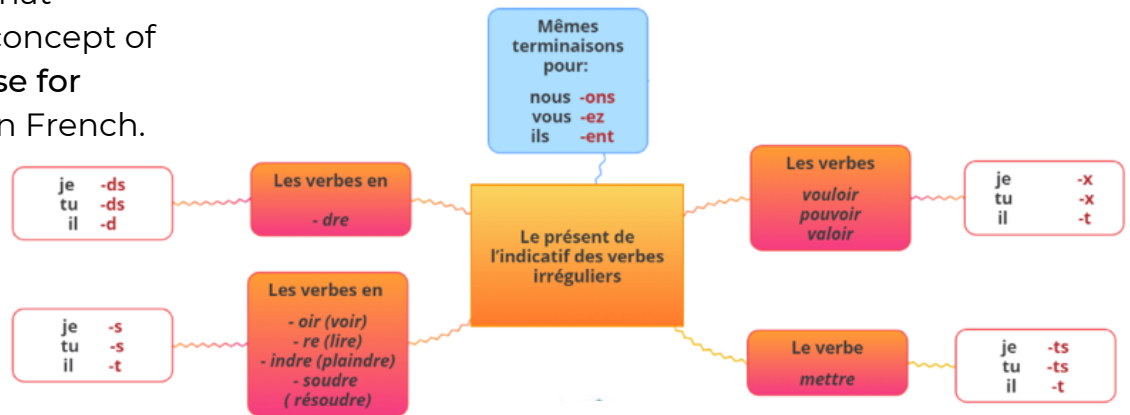
Structure of the lesson

Provide an outline at the beginning of the lesson with the content. Then, a review of the lesson at the end. Use map minds to illustrate your lessons. (See example)



Examples

On the right, an example of a map mind that introduces the concept of the present tense for irregular verbs in French.



Visuals such as these are very useful for students with dys. Note the use of colours, boxes and clear structure.



Resources

To download the OpenDyslexic font: <https://opendyslexic.org/>

Learn more about DYS in general: <https://moocdys.eu/resources/>

Learn how to make a classroom more Dys friendly:

https://www.britishcouncil.mk/sites/default/files/making_classrooms_dyslexia_friendly.pdf