

DYSGRAPHIA

PART 2

What it means continued...

Handwriting is a complex Skill requiring a blend of motor, perceptual and orthographic skills.



Challenges in handwriting can be caused by weakness in one or all of these areas so meaningful interventions need to take into consideration the root of the challenge being experienced. For example, an appropriate motor programme may address and strengthen some of the weaknesses being experienced but may not impact on the non-motor weaknesses. The absence of clarity in terms can cause confusion for families seeking a diagnosis (or indeed those who have been given the diagnosis without advice as to its impact). Currently, it seems reasonable to stick with the DSM-V and say that until we have consensus and clear diagnostic tools to measure the type and severity of the condition, the term 'dysgraphia' is meaningless.



Therefore, it should not be used in the way that other developmental disorders' labels are used. The National Handwriting Association encourages the use of the term 'an impairment in written expression' under the

category of "specific learning disorder" (DSM V) or 'a difficulty with orthographic integration (i.e., handwriting)'.

Routes to identification

Because of the lack of consensus, the National Handwriting Association considers the diagnosis of dysgraphia to be unsound. However, it is recognised that many people experience handwriting difficulties. Identification of such difficulties has to be through an educational/clinical psychologist, or an SpLD assessor in the UK, and the exact nature of the difficulty (e. g. motor, orthographic, perceptual) should be stated. Despite it being a relatively common condition, it is sometimes hard to find a person who feels confident to assess it.



Visit us on our website
www.ChallengingChallenges.com
for more information

