

Research Centre Global Learning | **Coventry University** 

 **UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

Dyslexia Delphi....?

PATOSS 2023

Julia Carroll
Maggie Snowling



1

 **UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

The History of Dyslexia

Home | What is Dyslexia? | UK Dyslexia Archive | Timeline | Resources | Credits



In 1968, The World Federation of Neurology met to discuss dyslexia and to come to some consensus on which were the more salient dyslexic manifestations. Although considerable agreement was reached and a definition of dyslexia agreed upon, the progress which had been made in the seventy years since the first recognition of dyslexia seemed disappointing. The World Federation of Neurology defined dyslexia as:

"A disorder, manifested by difficulty in learning to read despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence and socio-cultural opportunity. It is dependent upon fundamental cognitive disabilities which are frequently of constitutional origin."

2

1970s-1990s: Dyslexia as a categorical disorder

Specific disorder

- IQ-discrepancy definition
 - Oral Language proficient
 - Good nonverbal ability
- Secondary consequences of poor reading
 - Attention difficulties
 - Behaviour problems

Nature and Etiology

- Runs in families
- Due to a specific phonological deficit
- Direct cause of poor decoding
- Persistent across life span

3

2000s: Dyslexia reconsidered

Neurodevelopmental Disorder

- Classified alongside Mathematics Disorder and Writing Disorder as '*specific learning disorder*'
- Not a category but a dimensional disorder
- Primary [core] phonological deficit

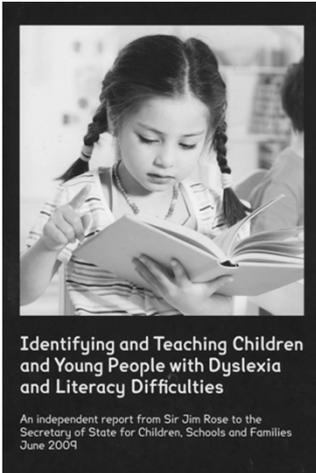
Risk Factors

- Family risk
 - Polygenic etiology
- Language difficulties (persistent)
- Gene-environment correlations
 - Home literacy environment
 - Motivation and print exposure



4

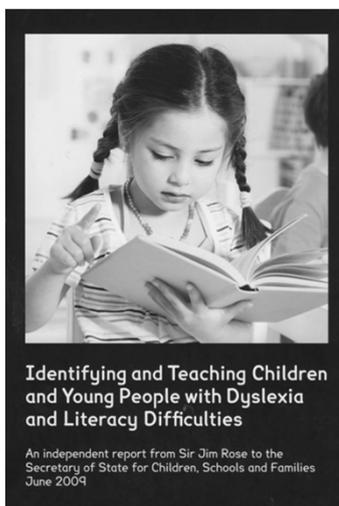
Rose Report (2009)



- Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.
- Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed.
- Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. It is best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points.
- A good indication of the severity and persistence of dyslexic difficulties can be gained by examining how the individual responds or has responded to well-founded intervention.

5

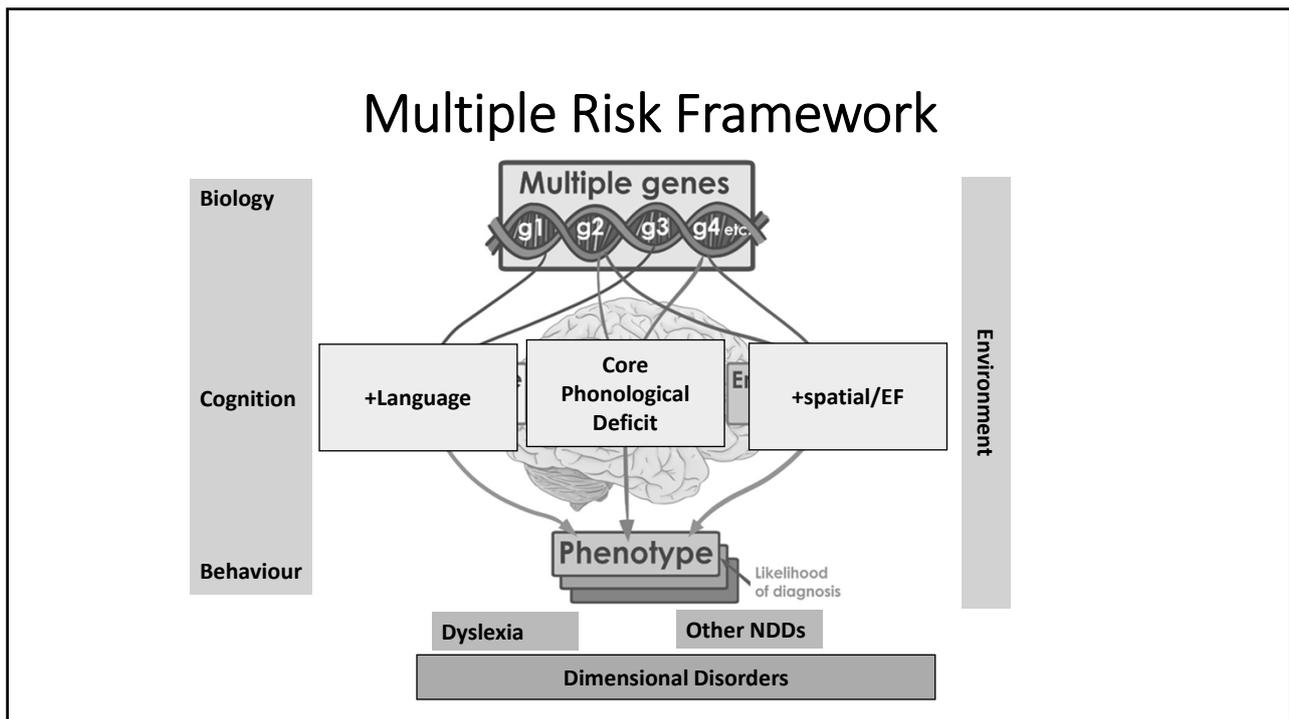
‘Comorbidities’



‘Co-occurring difficulties may be seen in aspects of **language, motor co-ordination, mental calculation, concentration** and **personal organization**, but these are not, by themselves, markers of dyslexia’

NDDs: DLD; dyspraxia; dyscalculia; ADHD.....

6

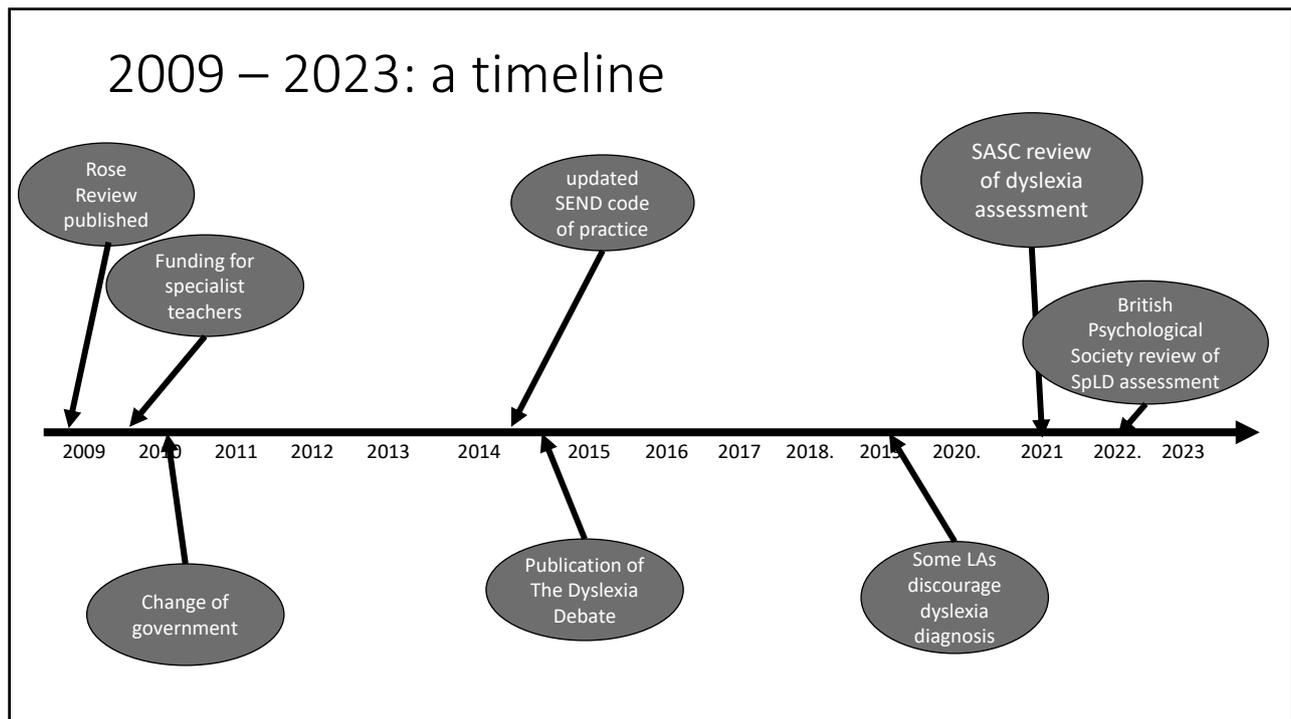


7

Outcomes of the Rose Review

- Explicit guidance on how to define dyslexia
- Funding for training for specialist teachers (£10m promised)
- ‘Official’ recognition of dyslexia
- And we all lived happily ever after....

8



9

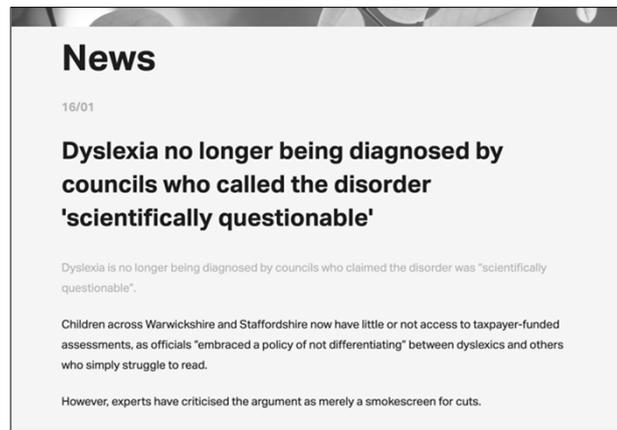
Elliott (2020) “it’s time to be scientific about dyslexia”

- Contrasts 4 different approaches to defining dyslexia:
 - Individuals with poor reading accuracy
 - A subgroup of individuals with poor reading accuracy, decided clinically
 - Individuals whose reading difficulties do not respond well to intervention
 - A complex neurodiverse profile which goes beyond reading difficulties, and in some cases may not include reading difficulties
- Argues that all of them are problematic

10

2019: Local authorities discouraging diagnosis of dyslexia

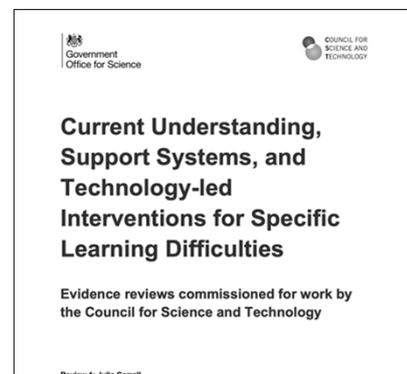
- Warwickshire and Staffordshire argue that if dyslexia is just reading difficulties, diagnosis is unnecessary
- Focus instead on early reading support for all
- Many parents respond by seeking private assessment and battling for additional support



11

2020 Review of SpLD: current issues

- Lack of consistency over time – different expectations/requirements for diagnosis in school/college/university/work
- Differences in diagnostic criteria used in research and practice
- Lack of clarity of the roles of specialist teachers and educational psychologists
- All feed into confusion for individuals, parents and teachers



12

2023: SEND White Paper

- “A vicious cycle of late intervention, low confidence and inefficient resource allocation that drives these challenges across the system.”
- In a context of an education system with budget cuts, staff shortages and low morale



13

2021: SASC Review

- Initiated in January 2021
- A review of assessment and identification of dyslexia
- Four phases:
 - Working Group
 - Consultation Phase 1
 - Publication of a paper: *Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) Consultation Paper on the identification of and effective intervention for literacy difficulties in children and adults. Implications for the assessment of dyslexia.*
 - Responses to the paper were gathered (407 responses)
 - Issues arising were discussed with practitioners in structured meetings. Summaries of these meetings were presented to the SASC Board in January 2023.
- What now?

14

Why do we need consensus about a definition?

- “To the extent that clinical economy depends on getting the **right treatment to the right people**, clinicians are...categorisers. At a purely practical level this depends on a judgement being made that such and such a child belongs to the category of those who ‘need help’, whereas another child belongs to a (usually) larger category who do not.” (p. 117).

Sonuga-Barke (1998) Categorical models of childhood disorder: a conceptual and empirical analysis. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 39, 115-133.

15

15

An approach to building consensus

Assemble a group of experts and use the **Delphi method** to have an online discussion

Key feature of Delphi: everyone rates and comments on initial set of statements, and sees everyone else’s responses, but whole process is anonymous.

Delphi Method used to build consensus regarding a new or controversial issue

16

16



- Automates survey distribution and data collection concerning the views on the statements
- Controlled access to the survey.
- Distribution can be done by email, SMS, online web link, or website popup.
- The 'data controller' monitors and summarizes the data, passing it on to the moderators for interpretation

17

17

Full details online

PLOS ONE Publish About

OPEN ACCESS PEER-REVIEWED

RESEARCH ARTICLE

CATALISE: A Multinational and Multidisciplinary Delphi Consensus Study. Identifying Language Impairments in Children

D. V. M. Bishop, Margaret J. Snowling, Paul A. Thompson, Trisha Greenhalgh, CATALISE consortium

Published: July 8, 2016 • <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0158753>



Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry *Explore this journal >*

Phase 2 of CATALISE: a multinational and multidisciplinary Delphi consensus study of problems with language development: Terminology

Dorothy V.M. Bishop, Margaret J. Snowling, Paul A. Thompson, Trisha Greenhalgh, and the CATALISE-2 consortium

First published: 30 March 2017 [Full publication history](#)

DOI: [10.1111/jcpp.12721](https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.12721) [View/save citation](#)

18

18

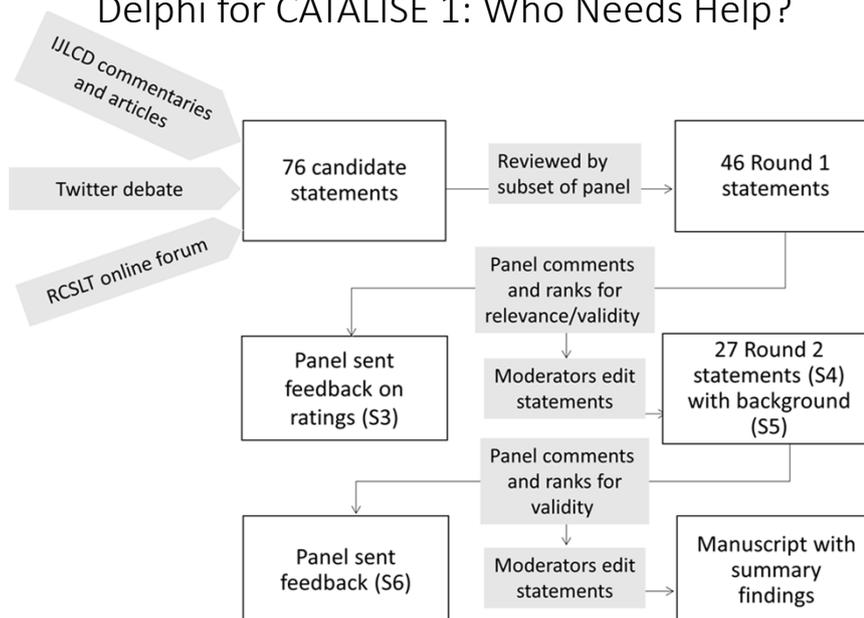
Assemble an International Expert Panel

- Authors of the commentaries in the *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 49(4)
- Additional panel members from under-represented categories

Discipline	Country						TOTAL
	Aus	Canada	Ire	NZ	UK	US	
SLT	3	1	3	4	15	6	32
SLT/Psychology	2	3	0	0	2	0	7
Psychology	1	3	0	0	3	1	8
Spec. teacher	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Audiology	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Paediatrics	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
Psychiatry	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Charity	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
TOTAL	6	8	3	5	30	7	59

19

Delphi for CATALISE 1: Who Needs Help?



20

Example Statement

“Language impairment is part of normal variation rather than a distinct condition (or many distinct conditions).”

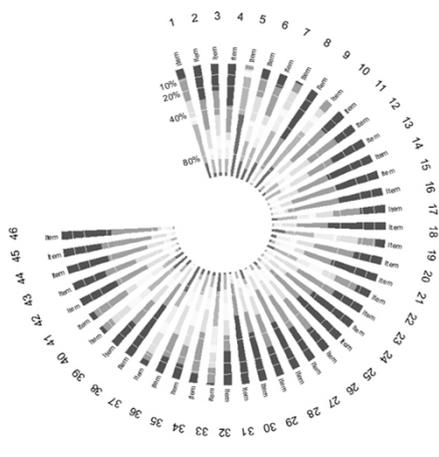
Strongly against Against Slightly against Neutral Slightly favour Favour Strongly favour

- Should we include this statement?
- Do you agree with the statement?

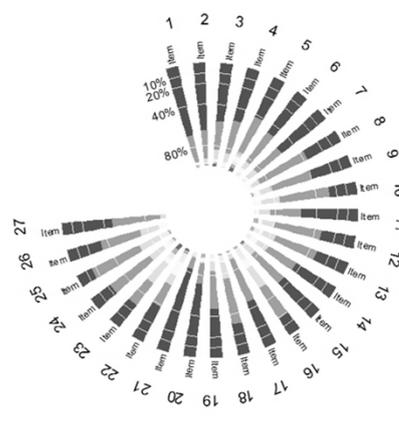
21

CATALISE 1: Criteria for identification

Round 1



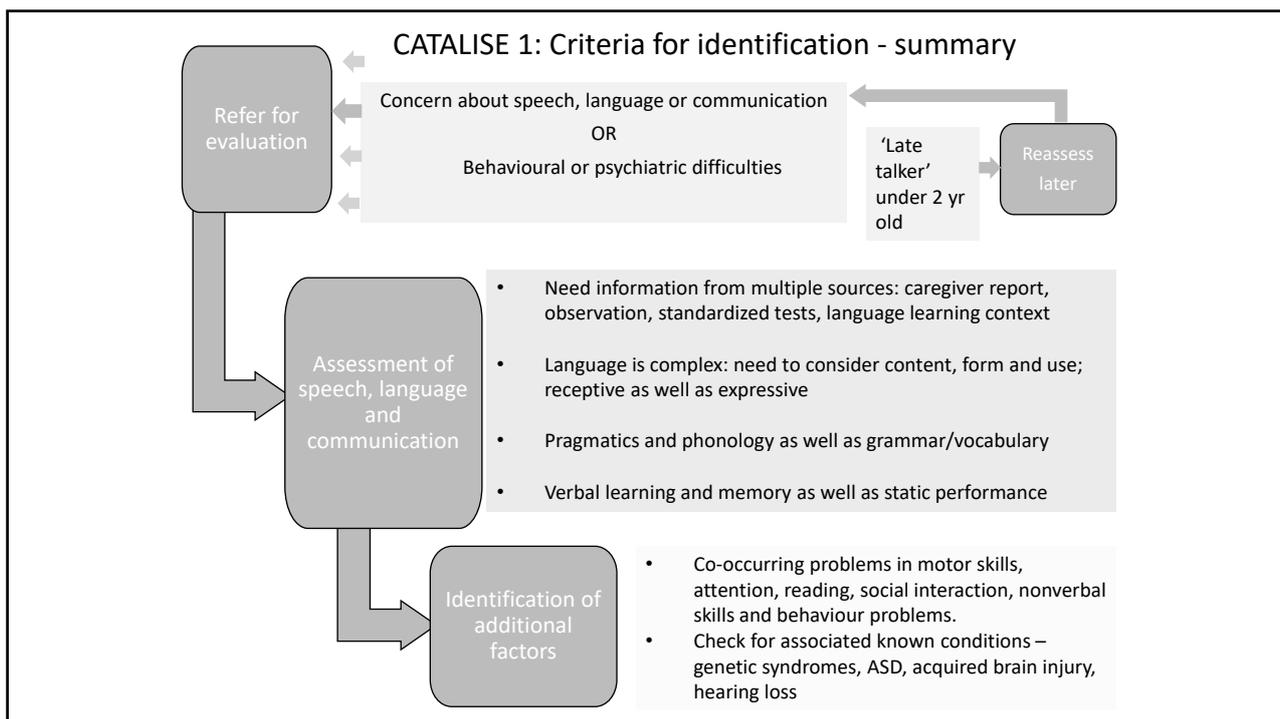
Round 2



Strongly favour Favour Slightly favour Neutral Slightly against Against Strongly against

22

22



23

CATALISE Phase 2: Terminology

Two terms rejected at an early stage

- dysphasia
- language delay

- #13. SLI
- #14. Primary Language Impairment
- #15. Developmental Language Disorder





<https://www.youtube.com/user/RALLIcampaign>

24

24

What was new?

- Developmental language disorder (DLD) to replace SLI
- Disorder defined in terms of **functional impairment** and **poor prognosis**
- Does not use social background or NVIQ as criterion
- Additional disorders as descriptor rather than exclusionary factor
- 'Language disorder associated with X' – X also needs assessment/intervention

25

25

Dyslexia Delphi Outline

26

Delphi Dyslexia Team

- Investigators: Maggie Snowling, Julia Carroll, Philip Kirby, Paul Thompson, Lynn Greenwold, and Caroline Holden
- Moderators: Maggie Snowling, Julia Carroll, Philip Kirby, Caroline Holden
- Data controller: Paul Thompson
- Admin support: Amy Birtwhistle

27



- Automated survey distribution and data collection concerning the views on the statements
- Statements distribution by email May 2023 with 4 weeks to respond
- The 'data controller' is monitoring the feedback on statements. As of 31 May: 59/71 have started the survey and 56 of those have completed

28

28

Expert Panel Members

- Professionals: psychologists, clinical, educational, occupational, other
 - Assessment practitioners: specialist assessors, specialist teacher- assessors, access arrangements assessors
 - Specialist teachers, SENCOs, support service managers in LAs, schools, colleges and HE
 - Families and people with 'dyslexia'
 - Stakeholding organisations and CPD/ psychology or specialist teacher training providers, e.g. BDA, Helen Arkell Centre, PATOSS, Dyslexia Guild, Real Training, IOE
 - Academics/researchers
 - UK Devolved Nations
 - England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales
 - Europe
 - US and International
- Selected 'experts from a longlist taking account of EDI considerations**
- Additional panel members from under-represented categories
 - Survey 1 sent to 71 'experts'.

29

Preliminary Demographics

- What country do you live in?
 - England (73%)
 - Scotland (9%)
 - Wales (2%)
 - Northern Ireland (2%)
 - USA (2%)
 - Europe (7%)
 - Other (5%)
- Gender: 69% female, 31% male
- Ethnicity: 82% white
- Profession:
 - 44% Academic
 - 9% Educational Psychologist
 - 27% Specialist teacher and/or assessor
 - 20% Other

30

International Expert Panel [may share further details at conference]

- Panel members - representatives of the following stakeholder groups:

31

Example Statement (not included)

“The generic term **Reading Impairment** is recommended for situations where it is useful to adopt a broad category, where difficulties affect many domains of reading and language.”

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know/ no opinion

If you have additional comments on this statement, please add them here:

32

Statements

Step 1 Selection

62 candidate statements selected from:

- SASC statements
- Dyslexia Debate
- Science of Reading
- 55 Round 1 statements selected and modified

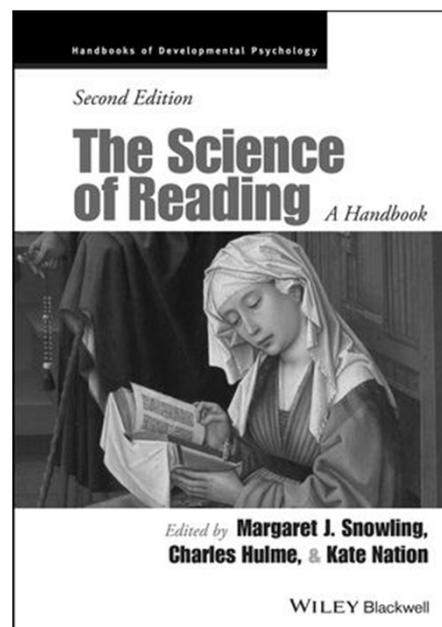
Step 2 Issues on which to gather views

- What is dyslexia?
- What 'causes' dyslexia?
- How is dyslexia experienced?
- Why and when to assess
- What to assess
- Identification criteria

33

Take Home Messages

- The concept of dyslexia remains controversial despite 50 years of research
- Interventions for reading and language can be delivered effectively in mainstream schools
- The absence of consensus concerning SpLD is detrimental to stakeholders including those with persistent reading problems
- In order to put research into practice, and to implement interventions, policy makers need to hear 'one voice'
- The Dyslexia Delphi aims to agree on definitions, characteristics and risk factors for poor reading



34