

CAMBRIDGE DYSLEXIA AWARENESS ACTIVITIES



October 4, 2019 at 6:15pm (Sunset Ceremony)

Light it Red at City Hall

795 Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge, MA 02139

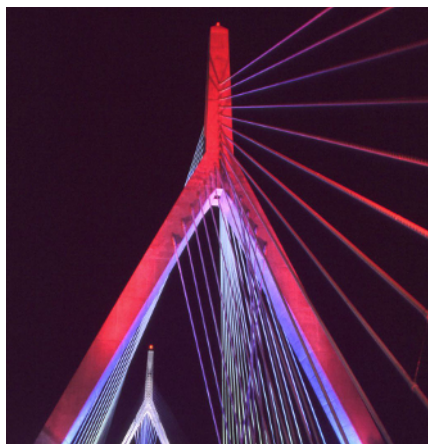
DYSLEXIA COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR

October 19th, 1:00pm - 5:00pm

Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School

459 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02138

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Barbara Wilson, Author & Co-Founder of the Wilson Reading System®



DECODING DYSLEXIA MA LIGHT IT RED CEREMONY THE ZAKIM BRIDGE

October 19th at 6:00pm (Sunset)

Decoding Dyslexia MA

Light It Red Ceremony

The Zakim Bridge

Paul Revere Park, Charlestown

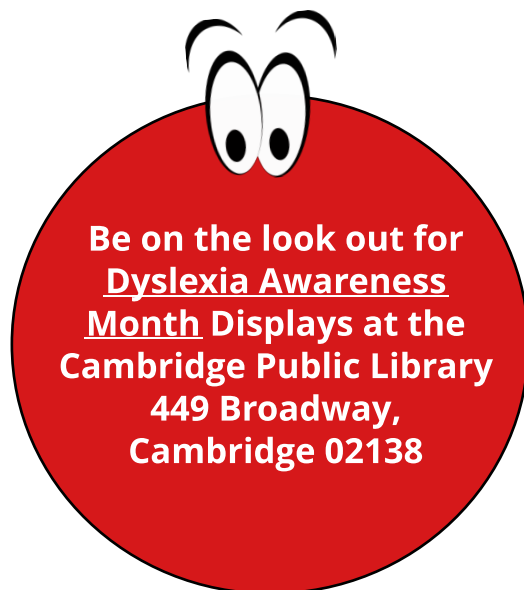
READ ALOUD!
(Ask your child's teacher!)

Cambridge Public Schools Dyslexia Awareness
Classroom Read Alouds of The Alphabet War

GET INVOLVED

If you are interested in serving on the event planning subcommittee or volunteering, please contact
zqueen-postell@cpsd.us or
soto.mercedesm@gmail.com

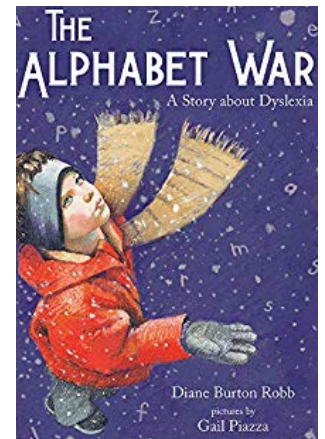
Planning Meetings: Wednesdays, 12:00pm-1:30pm



HOW TO TALK ABOUT THE BOOK

The Alphabet War by Diane Burton Robb and Gail Piazza uses metaphors and beautiful illustrations to describe what it feels like to be dyslexic. The important message to stress when reading this book is that different does not mean worse or bad. As educators, it is our job to celebrate divergent thinkers and students with learning differences. This book helps to demystify what it feels like to be dyslexic in a traditional classroom setting. As with all learning differences, be careful not to identify children with learning differences, but celebrate their strengths without singling them out. Make celebrating different approaches to problem-solving a regular part of your classroom learning and sharing.

Source: "The Alphabet War." Albert Whitman & Co. (2019).
<https://www.albertwhitman.com/book/the-alphabet-war/>



OBJECTIVES



- Activate prior knowledge about diversity by exploring the words *different*, *unique*, *similar*, and *inclusion*.
- Deepen their understanding of what the term *diversity* means.
- Use oral and listening skills during shared reading of the text, *The Alphabet War: A Story About Dyslexia*: by Diane Burton Robb.
- Further their knowledge about the term diversity through pre-and post-reading activities and whole-class discussions.

Source: Price, Karla. "It's Okay to Be Different." Read Write Think. 2019. <http://bit.ly/2ngpq1M>

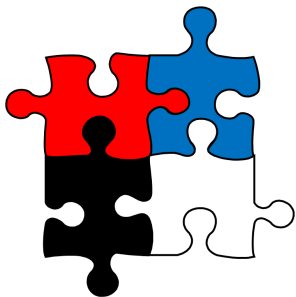
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. What do you think the author means by "Alphabet War?" Why does Adam feel like he is in a war? (p. 5)
2. Why do you think Adam needed to shut out the "Alphabet War?" How do you think he was feeling when he started to daydream? (p. 7)
3. How do you think Adam was feeling when he realized that his friends were so far ahead of him in reading? (p. 15)
4. Do you think that people learn differently? Why or why not? Use your personal experiences in class and the text to support your idea. (p. 17)
5. How did Mr. Chase help Adam feel successful? Share a time that you felt successful in class. What made you feel that way? (p. 25)

Source: "The Alphabet War." Albert Whitman & Co. (2019). <http://bit.ly/2lC8eTP>

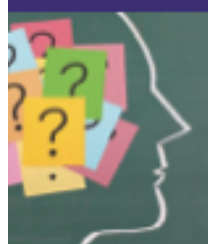
ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES



1. Review Article and short video from the Today Show: <https://on.today.com/2napaBi>
2. Read the Dyslexia Reverse Poem as a class (see handout)
 - A. Do you think reading this poem would help students like Adam? In what way?
 - B. What message do you hear when you read the poem from top to bottom?
 - C. How does the message change when we read it from the bottom to the top?
 - D. What do you think is the author's purpose for writing the poem?
 - E. What can we learn about dyslexia from reading this poem?
3. Try to write your own reverse poem about a challenge you've faced.

Source: Author of Poem, Unknown;

Discussion Questions: Soto, Mercedes (2019).



What Is Dyslexia? A Look at the Definition

IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD MAY BE DYSLEXIC:

1 Don't wait! Early identification and intervention are key

2 Share this tip sheet with your child's teacher and start a conversation

3 Ask the school to assess your child's reading skill development

4 Seek the support and resources of LD professionals, such as Learning Ally's Parent Support Specialists at 800.635.1403

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability (SLD) that is neurological in origin.

It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. These difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction.

Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.

*Adopted by the International Dyslexia Association's Board of Directors, November 12, 2002.
This definition is also used by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).*

• DIFFICULTIES WITH ACCURATE AND/OR FLUENT WORD RECOGNITION

Word Recognition is the ability of a reader to recognize written words correctly and virtually effortlessly. It entails a reader's ability to recognize words individually—from a list, for example—without the benefit of surrounding words or pictures for contextual help. Rapid and effortless word recognition is the main component of fluent reading.

• POOR SPELLING AND DECODING ABILITIES

Spelling, also called "encoding," is the process of using sound-symbol relationships to transpose speech into writing. **Decoding**, also called "phonics" or "word analysis," is the process of using sound-symbol relationships to figure out unfamiliar words, transposing them from print into speech. Spelling and reading are closely connected. Good readers can decode words correctly with little mental effort and are able to spell at levels close to their word reading ability.

• DEFICIT IN THE PHONOLOGICAL COMPONENT OF LANGUAGE

Phonological Awareness is a broad skill set that includes identifying and manipulating units of oral language—parts such as phonemes, syllables, and onsets and rimes. It is an important and reliable predictor of later reading ability. **Phonemic Awareness**, a subset of phonological awareness, is the ability to recognize that speech is made up of a sequence of sounds (phonemes) that can be manipulated—changed, added, or subtracted—to form different words: back, black, block, blob, bob.

• SECONDARY CONSEQUENCES

If the underlying skills described above are weak, students may find reading to be difficult and laborious and therefore, they will read less. **Reduced Reading Experience** can impact the **Growth of Vocabulary and Background Knowledge** which are required along with fluency, word recognition and decoding skills for strong **Reading Comprehension**.

To learn more about dyslexia and to take Learning Ally's online dyslexia screener, visit LearningAlly.org