



DiverseMind

Exercise 1

Specific learning difficulties

From Strength to Strategy: Supporting Dyslexic Learners

Name of the Tool

From Strength to Strategy: Supporting Dyslexic Learners

Objectives of the Tool

Raise awareness of the strengths of students with dyslexia.

Encourage the transformation of educational challenges into opportunities for development.

Develop the ability to design strategies based on the strengths of students.

Build a supportive and neuro-inclusive attitude in the everyday work of teachers.

Strengthen the ability to cooperate and share good practices within the team.



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Introduction of the Tool

This interactive, three-stage exercise helps participants identify the strengths of students with dyslexia and transform them into specific educational strategies. By working in pairs and small groups, participants develop a practical approach to lesson planning that not only supports but also actively utilises neuroatypical abilities.

Applying of the Tool: Clear steps

Starter activity 1 - this should catch the students' interest and engage prior learning. Pair work is great here to help students with retention issues. The starter is visual, it involves discussion.

Activity 2: Strength-to-Strategy Match (20 minutes)

Activity: Small Group Task – “Make It Work”

Instructions:

Each group receives cards or a list containing:

- Common strengths of dyslexic learners
- Typical classroom tasks (e.g., reading comprehension, note-taking, spelling tests, group projects)

Task:

Match each strength to ways the pupil can approach or contribute to the task effectively.

Example Matches:

- Creative thinker → Use mind maps or visual storytelling to summarize reading
- Good verbal communicator → Share ideas orally instead of written responses
- Big-picture thinker → Lead group discussions or presentations
- Artistic strength → Design visuals, posters, or illustrations for class content

Outcome:

A bank of classroom strategies that build on what learners do well, rather than trying to “fix” what they struggle with.



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Activity 3: Reflect and Apply (15–20 minutes)

Activity: Individual or Pair Planning – “Tomorrow’s Classroom”

Instructions: Ask participants to write or discuss:

- A pupil they’ve worked with who has dyslexia
- One strength they’ve observed in that pupil
- A subject or task that’s been a challenge
- One way they can adjust the task to leverage the pupil’s strength

Optional: Share ideas in small groups or post them on a “Strength Wall” for inspiration.

Key Takeaway:

Dyslexia may present challenges in reading and writing, but it also comes with incredible potential. When we recognise and build on the strengths of dyslexic learners, we create inclusive, empowering classrooms where everyone can thrive.

Timing

45-60 minutes

Extra materials for implementation

Cards, pens, coloured paper



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Exercise 2

Specific learning difficulties

The Power of Format

Name of the Tool

The Power of Format

Objectives of the Tool

Make participants aware of what dysgraphia is and how it affects the writing process.

Increase empathy and reflection on students' experiences of frustration, fatigue and demotivation.

Show the difference in the effectiveness and assessment of a student's work depending on the tool used (hand vs. computer).

Encourage the adaptation of assessment criteria and wider use of assistive technologies.

Strengthen teachers' ability to recognise where a student's difficulty ends and their potential begins.



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Introduction of the Tool

This two-part, engaging exercise allows participants to experience the difficulties faced by students with dysgraphia through multisensory writing and analysis of sample work. By comparing handwriting and computer writing and evaluating students' work, participants gain a better understanding of how form influences content, assessment and student emotions.

The exercise promotes empathy, conscious assessment and demonstrates the value of assistive technology in working with students with special educational needs.

Applying of the Tool: Clear steps

Part 1: Awareness Activity – Gather Writing Samples – Type and Write (10–15 minutes)

Activity: Multisensory creative writing

Instructions: Participants complete a short 250-word writing activity:

- 100 Words must be handwritten
- 150 words typed
- Students should be provided with visual prompts: inspiring images, etc.

Goal: To help educators establish dysgraphia as the key difficulty and not other SLDs. Students will also be encouraged to check for difference in grades when using Assistive Technology

Debrief Questions:

How did you feel during that task?

What helped or made it worse?

What might a pupil need in that moment?



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Part 2: Identify the Challenges (15–20 minutes)

Activity: Participants will identify 3 challenges faced by students with dysgraphia

Instructions:

Some teachers will be given a piece of writing written by a student with dysgraphia others will be given that same piece but in typed format.

Participants will grade the work they have in front of them according to a standard grading criterion.

Task:

Compare the grades between the written and typed pieces

Goal:

Understand how weaknesses appear in class and how to adapt grading accordingly

Timing

40 minutes

Extra materials for implementation

Notepads, pens



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Exercise 3

Specific learning difficulties Soft Skills for Strong Minds

Name of the Tool

Soft Skills for Strong Minds

Objectives of the Tool: Clear steps

This tool is designed to equip educators and caregivers with practical soft skills techniques that support students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) in both classroom and home settings. The key objectives are to:

1. Enhance communication with students through active listening, empathy, and clear language that validates their experiences and reduces frustration.
2. Promote emotional well-being by modeling patience, supporting emotional regulation, and creating safe, predictable environments.
3. Foster motivation and self-esteem using strengths-based feedback, positive reinforcement, and personalized encouragement.



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Introduction of the Tool

Supporting students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs) goes beyond academic strategies—it starts with human connection. This tool introduces soft skills techniques that help build trust, reduce stress, and create a safe, inclusive environment where every student feels seen and supported.

Through empathy, clear communication, and emotional awareness, educators and caregivers can make a powerful difference in the daily experiences of neurodivergent learners—both in the classroom and at home.

Applying of the Tool: Clear steps

Students with SLDs benefit from consistent, supportive communication, and strategies that reduce frustration and build self-esteem. These soft skills techniques help create an inclusive, empowering environment.

1. Active Listening

Why it helps: Validates student challenges and builds trust.

Classroom tip:

- Give full attention and allow extra time to express thoughts.
- Acknowledge feelings: “I hear this was tough—let’s work through it together.”

At home: Let them talk through frustrations without rushing to solve.

2. Empathy & Patience

Why it helps: Reduces anxiety and supports emotional regulation.

Classroom tip:

- Avoid judgment; respond calmly to mistakes or off-task behavior.
- Offer breaks when signs of overload appear.

At home: Reassure, don’t compare. A calm tone works wonders.



3. Clear, Positive Communication

Why it helps: Prevents misunderstandings and supports focus.

Classroom tip:

- Give short, step-by-step instructions.
- Use visual aids and written directions when possible.

At home: Use timers, checklists, or visual schedules to reinforce tasks.

4. Positive Reinforcement

Why it helps: Builds self-esteem and encourages effort.

Classroom tip:

- Praise specific behaviors: “Great job using your strategy!”
- Focus on effort, not just outcomes.

At home: Recognize small wins—“You kept trying even when it was hard.”

5. Emotional Regulation Support

Why it helps: SpLDs often come with emotional frustration.

Classroom tip:

Teach simple coping strategies (deep breaths, safe space).

Normalize mistakes as part of learning.

At home: Use consistent routines and talk through big emotions calmly.

6. Flexibility

Why it helps: Supports students who learn or behave differently.

Classroom tip:

Offer alternative ways to complete tasks (oral, visual, hands-on).

Adjust pace and expectations based on needs.

At home: Adapt chores and learning to their strengths and energy levels.

7. Build Rapport

Why it helps: Trust improves engagement and motivation.

Classroom tip:

Show interest in their hobbies and strengths.

Greet them by name, celebrate small progress.

At home: Spend quality one-on-one time regularly.



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8. Collaborate with Families

Why it helps: Reinforces consistency and shared strategies.

Classroom tip:

Keep communication simple and solution-focused.

Share both challenges and successes.

At home: Let teachers know what helps your child stay calm and focused.

Final Note:

Soft skills aren't just for students—they're a vital toolkit for teachers and parents supporting learners with SLDs. With empathy, structure, and encouragement, we can create spaces where every student can thrive.

Timing

45-60 min

Extra materials for implementation

No additional materials are required, but you can use your imagination and creativity to enrich each exercise.



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