

# Dyslexia and Careers

- Independent
- Dyslexia
- Consultants

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# The adult years

- The longest but least studied.
- Dyslexic adults are not just dyslexic children grown up.  
(Patton & Polloway, 1996)
- Dyslexic children are dyslexic adults who have yet to grow up.

# Reasons for not disclosing

- I never thought it would apply to work
- I was afraid to be found out – they might have taken the job away
- They would think I couldn't do the job
- People would look down on you
- I was embarrassed
- I didn't think it was my place to ask for those things
- I would feel like a burden if they gave me anything extra

# Dyslexia - the myths

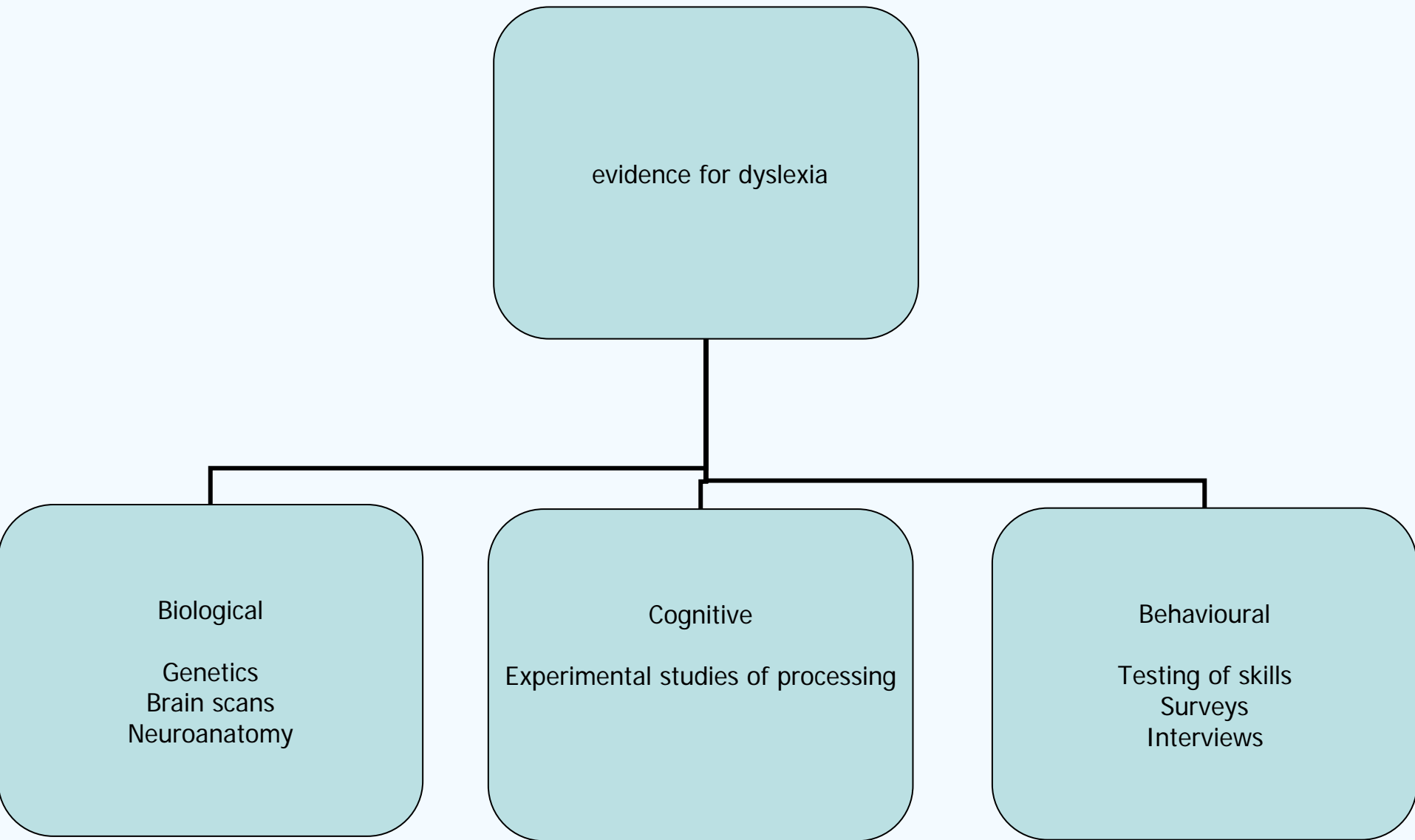
- Dyslexia is a reading/spelling problem – an educational issue
- Dyslexia doesn't exist – its an excuse
- Dyslexic people lack intelligence
- Dyslexic people are incompetent
- Dyslexic people need a lot of help

# What is dyslexia?

- ‘There is no contradiction in saying that a person is dyslexic whilst nevertheless being a competent reader.’
- ‘Dyslexia is a syndrome – a family of lifelong manifestations that show themselves in many other ways than poor reading.’  
(Tim Miles, 1990, 1998)
- ‘Literate dyslexic’ is not an oxymoron

# Research evidence for dyslexia

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# Primary characteristics

Those that derive directly from the cognitive difference:

- Reading
- Spelling
- Writing
- Proofreading
- Numeracy
- Organisation
- Social communication

# Transition stress points for adults



- School to Work
- Work Back to Training/Education
- Job Redefinition
- Change of personnel
- Promotion
- Change of Job
- Marriage
- Parenthood
- Retirement

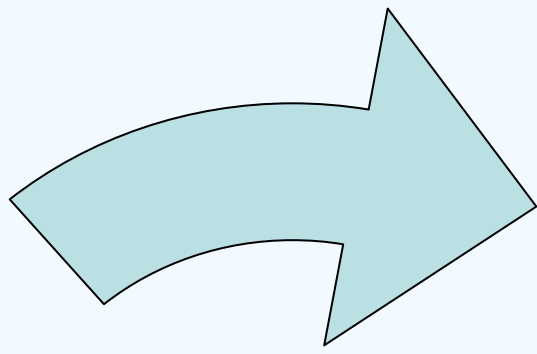
# Secondary characteristics

- Lack of confidence
- Low self-esteem
- Anxiety
- Stress

Sometimes not being able to forget is more of a problem for dyslexic people than not being able to remember.

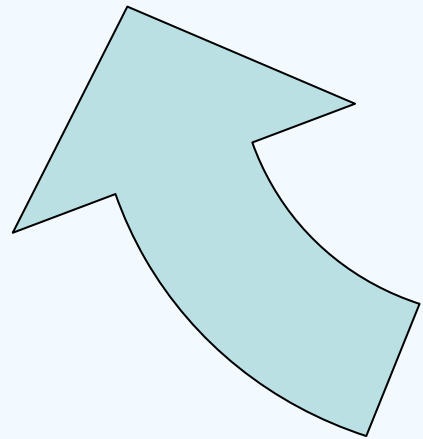
(McLoughlin, 2006)

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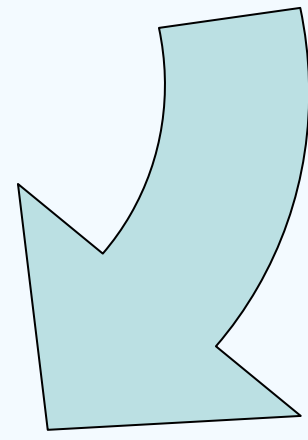


PRIMARY  
DIFFICULTIES

EDUCATIONAL AND  
SOCIAL  
EXPERIENCES



SECONDARY  
DIFFICULTIES



# Positive characteristics

## Cognitive

- Good powers of visualisation
- Artistic talents, particularly where good visuospatial skills are required
- Good practical and problem solving skills
- A 'big picture' approach to problem solving

Is dyslexia a gift?

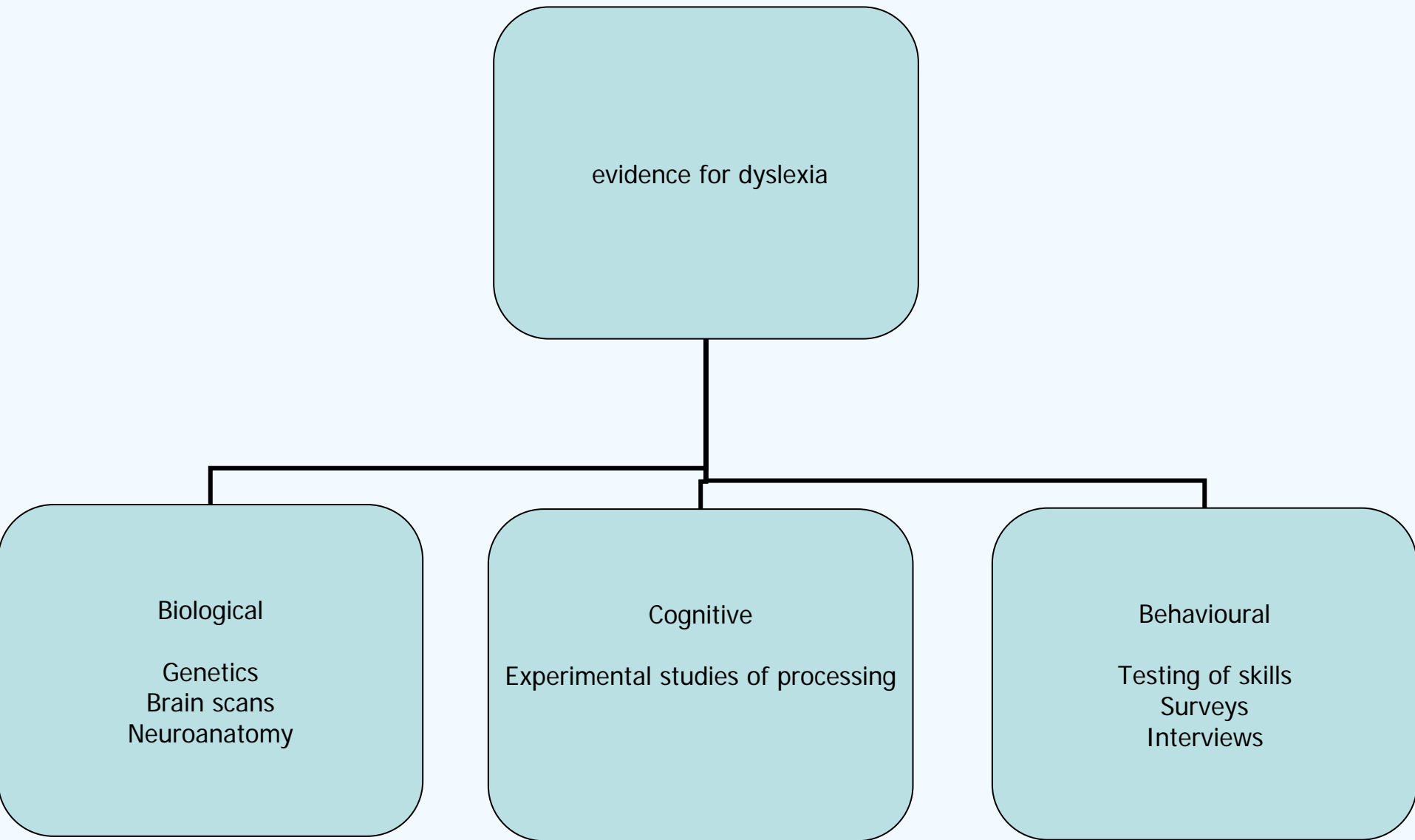
# Positive characteristics

## Affective

- persistent
- determined
- hard working
- resilient

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# Models of dyslexia

- Explain primary difficulties
- Predict what might be difficult in the future
- Provide a rationale for strategy development

# Working Memory

- The memory system fundamental to effective performance in learning and work settings
- Working memory and general intelligence are not identical but are highly related (Conway et.al. 2003)

# Working memory

- Short term storage of auditory, visual and motor input
- facilitating the encoding of information for storage in and retrieval from long term memory



# Working memory

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● Dyslexia  
● Consultants

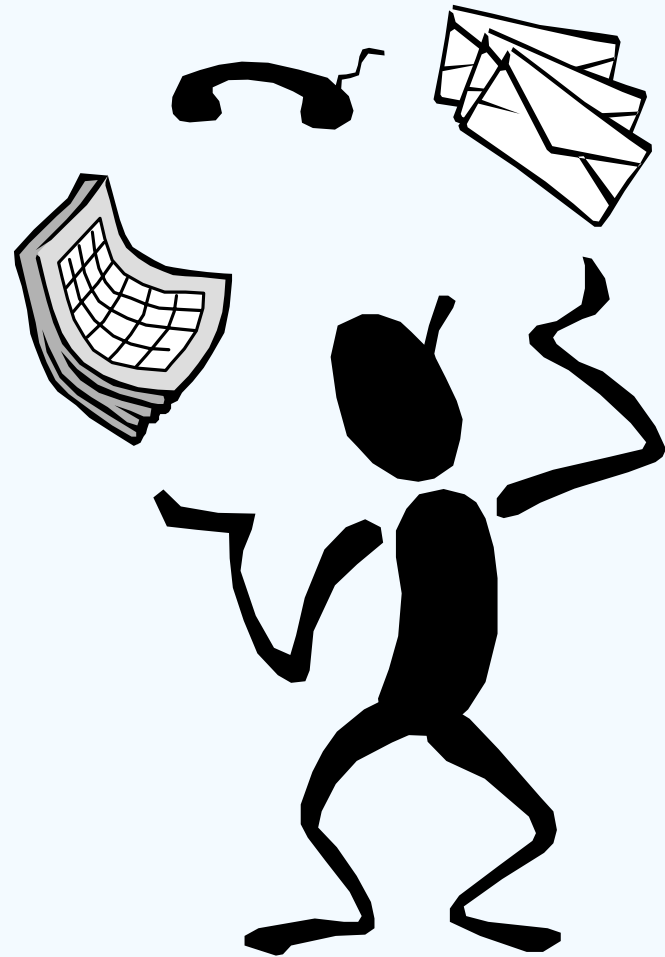
- Enabling the recall of learned material from long term memory



# Working memory

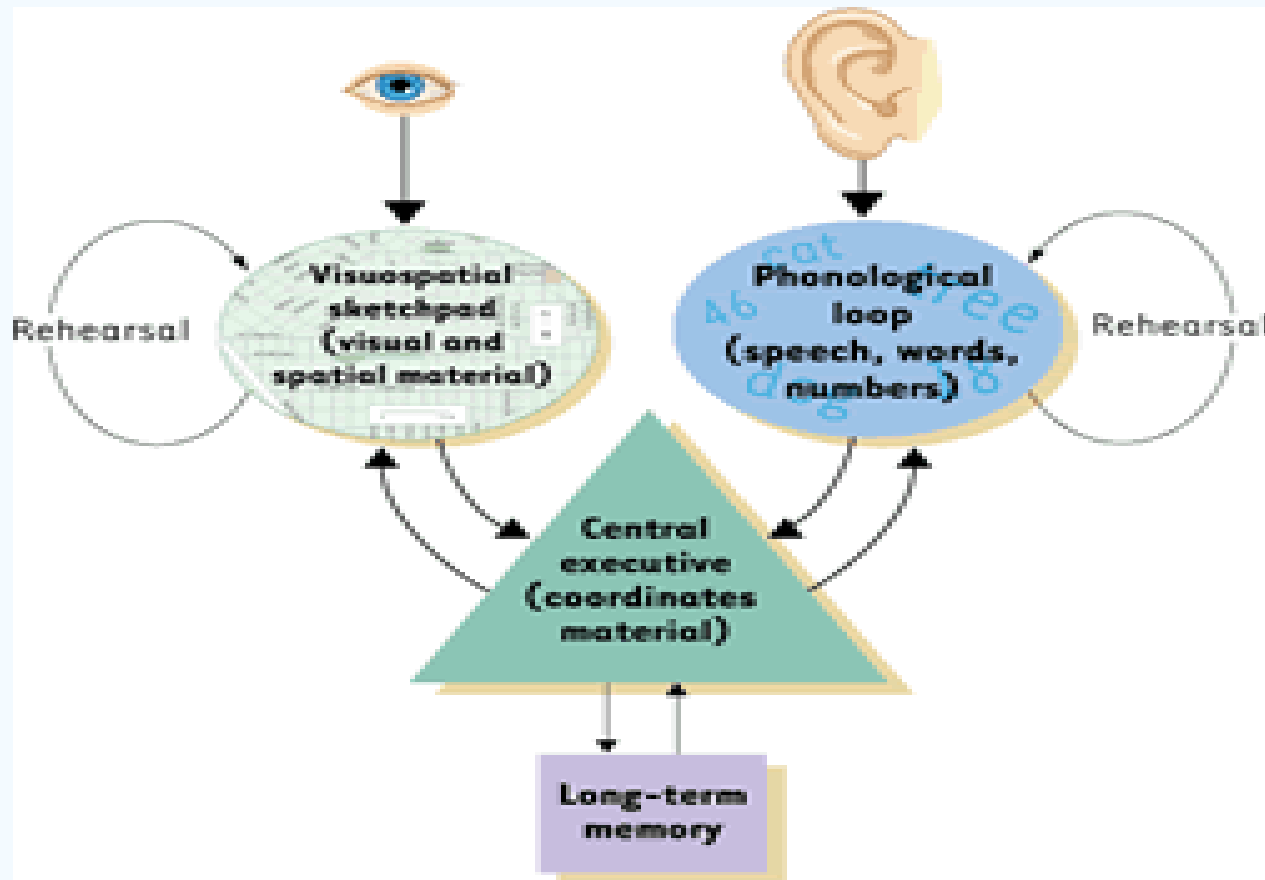
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- Automatic control of a previously learned skill while other incoming information is processed simultaneously.  
Viz. MULTI-TASKING



# Working memory

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# Phonological Loop

## Two components

- Phonological store – speech perception
- Articulatory loop – speech production
  
- It preserves the order in which words are presented
- Limited capacity

# Phonological loop

The function of the phonological loop is not to remember familiar words but to facilitate the acquisition of new words...it provides temporary storage for unfamiliar phonological forms while more permanent memory representations are being constructed.

(Baddely et.al.)

# Visuo-spatial Sketchpad

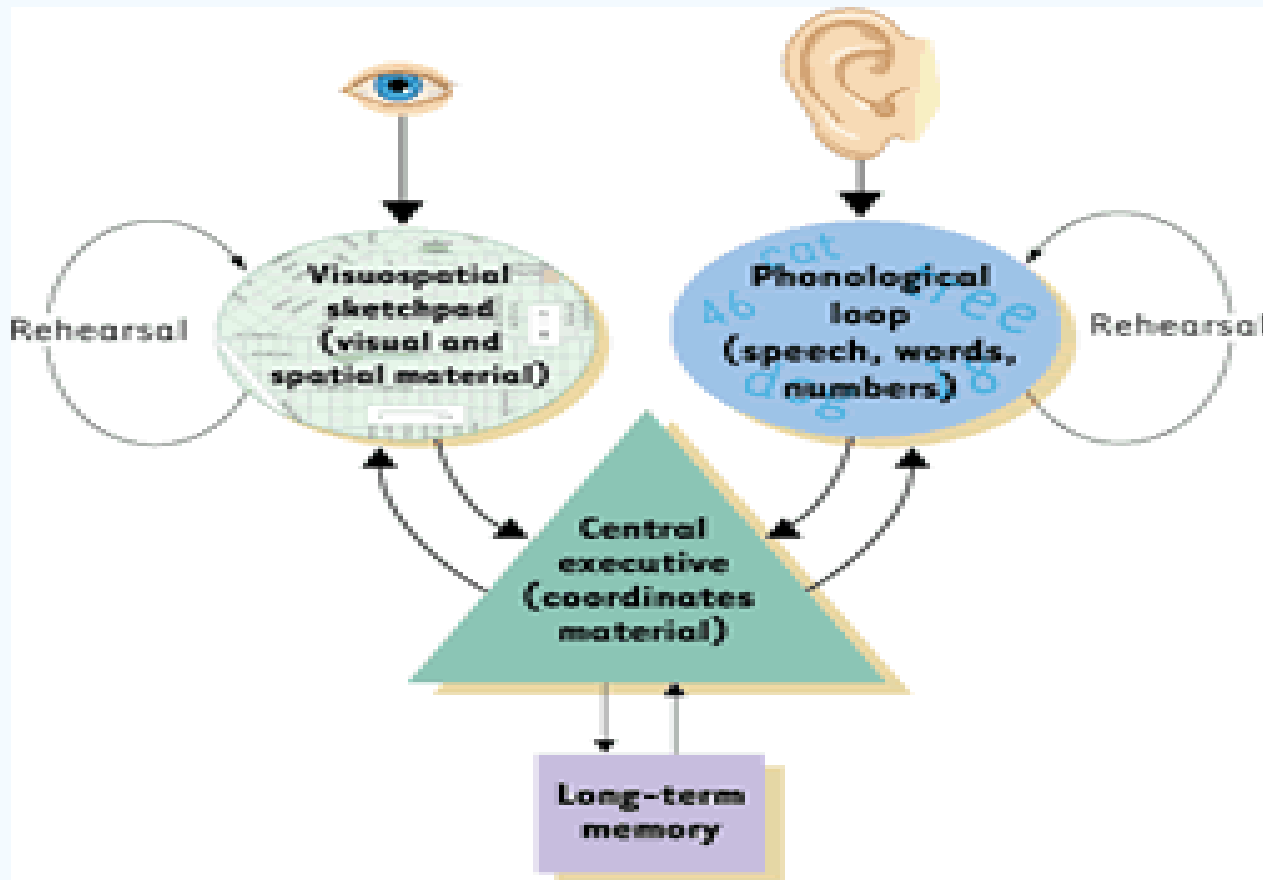
- Storage and manipulation of spatial and visual information
- Limited capacity
- Logie (1995) suggested:  
Visual cache – stores form and colour information  
Inner scribe – spatial and movement information

# Central Executive

- planning
- sequencing
- the ability to sustain attention
- resistance to interference (inhibition)
- utilisation of feedback
- the ability to change set
- the ability to deal with novelty

# Working memory

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When storage demands exceed storage capacity in one of the specific store systems, some central executive capacity must be devoted to storage with the result that fewer resources are available for alternative activities. (Swanson, 1998)

Increasingly taxing working memory resources results in increased difficulty in controlling inhibition. (Pennington, 1996)

# Note taking

- Hold information in working memory
- Select important detail
- Transform
- Transcribe
- Maintain continuity

# GOOD DAYS/BAD DAYS

- Dyslexic and non-dyslexic adults experience good days and bad days
- Non-dyslexic adults define bad days in emotional terms, e.g. moodiness, depression
- Dyslexic adults experience an exacerbation of the difficulties associated with dyslexia (Freeman, 2003)

# What is Success?

Success = Goal achievement

# Dyslexia and success in employment



## Skill Development

- Goal setting - steps to securing and mastering a job
- Re-framing - developing self-understanding

# Diagnostic assessment

- Diagnostic assessment is differential
- It is a process of explanation
- It should lead to better self-understanding
- The content should be appropriate for an adult

# Dyslexia and success in employment



## Skill Development

- Goal setting - steps to mastering job
- Re-framing - developing self-understanding
- Developing skills and strategies-reading comprehension, memory techniques, spelling

# Skill development

- Dealing with dyslexia can and should be a creative experience in that it is about finding solutions.
- So many adults have achieved success in their personal and working lives that it must now be accepted that dyslexia is not an insurmountable barrier.

( McLoughlin et al 1994)

# Dyslexia and success in employment



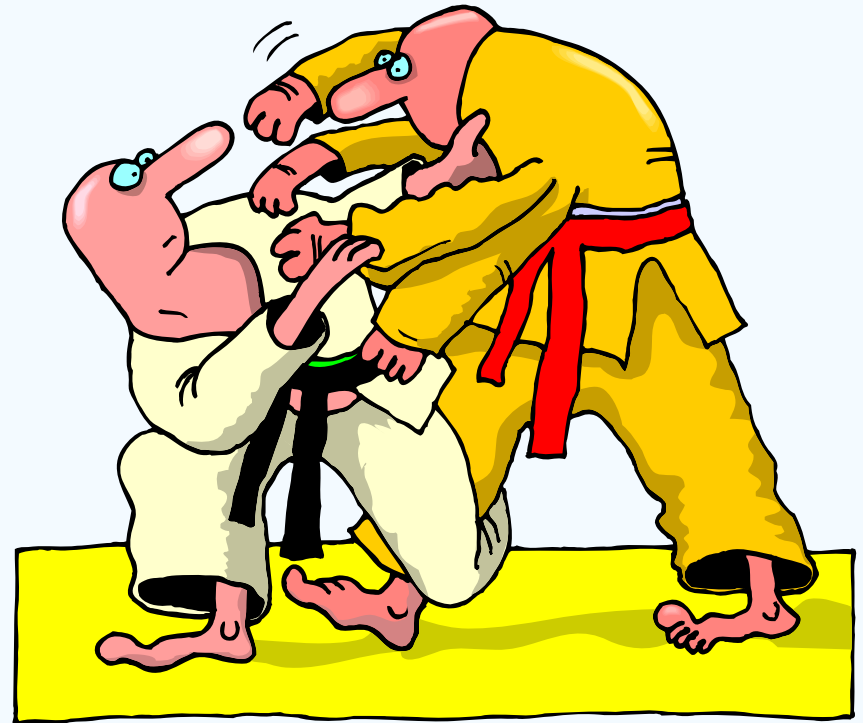
## Compensation

- Finding alternative ways of dealing with tasks – mnemonics for spelling and procedures, use of imagery
- Using technology - portable spell-checker, planning software, text to speech software

# SUCCESS

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- Goodness of Fit



# To tell or not to tell

- When to say something .
- Who to tell.
- What to say.
  
- Explain the problems, offer solutions
- Be positive.
- Say what is needed to work well.
- Have confidence.

# Reframing

- I read slowly -----
- I take a long time to do my work----
- It write slowly-----
- I don't remember people's names-----
- I am always forgetting what to do----
- I often get lost----
- My spelling is dreadful-----
- I don't work as well as others-----

# Summary

- Dyslexia is an information processing difficulty/difference which is neurological in origin and persists across the lifespan
- It affects much more than reading and spelling
- Dyslexic people can be successful in all occupations and at all levels
- Success comes from finding a niche, developing self-understanding, skill development and compensation