



**Adaptation of learning content for students with SLDs**

**What are Specific Learning Disorders (SLDs)?**

## **Challenges met by students with SLDs**

### **Introduction**

Not only do students with SLD have to face the difficulties caused by their **Specific Learning Disorders (SLD)**, but they also have to deal with **societal acceptance issues**.

Understanding what your students are coping with will help you better understand what you can do to support them.



# Theoretical explanation: students with Dys face all sorts of difficulties

## Difficulties to learn languages inherent to their condition

The **most obvious difficulties** are the **challenges of learning** and, more specifically, of learning a foreign language. People with SLDs may have difficulties with:

- **Time management** and **organisation**
- **Writing, speaking** and/or **reading**
- **Visual** and/or **auditory processing**
- **Memory** and/or **focus**

## Acceptance of their difference

Besides these difficulties, students with SLDs may face other challenges that may increase their **feeling of helplessness**, resulting in **lack of motivation** and engagement that cannot be tackled solely by working on the learning content and methods.

**Personal and family issues** can take up a lot of their attention as they will need to work with their family to accept their condition. This can require them to work with a professional, which also takes a lot of energy and commitment.

Once these issues are addressed, people with SLDs may still face **difficulties** in **society**, at **school** and in their **relationships**.

## Misconceptions

There are several misconceptions that can make them feel unintelligent. However, **SLDs have nothing to do with intellectual capacities**. It is important that they and those around them understand that they just process information differently.

It can also be quite hard for students with SLDs to connect with others and make friends, therefore **isolating themselves from their peers** and being labelled as “socially awkward”.

## Bullying

Bullying can be verbal, social, or physical and is a severe issue that can arise in any school and group of students. It can be defined as an “unwanted, aggressive behaviour among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance”.

Because of their differences, students with SLDs can be more at risk of being bullied than other students.



## What you can do

- **Adapt your learning content** to meet your students' needs. You can also read our practice sheets on the needs and adaptations for students with SLDs.
- Be mindful of what they may be going through. **Create a safe environment** for them to share their troubles. **Discuss the forms of bullying** and pay attention to signs and confessions. Address the topic of SLDs in one of your activities so all students understand what they are, without singling out your students with SLDs.
- If you are planning to make your own **pedagogical video game**, make the story inclusive with a diversity of characters, so all students can relate to them. Make sure to have a look at our practice sheet “**Inclusive Depiction of Characters**”.

## Conclusion

**Students with SLDs face many challenges**, but once they understand their disorder and once their families, friends and schools are on board, **they can overcome those difficulties**.

As a teacher, **you can support your students with SLDs** by **adapting your learning material** or even by **clearing up some misconceptions** about SLDs with your students and **raising awareness**. You can also **address bullying** and be attentive to what your students are going through, for instance by creating your **own inclusive pedagogical video games** to teach English!

## Resources and references

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## Illustrations

- [Goal icons created by Freepik - Flaticon](#)

- [Violence icons created by Eucalyp - Flaticon](#)



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