

The Study Beyond English Companion: Dyslexia Support

A Guide to Support the Supporters

Study Beyond English 2026

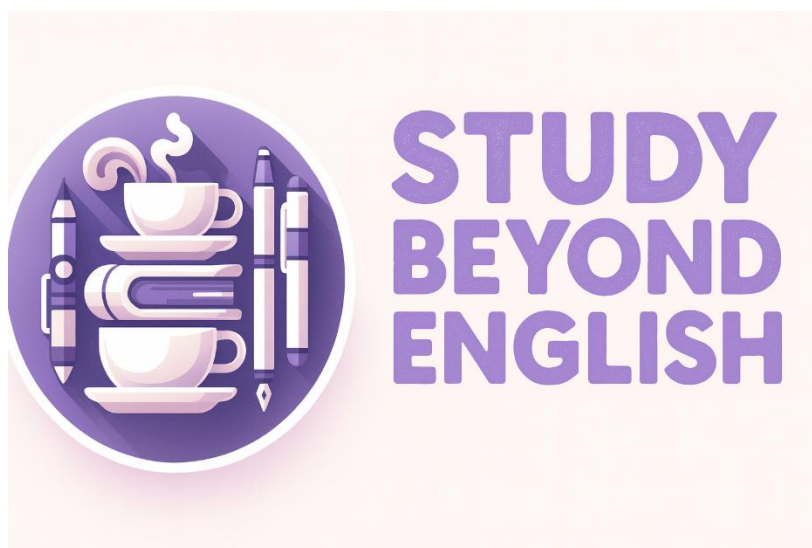
The "Deep Breath" Introduction

A Note from Fliss:

When I invited parents in for a chat, the fear was often palpable. But my starting point was never blame.

My mindset was always: "I am not managing to support your child with what they need yet. Help me understand the barriers."

This guide is your invitation to do the same. We are moving away from the panic of "what they haven't done" and toward the practical tools of "what we can unlock together." Whether it is treating an essay like a maths equation or finding mental clarity in a tidy room, we are here to support the *whole* child – not just the exam candidate.



Dyslexia Tools and Support for GCSE English

Practical guidance for families, teachers and students

Students with dyslexia often work twice as hard to achieve the same outcome as their peers. They may struggle with reading fluency, working memory, processing speed or spelling. These challenges can make GCSE English feel overwhelming. With the right tools and a calm, structured approach, dyslexic learners can thrive. This page brings together clear, practical strategies and dyslexia friendly tools that support confidence, clarity and steady progress.

Understanding dyslexia in secondary school

Dyslexia affects how the brain processes written language. Many students with dyslexia are highly creative, intuitive and strong problem solvers. They often think in images and patterns rather than linear sequences. When they receive the right support, they can achieve excellent results in English.

Common challenges include:

- slow reading speed
- difficulty tracking lines of text
- losing their place
- fatigue during long reading tasks
- difficulty recalling information
- anxiety around reading aloud

These challenges are manageable with the right tools and routines.



Dyslexia-friendly tools that support GCSE English

1. Clear, accessible fonts

Fonts such as Arial, Verdana and OpenDyslexic reduce visual crowding and make letters easier to distinguish. Many students find that switching to a dyslexia-friendly font immediately reduces strain.

2. Coloured overlays and background filters

Some students experience visual stress when reading black text on a white background. Coloured overlays or digital background filters can soften the contrast and make reading more comfortable.

3. Chunked text and shorter paragraphs

Breaking text into smaller sections helps students process information more easily. It also reduces the feeling of being overwhelmed by large blocks of writing.

4. Audio support and text-to-speech tools

Listening to a text while following the words on the page can improve comprehension and reduce fatigue. Many students use audio versions of set texts to support revision.

5. EchoGuide for reading confidence

EchoGuide supports learners with dyslexia by:

- highlighting the next word so they never lose their place
- listening to their voice and offering gentle feedback
- helping them maintain eye contact
- reducing the cognitive load of tracking text
- creating a predictable reading experience



Students who struggle with reading aloud often feel calmer and more in control when using EchoGuide. It is suitable for classroom use and home practice.

6. Revision tools designed for dyslexia

Dyslexia-friendly revision tools include:

- mind maps
- colour-coded notes
- visual summaries
- step-by-step guides
- scaffolded writing frames

These tools help students organise information in ways that match their thinking style.

How to support a learner with dyslexia at home

Parents play a powerful role in helping their child feel confident and capable. You can support your child by:

- keeping reading sessions short and positive
- using audio support when needed
- encouraging breaks to prevent fatigue
- helping them create colour-coded revision notes
- focusing on understanding rather than speed
- reminding them that their intelligence is not defined by spelling or reading pace

Small, consistent routines make a significant difference.

How teachers can support students with dyslexia in GCSE English

Teachers can create inclusive classrooms by:

- offering extra processing time



- providing chunked text
- using clear fonts
- avoiding rapid reading rounds
- modelling calm, steady reading
- allowing students to use supportive tools
- checking understanding in small steps

These adjustments help learners with dyslexia feel safe enough to participate and practise.

Managing reading anxiety linked to dyslexia

Many students with dyslexia experience anxiety when reading aloud. This is a natural response to past experiences of difficulty or embarrassment. You can help by:

- normalising mistakes
- offering choice
- practising in low pressure moments
- using EchoGuide to support pace and tracking
- celebrating clarity rather than speed

Confidence grows when students feel understood and supported.

Dyslexia and the GCSE Spoken Language assessment

The Spoken Language endorsement is an opportunity for students with dyslexia to shine. It focuses on communication rather than reading or writing. Students can prepare by:

- choosing a topic they care about
- practising short talks
- using cue cards with minimal text
- rehearsing in calm, familiar environments

EchoGuide can support eye contact and pacing during practice.



A final message for learners with dyslexia

Dyslexia does not limit your potential. It simply means your brain works in a different way. With the right tools, steady routines and supportive adults, you can succeed in GCSE English and beyond. Your strengths are real. Your voice matters. You deserve to feel confident in your learning.

A final message for parents and teachers

Your calm presence and your belief in your child make a profound difference. When you create an environment where reading feels safe and mistakes are treated as part of learning, students with dyslexia begin to relax. Confidence grows in spaces where young people feel understood. Study Beyond English is here to support you in building those spaces.





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