

The Word Gobblers

Glossary

ADHD. *See* Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. The disorder includes a combination of problems, including impulsive behavior. Symptoms can vary from person to person.

autism. Autism disorder impacts the nervous system and falls on a scale from mild to severe. Symptoms can include difficulty with communication and social interactions, obsessive interests, and repetitive behaviors.

decoding skills. Decoding involves taking apart the sounds in words. This ability is a key skill for learning to read. It helps children sound out unfamiliar words.

dyslexia. Dyslexia is a learning disorder that involves difficulty reading due to problems with a child's or adult's ability to decode.

Irlen Certified Screener. Screeners are trained to interview and administer a series of tests to determine if an individual is suffering from Irlen Syndrome.

Irlen Certified Diagnostician. Diagnosticians are trained to perform the same evaluation that Screeners perform to determine if someone is likely to have Irlen Syndrome. They are additionally trained in the exacting method of testing those with Irlen Syndrome in order to create each individual's specific formula for Irlen Spectral Filters.

Irlen Colored Overlays. These overlays are specially formulated colored plastic sheets used over black ink on white paper and on computer screens. They ease the symptoms of those suffering from Irlen Syndrome by changing the high contrast black ink on white background to a color that the user's brain can more easily process.

Irlen Reading Perception Scale. This scale measures the level of perceptual difficulty and discomfort on a scale from 0 to 18 (severe) when looking at black patterns and text on a white background. This assessment is administered by an Irlen Screener or Diagnostician.

Irlen Spectral Filters. Spectral Filters are worn like eyeglasses. They are precision-tinted at the Irlen Institute for each individual. These lenses filter out the exact wavelengths of light creating perceptual difficulties and can improve problems with reading, headaches, migraines, dizziness, and depth perception.

Irlen Syndrome. Irlen Syndrome is a malfunction in the light wave or color processing center of the brain. It causes varied symptoms, one being difficulty with reading.

learning disabilities. These are any condition giving rise to difficulties in acquiring knowledge and skills at the level expected of those of the same age. The problems experienced vary from person to person, but may include difficulty learning new things, communication, managing money, personal care, reading and writing.

light waves. Light (waves) enables us to see the world around us. Some light waves are visible, while others are invisible. Light waves are measured in nano- meters or nm. The human eye can see light waves from 390 nm to 700 nm. It is within this range of light waves that colors are produced that the human eye can see. These are the light waves that enter your eye and travel to your brain creating the image you see. Violet light is on the top of this spectrum while red light is on the bottom. Ultraviolet, as the name indicates, is above 700 nm and is invisible to the human eye.

Offlite bulbs. These bulbs are color correcting, meaning the colors you see under these lights are close to what you would see under direct sunlight at noon on a cloudless day.

Other types of bulbs, such as incandescent and fluorescent, distort colors, causing problems for those who suffer from Irlen Syndrome. These can include headaches, migraines, dizziness, and distortions when reading.

phoneme. A unit of sound that distinguishes one word from another. English contains 19 vowel sounds and 25 consonant sounds for a total of 44 distinct sounds.

phonetic skills. The ability to sound out unfamiliar words by learning the basic five skills or rules needed to read the English language. These skills need to be mastered to become a good reader. These include:

1. When one consonant and nothing more follows the vowel, the vowel will be short, such as in the word *bat*.
2. When the vowel is followed by two consonants and nothing more, the vowel will be short, such as *call*.
3. When a vowel stands alone, it will be long, such as *I*
4. When a word ends with a silent E the first vowel will be long, such as *make*.
5. When vowels are next to each other, the second vowel is silent and the first vowel is long, such as *boat*.

sight vocabulary. A set of words that a child can immediately recognize without use of decoding strategies. Many sight words cannot be sounded out, so mastery of these words is one key component to success in reading. There are over two hundred of these words. Examples include: *enough, right, sign, laugh, again, know, once, said, and where*.

spectrum. Any scale used to classify or measure something in terms of its position on a scale between two extremes or opposite points. Autism is classified this way, as is Irlen Syndrome.

Resources

BOOKS

Calkins, Lucy, with Lydia Bellino. *Raising Lifelong Learners: A Parent's Guide*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books, 1997.

This book explains the importance of what and how a child learns at home. It shows ways to turn a home into a rich learning environment and offers chapters on the usual classroom subjects of reading, writing, and math, but also on play and chores. The information in this book can supplement learning in a traditional school setting or offer guidance to those who homeschool.

Irlen, Helen L. *Certified Irlen Screener's Information Handbook*. Long Beach, CA: Irlen Institute International Headquarters, 2018.

Continuously updated Screener's manual with training materials, questionnaires, intake forms, and research information.

Irlen, Helen L. *The Irlen Revolution: How a Simple Method Can Change the Lives of Children and Adults with LD, AD/HD, TBI, Dyslexia, Autism, Headaches, Medical Conditions, and Much More*. Garden City Park, NY: Square One Publishers, 2010.

An updated version of Helen Irlen's first book, *The Irlen Revolution* contains the latest information and discoveries involving perceptual processing problems and how all aspects of life can be affected, from reading and writing to depth perception to medical and psychological conditions.

Irlen, Helen L. *Reading by the Numbers: Overcoming Dyslexia and Other Reading Disabilities through the Irlen Method*. New York, NY: Perigee Books, 1991, 2005.

This second edition explains the science behind learning disabilities caused by a perceptual processing problem within the brain. Through the use of brain-imaging techniques that were not available when the book was first published in 1991, the reader will learn why one in six people worldwide suffer from a condition now called Irlen Syndrome. The book offers steps that can be taken to assess if that condition applies and steps that can be taken to ease or eliminate the symptoms.

Irlen, Helen L. *Sports Concussions and Getting Back in the Game of Life: A solution for Concussion Symptoms including Headaches, Light Sensitivity, Poor Academic Performance, Anxiety and Others*. Long Beach, CA: Helen Irlen, 2015.

Sports and combat related brain injuries often produce long term, debilitating physical symptoms, including headaches, dizziness, nausea, light sensitivity, memory loss, blurred vision, and irritability. The same methods that ease the symptoms of Irlen Syndrome, a light processing problem within the brain can also relieve the symptoms of these type of injuries.

Jordan, Dale R. *Overcoming Dyslexia in Children, Adolescents, and Adults*. Austin, TX: PRO-ED., Inc., 1996.

Starting with the history of dyslexia, this book takes the reader through the twentieth century workplace, visual and auditory dyslexia, and how individuals with this learning disability can achieve success.

WEBSITES

Irlen Institute

Website: www.irlen.com

This website offers the most up to date information and research on Irlen Syndrome. The website includes videos of children reading with and without colored overlays and with and without Irlen Spectral Filters. Questionnaires are provided to self-assess whether one may have Irlen Syndrome. The viewer can also use the site to find local Certified Irlen Screeners or Diagnosticians.

The Reading Well—a virtual well of dyslexia resources

Website: Dyslexia-Reading-Well.com

Their mission is to help parents and teachers understand dyslexia and connect to resources. They provide a well-defined section on phonemes—the smallest units of speech sound that convey a unique meaning.