

THE CUTTING EDGE ON DYSLEXIA TEACHING

What remedial program is recommended for dyslexia?

According to the National Institute of Health and the Department of National Revenue in Canada, the Orton-Gillingham based method is the **only** Recognized medical intervention for persons affected with dyslexia. "The Orton-Gillingham Method is a structured and highly organized method and uses the multisensory method in teaching. It uses all the senses to educate. Medically, this method is essential to treating this disorder." 91 DTC 816 Tax Court of Canada, Court File No. 90-1931.

Where can I get such a program?

There are many effective Orton-Gillingham multisensory programs. In addition to the curriculum Heritage Academy integrates the Simultaneous Multisensory Teaching method (SMT) for it's the most user friendly method developed to meet the needs of students of all ages. In addition with teaching the fundamentals of the Orton- Gillingham philosophy, many other components have been added to assist with other difficulties associated with Dyslexia, such as; orientation, laterality, visual and auditory memory and verbalization exercises. The SMT program also incorporates many phonological/ phonemic awareness exercises which is lacking with persons affected with Dysphonia.

The SMT Program is a language re-education method for students of all ages. It is based on the Orton-Gillingham methodology, which is a structured and highly organized method for language training. It uses all of the senses to educate and has been acknowledged as the only appropriate intervention for people with dyslexia.[1] Both English and French versions of the program are available. The SMT can be administered to groups or individuals.

The SMT Program is made up of a series of sequential lessons which teach reading, writing and spelling with an emphasis on reading accuracy in the early stages, followed by a thorough comprehension of written language and its structures.

The program comprises a comprehensive manual for the teacher/tutor that includes step-by-step lessons plans and all teaching materials and a student workbook. There are 12 levels in the English (SMT Program). Student progress is reviewed at regular intervals to ensure mastery of concepts and content.

The SMT Program is based on the following principles:

- * *Simultaneous, multisensory teaching* - Students learn using visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile senses simultaneously.
- * *Systematic and cumulative* - Each lesson is based on concepts taught in previous lessons. Lessons begin with the most basic concepts of language and progress to the most complex in logical order.
- * *Direct instruction* - Each concept is explicitly stated. Students are not expected to infer or intuit concepts as part of the learning process.
- * *Diagnostic teaching* - The teacher must continuously adjust the pace and style of instruction to suit the student's changing needs and abilities.
- * *Synthetic and analytic instruction* - Synthetic instruction introduces the component parts of a concept, then describes how the component parts fit together. Analytic instruction presents the concept, and then describes how it may be broken down into its component parts.

People wanting to use the program undertake a comprehensive training program with follow-up support from an instructional video. Less teacher training time is needed for SMT teachers/tutors due to the detailed information provided in the teacher's manual and the very precise lessons provided.

The SMT Program is being used extensively in Canada and many school boards have provided training. The program is also used increasingly with federal civil service employees who have been unable to learn a second language in traditional ways due to dyslexia. Recently, the SMT program has been introduced to the Middle East.

For schools, the SMT Program offers a successful intervention for students with dyslexia who have not developed reading mastery despite the provision of regular classroom instruction.

[1] (91 DTC 816 Tax Court of Canada, Court File No. 90-1931, Denis Ranelli (Appellant) v The Minister of National Review (Respondent)

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