

LEARNING DIFFERENCES

ALL

Natalie

- Hi everyone, my name is Natalie and I am a junior.

Cassie

- Hi, my name is Cassie and I am a sophomore.

Clara

- Hi, my name is Clara and I am a junior.

- Today we will be taking to you about learning differences, specifically how they are present within our own community.

Why is this Important?

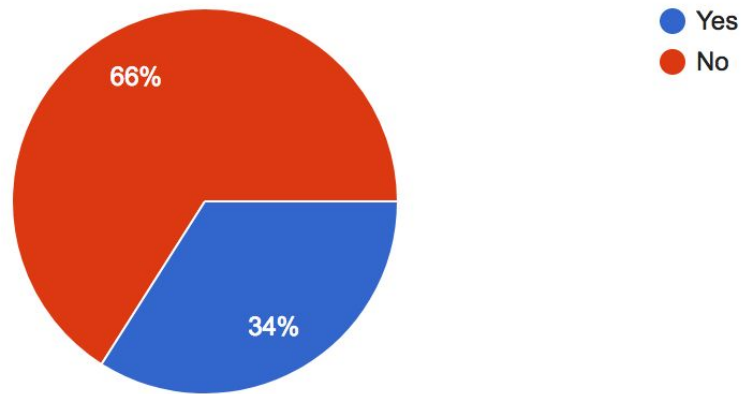
Cassie

- I know that some of you are wondering why we are standing in front of you today.

According to the National Center of Learning Disabilities, 1 in 5 children in the United States have a learning and attention issues such as dyslexia and ADHD. It affects so many of us, yet it is rarely addressed.

Do you have a Learning Difference?

100 responses



Natalie

- Out of a survey sent out to the entire school, we collected 100 responses. And of those, we found that 34% of the student body surveyed had a learning difference.

Misconceptions and Stigmas

Cassie

- When collecting this survey, we also asked the student body some of the misconceptions they have either heard or been told themselves.

There are many misconceptions, some which can even take place here, encouraging the spread of “wrong information” and lack of knowledge.

This is one reason why people can become ashamed, rather than embrace and be comfortable with their difference.

- Here are some of the misconceptions we received from the survey or heard ourselves.

“People don’t understand that my accommodations only exist so I can function at a regular student’s level.”

Natalie

“You’re so LUCKY that you have a learning disability and receive accommodations.”

Clara

“I wish I had a learning disability, so I could get out of taking a language.”

Cassie

**“It is unfair that LD kids get
extra time.”**

Natalie

“LD kids are lazy and have too many excuses for things.”

Cassie

The Learning Center @ LREI

Jonathan and Allison: Allison will wing it :)

What is a Learning Difference?

Natalie

- Learning differences, occasionally called learning disabilities, according to the National Institute of Health, typically involve difficulty with basic reading and language skills.
- LD is an abbreviation sometimes used to mean learning disabilities or differences.
 - Smartness is a term we use a lot in our society, so thinking about “smartness” when talking about learning differences can be confusing. It is important to say here that “smartness” is not connected to learning differences.
 - Learning differences in students are often specific to an area, such as reading or math. The challenges surrounding learning differences arise

- from one's varying ability to perform in academics. For example, a student can have a diagnosis of dyslexia, which is a challenge with reading, and be very strong in areas of logical thinking, such as math. And in English class, a student can be a great writer with terrible spelling.

Examples of Common Learning Difference

Natalie

- For further clarity on this subject we will go through a few learning differences found within our community and their definitions.

DYSCALCULIA

Clara

Dyscalculia, is another Greek word that means a problem with calculating. This refers to: basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division operations.

All students need to learn to process teacher instructional talk during math lessons including understanding math-specific vocabulary and strategies for reading and solving word problems.

ADHD

Information from <http://hallowellnyc.com>

Cassie

ADD, attention deficit disorder, is a misleading name.

ADD is not a learning disorder but rather a collection of traits and tendencies – some positive, some negative – that affect the ability to execute tasks such as planning and organizational skills.

However, (look up) we decided to talk about this here because many people in LREI have ADD and ADHD, which affect their learning.

Many people don't know what the difference is between ADD and ADHD.

When ADD is accompanied by hyperactivity, it is referred to as ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), but the terms ADD and ADHD are often used interchangeably.

ADHD is the more modern term and is used to describe the condition both with, and without, hyperactivity.

But ADD, the old term, is **still** used by many people. Whichever term you use, the important thing to know is that you can have ADHD (or ADD) without showing any signs of hyperactivity or impulsivity whatsoever.

Having ADD does not mean having a slow brain or a brain that cannot focus.

In fact, it's quite the opposite. Having ADD is actually like having a **race-car** brain that goes much faster than other brains and is constantly taking in a lot of different stimuli.

DYSLEXIA

Natalie

Dyslexia comes from the Greek root of “dys,” meaning difficult, and “lexia,” meaning reading. Dyslexia is a neurological condition that makes reading extremely challenging. People with dyslexia often have difficulty with word recognition and struggle with poor spelling, which can lead to problems in reading comprehension and a poor vocabulary.

Another way of thinking about it is that - letters are essentially symbols, and when we learn to read, our brains transform these symbols into sounds and meaning. People with dyslexia have trouble recognizing and processing these phonological symbols. In the classroom, it can look like students with dyslexia are just very slow readers or have trouble understanding the content of what they read. However, dyslexia is separate from understanding complex ideas in that it might just take a longer time to comprehend written information.

DYSGRAPHIA

Clara

“*Dysgraphia* is a Greek word that means a problem with hand writing. Impaired handwriting can interfere with learning to spell words in writing and speed of writing text. People with dysgraphia may have only impaired handwriting, only impaired spelling (without reading problems), or both impaired handwriting and impaired spelling.

Dysgraphia is a learning difference that affects writing abilities and can look as though students have trouble generating ideas, when in fact they only have particular trouble physically putting words on paper. If a student with dysgraphia is a fluent typer, they can overcome these challenges by producing work on their laptop.

Intersectional Lens

Natalie:

It is important in this conversation about Learning Difference at LREI, to comment on the issues around learning disabilities at the national level. The diagnosis of learning disabilities and the support provided to students in schools around the U.S. varies dramatically due to the intersecting issues of race, class, and gender. Public schools do not often have adequate funding to meet the needs of every student, and the process families must go through to get services for their children is very complex and hard to navigate. Thus, many children go without the academic help they need to succeed in school.

In addition, certain marginalized populations are over-diagnosed with certain disabilities, such as ADHD, and then this disability is used to remove students from school settings because the schools can claim that they aren't equipped to serve their particular needs. Consequently, the diagnosis of learning disabilities has been used as another form of oppression for certain groups.

At LREI we have an abundance of resources. Our teachers are available to work with us outside of class and we have places like the Learning Center where all students can go to get help. It is important use our experience to speak out on behalf of others, and to advocate for policies that will protect school rights for children and will help schools get the funding they need to support their students.

Types of Learning Styles

Clara

- The term “learning styles” is used to understand that every student learns differently. It refers to how a student absorbs and comprehends learning materials. The types of learning styles include auditory, verbal, visual, or kinetic.

Auditory

- Auditory learners prefer using sound, rhythms, music, and recordings to help them learn.

Verbal

- Verbal learners prefer using words, both in speech and writing.

Visual

- Visual learners prefer to use pictures, images, diagrams and mindmaps to help them learn.

Kinetic

- Kinetic learners “learn by doing,” such as drawing diagrams or using physical objects. It is often referred to as “hands on learning.”

Legal Terms and Accommodations: Why we are thought of as “DISABLED?”

Natalie

- For those with learning differences, accommodations are seen as a necessity. Many times within the traditional school system, certain disadvantages are put into use, such as standardized testing or the inability to adjust for those with different learning styles.

Cassie

This is also why learning differences are addressed as learning disabilities.

Legally, it is called a disability because the school and work systems give us a disadvantage.

Acknowledging the disadvantage with a label allows for certain accommodations that adapt to different types of learning, like progressive education.

But this is just a legal term, in reality, we are not disabled, we just learn differently.

IDEA

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

A federal law that requires schools to provide special education and related services to kids with disabilities who require them

ADA

Americans with Disabilities Act

A civil rights law that protects qualified individuals with disabilities

Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

A civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability

Cassie

Accommodations are put in place through federal laws, because everyone in the united states of america is allowed “free and appropriate education.”

These laws include the IDEA, the ADA, and Section 504. These laws give us accommodations and protection from discrimination.

Additionally, this was and still is a big fight to keep these laws; remaining widely controversial throughout society today.

“It can sometimes be challenging, but it’s
also my secret weapon.”

Natalie

- Even though having a learning difference can be seen as a negative, a quote taken from our survey gives us another perspective.

Famous People

Cassie

-Learning differences are usually thought of as a bad thing. However, studies have shown that it has the ability to aid some people in their fields of work.

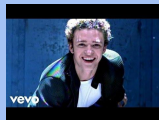
For,

- According to Northwestern University, research says having ADHD, increases creativity. Another example of this is dyslexia. According to CNN, dyslexics were said to have “unusual aptitude in visual-spatial relations.” Meaning, visually they are also more creative.

- For these reasons, a lot of people who have a form of LD are extremely famous and successful.

- We have decided to show 4 different famous people who have learning differences or difficulties. We will first show you a brief biography about the person, please take a moment to read each of these slides.

This person has OCD and ADHD. He is a singer-songwriter, actor, and record producer. He is the recipient of 10 Grammy Awards, 4 Emmy Awards, and 9 Billboard Music Awards.



Natalie

- OCD: obsessive compulsive disorder (TECH: after giving some time for people to read the slide, start video at 1:03, ending after 15 seconds)

ASK: who do you think this is? Call out your answer.



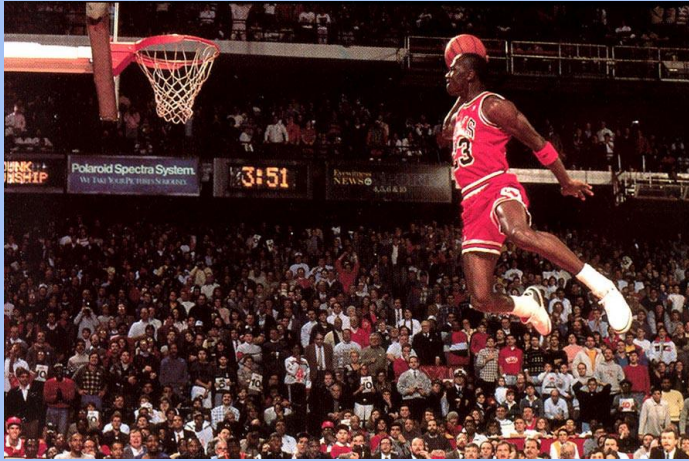
Justin Timberlake

Natalie

This person has ADHD. He is a retired professional basketball player, having played 15 seasons in the NBA for the Chicago Bulls and Washington Wizards.

Clara

ASK: who do you think this is? Call out your answer.



Michael Jordan

Clara

This person has dyslexia. She is an award-winning comedian, actress, human rights advocate, and talk show host.

Natalie

ASK: who do you think this is? Call out your answer.



Whoopi Goldberg

Natalie

This person has dyslexia. He inspired the era of the home computer and commercialized the operating system. He has a networth of about 79.2 Billion.

A quote from him: “I failed in some subjects in exams, but my friend passed in all. Now he is an engineer in Microsoft and I am the owner of Microsoft.”

Cassie

Please take some time to read this slide

- <https://dyslexia.com.au/dyslexic-billionaires/>

ASK: who do you think this is? Call out your answer.



Bill Gates

Cassie

Documentary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXdzJB4-LLE&authuser=0>

Natalie

- But what is it really like having a learning difference?
- From examining a selection of learning differences and the implications that come with each of them, we wanted to explore the effects of it within our own community through the creation of a documentary. It is a video comprised of students in the school, and their individual experiences with their own learning difference.
- We wanted to engage you in this topic, and thought the best way to do so was through your peers.

Q & A

ALL