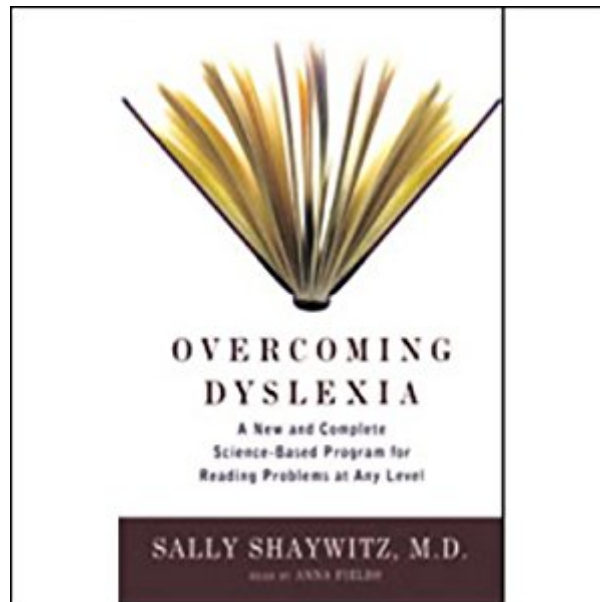


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# Overcoming Dyslexia



## Synopsis

From one of the world's leading experts on reading and dyslexia, the most comprehensive, up-to-date, and practical book yet to help us understand, identify, and overcome the reading problems that plague American children today. For the one in every five children who has dyslexia and the millions of others who struggle to read at their own grade levels—and for their parents, teachers, and tutors—this book can make a difference. Drawing on recent scientific breakthroughs—many of them in her own laboratory—Dr. Shaywitz demystifies the subject of reading difficulties and explains how a child can be helped to become a good reader. She discusses early diagnosis in young children as well as the diagnosing of older children, young adults, and adults. Dr. Shaywitz explains why some bright adults can read only very slowly, and what they can do about it. Her book makes clear how the latest research, including new brain imaging studies, is uncovering the mechanisms underlying dyslexia and has led to effective treatments for each age group. Dr. Shaywitz instructs parents in what they can do year-by-year, grade-by-grade, step-by-step for a dyslexic child. She lays out a home program for enhanced reading; guides parents in choosing the best school for their child and in working with teachers; and suggests ways of raising and preserving the child's self-esteem. She provides exercises, teaching aids, information on computer programs, and many other invaluable resources. In addition, her book corrects such popular (and harmful) myths as the belief that dyslexia is primarily a male problem, that children with dyslexia see words backward, that dyslexia is linked to intelligence. She shows us how, although dyslexia cannot be outgrown, its effects can, with careful planning and hard work, be overcome. Dr. Shaywitz lifts the barrier of ignorance surrounding dyslexia and replaces it with the comfort of knowledge. Here is a trusted source to which you can turn for information, advice, guidance, and explanation. In sum, here is cutting-edge research translated into an easy-to-follow plan of action offering help—and hope—to all who have reading problems, and their families. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As an adult and scientist with dyslexia, I always wanted to understand the physical mechanism behind the disability. I could never understand why I scored average to low in multiple-choice tests but scored high in reading comprehension. Why I excelled in physical science and math yet was constantly taking remedial writing and English? Dr. Shaywitz's book is excellent in answering these questions. The first step in treatment is understanding the mechanism. A miswiring of the phonologic module explains so much and suggests likely remedies. Her book is written in layman's terms and is easy to read and understand. I wish I could give a copy of this book to all my friends and family it explains so much. Dr. Shaywitz knows her audience and writes with compassion and personal touch. The best part was learning that dyslexia can now be seen to have a physical manifestation by fMRI. Dyslexia is no longer a mysterious disability but has actual biological roots. Most disturbing to read was that in her estimates, 1 in 5 children have some form of dyslexia. As a child that almost slipped through the cracks, I failed kindergarten because I didn't know my ABC's, this is distressing to learn. How many intelligent and potentially successful adults were allowed to fail due to dyslexia? It was only through the diligence of my mother that I ever learned to read. Thirty years ago little was understood about "word blindness" but my mother did the primary research and tried every goofy theory on teaching including writing letters on my back with her finger and asking me to name the letter. Now Dr. Shaywitz gives good advice as well as current research and resources so parents have it all in one book. If you had only one book on dyslexia this would be it. I can't recommend this book highly enough. I give it many more stars than I'm allowed.

This would be a wonderful book - worth 5 stars - were it not for the title. This book is not about "Overcoming Dyslexia" so much as it is about "Coping with Dyslexia". There is no "New" Program for Reading Problems but rather a detailed description of a strong phonics and language-based curriculum that has been around for years -- and is geared to the needs of ordinary students, not

dyslexics. This book does give a good overview of the process of learning to read in ordinary children, as well an explanation of some of the differences in the way dyslexic children learn and read, and an excellent overview of good curriculum materials available and in use in many schools today. It also give a wonderful and very readable summary of Dr. Shaywitz's own research into reading and dyslexia -- but Shaywitz's theories are not universally accepted, and the book does not analyze or compare the research done by the dozens of other prominent researchers in the field of dyslexia. As another review noted, the book also suffers from a sort of split personality -- in the first section it outlines the many aspects of the dyslexic learning style that are different from typical children, and then the section on reading instruction recommends many of the very same techniques that the first part said were inappropriate for dyslexics. For example, in one part the author points out the difficulty of rote learning for dyslexics; in the next part she recommends using flash cards for drill and memorization of common sight words. Ever since the pioneering work of Samuel Orton, educators have known that dyslexics learn best by "multisensory" methods -- but this book does not include an explanation of the importance of such teaching, or even a list of the most commonly used tutoring methods for dyslexia. Worse - while parents are bombarded with information about one new approach after another --- this book barely mentions the availability of private tutoring or therapy, let alone give parents any means to evaluate the various competing approaches that might be recommended for their children. Dr. Shaywitz is one of a number of researchers who have contributed immensely to the understanding of dyslexia -- but she is only one, and this book happens to present an extremely useful but somewhat one-sided view of her work. That is certainly an appropriate book for her to write; but it would have been better with an honest title that didn't promise more than it delivered. The harm that this book can do is that it might mislead parents into being complacent when their children are struggling. At one point the author states that parents of children in California have nothing to worry about: their children will certainly learn to read because California has adopted her recommended curriculum. Needless to say, California test scores (among the lowest in the nation) do not bear out her contention. The reality is that dyslexic children, almost by definition, do NOT learn to read with ordinary instruction in regular classrooms -- no matter how good the curriculum. The dyslexic children are the ones on the tail end of the bell curve - the 20% who don't learn by the methods proven effective for the other 80%. They need specialized and individualized support and methods, geared to their unique learning style. While Dr. Shaywitz does a great job exploring that learning style, she fails to apply that knowledge to the art of teaching reading. Dr. Shaywitz is a doctor and a scientist, not an educator - so her book is long on theory and conclusions, short on practical advice. For anyone who is understands enough

about dyslexia to recognize the limits of this book, it is a valuable and essential read. If you want to understand about brain science and dyslexia, this book is a must-have -- AFTER you read the more comprehensive text "Brain Literacy for Educators and Psychologists" by Drs. Virginia Berninger & Todd Richards.

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