

# IDENTIFYING 'IF' A CHILD HAS A LEARNING GLITCH

*Dianne Craft, MA, CNHP*

*"He's seven and a half years old, and still can't read! Will he "grow into" reading if I give him more time?"  
concerned homeschool mom*

*"No parent has ever said to me that they started intervention too early with their child",  
Sally Shaywitz, MD, Overcoming Dyslexia*

*"Reading and writing are natural processes, and take place easily when no learning  
block is present." Dianne Craft, HSLDA Learning Specialist*

## I. Maturity Issue?

- A. Boy or Girl
- B. Desire to learn
- C. Alphabet learning
- D. How did other children in family learn?
- E. Listening to stories
- F. Writing and letter reversals?

*There are many bright children who have to work too hard to learn!*

## I. The Brain Model for the Four Learning Gates

### A. Visual Processing Gate Blocked

- 1. Reading reversals after age 7 (on=no, was=saw, of=to)
- 2. Oral reading starts smooth, but becomes more labored
- 3. Yawning shortly after reading begins
- 4. Smart kids who don't want to read (due to eye fatigue)

### B. Visual/Motor (Writing) Gate Blocked

- 1. Frequent or occasional reversals in letters (b/d) (after age 7)
- 2. Poor spacing in writing and math papers
- 3. Writing is slow and laborious
- 4. Copying is very time consuming
- 5. Great stories orally, but writes very little
- 6. Does all math problems mentally to avoid writing down
- 7. Writing looks sloppy and child is often considered lazy
- 8. Can't tell left and right easily

### **C. Auditory Processing Gate Blocked**

- 1. Phonics sounds don't stick**
- 2. Sight words hard to memorize** (sounds out all words)
- 3. Spelling rules hard to remember**
- 4. Easily misunderstands verbal information**
- 5. Guesses at long words frequently** (forgets words he just sounded out)
- 6. Can't remember multiplication facts, difficulty saying months in order**

### **D. Attention/Behavior Gate Blocked**

- 1. Inconsistency in performance from one day to another**
- 2. Needs to have someone sit with him to finish work**
- 3. Forgets previously learned work much of the time**
- 4. Impulsive behavior**
- 5. Easily upset and angered when things go wrong**
- 6. Sensory Integration processing problems** (little things bother them a lot, like tags on shirts, loud noises, transitions, etc.)

## **II. Levels of Processing Problems**

### **A. Glitch**


- 1. Child has to work harder, but is not behind**
- 2. This does not need intervention, but it would help**

### **B. Dysfunction**

- 1. Child has to work harder, and is about a year behind**
- 2. Intervention can get this child caught up easily**

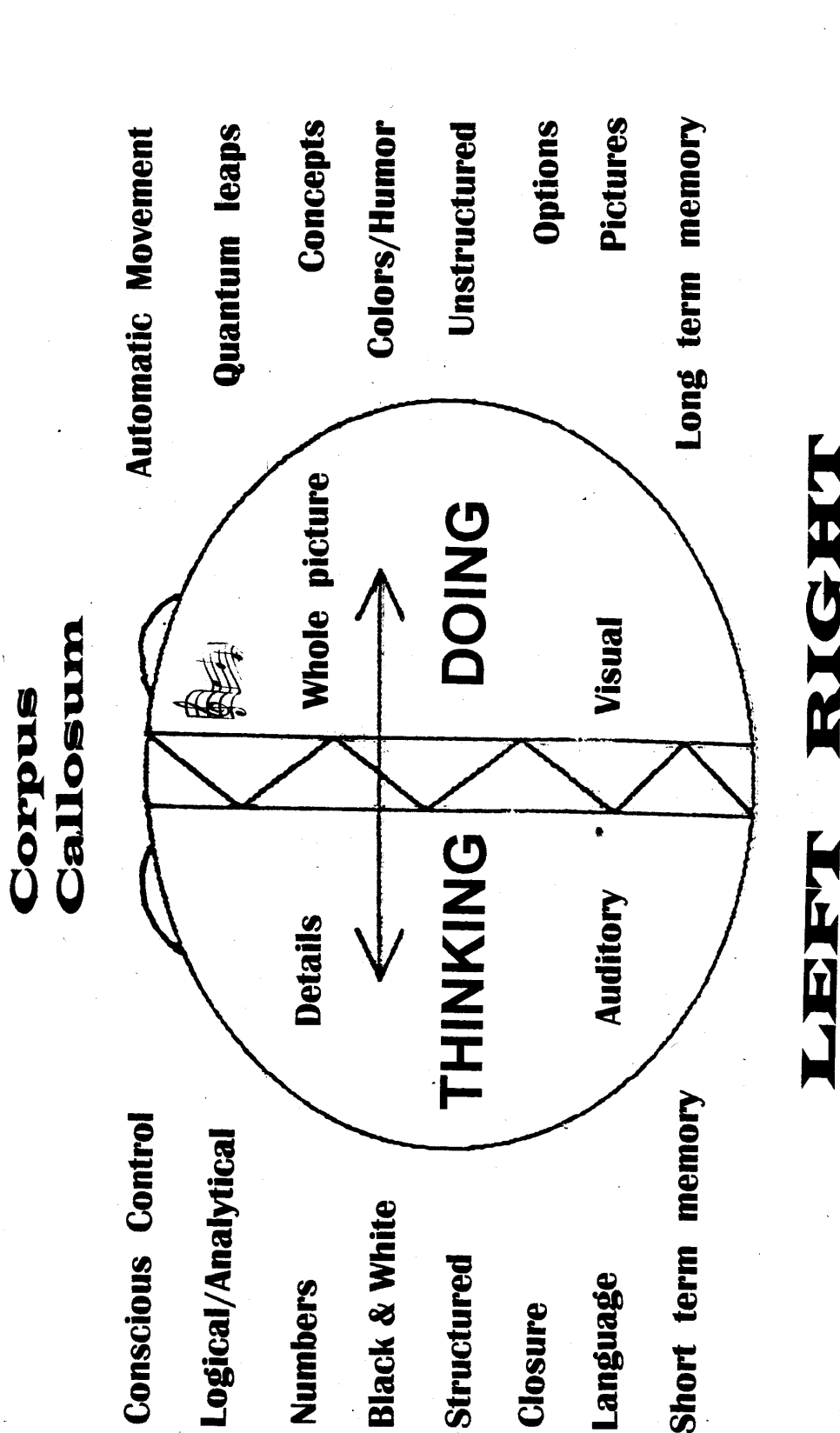
### **C. Dyslexia or Dysgraphia**

- 1. Child has to work harder and is about two years behind**
- 2. Intervention is vital to help this child learn**

\*HSLDA's new website: "Homeschooling the Struggling Learner", has the four learning gates, their characteristics, and more importantly, the interventions that a parent can use to help their child get past the learning block. This information packed website is a Godsend for homeschooling families.  Join HSLDA and experience all the benefits for your struggling learner!

*Dianne offers private consultations for homeschool families in Denver. As an educator and nutritionist, she can give help to families in unique ways. She videotapes the sessions so that parents can follow the instructions at home. She also has many teaching DVD's and Right Brain Teaching product (Right Brain Phonics, Spelling, Math, etc.), and her Overcoming*

*Dyslexia with Brain Integration Therapy manual, on her website, *

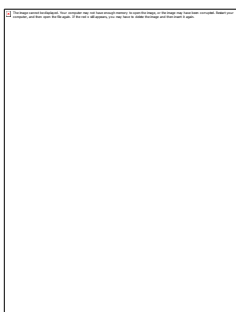


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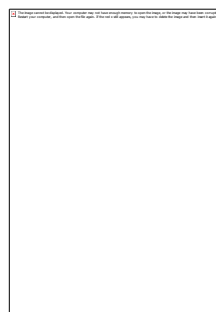
## The “Ear Eight” Exercise

The “ear eight” exercise integrates the brain for listening with both ears by retraining the neck muscles involved in sound perception. Research has shown that there is a relationship between covert speech and movement of the neck muscles. **In this exercise, the student will cross the midline while activating the hearing centers on each side of his brain. This exercise replicates the movement that a crawling baby makes as he turns his head to the right or left in order to hear sounds clearly.**

In this movement the torso, head, pointing arm, and hand function as a single unit. This Unit moves around an imaginary horizontal 8, while the eyes focus on the thumb. It is best to keep the knees slightly bent. Do this for six times (complete eights) with each arm. Eights should ALWAYS GO UP IN THE MIDDLE. The ear should be **completely covered** by the shoulder for his exercise. Be sure to have child bend at the waist, so the arm does not move.



**Ear Eight Exercise**

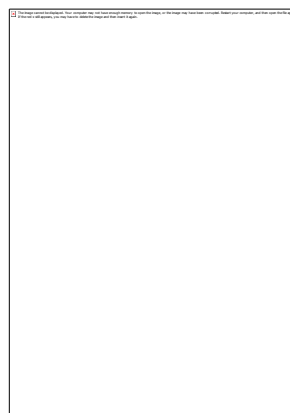
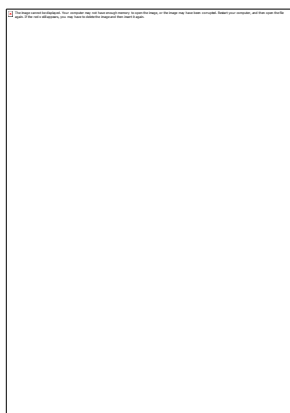
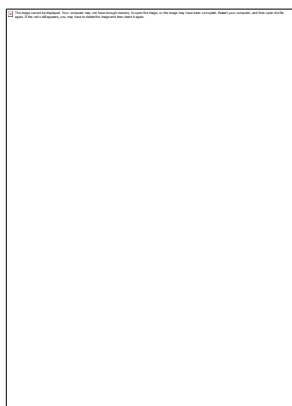


**Fencer**

**Eye Eight Exercise**

**Cross Crawl**

**Cross Leg Toe Touch**



## Eye Eight Exercise

**This visual exercise integrates the right and left visual fields, enabling the reader to cross the visual midline without interruption. Doing this exercise once a day, along with once-a-week repatternings, will frequently increase the bilaterality of the eyes, thereby reducing fatigue and stress on the visual processing system.** This exercise has been used in Special Education and perceptual training for years to help students with learning problems related to an inability to cross the midline. **This activity is best done with small groups in the classroom, so that the teacher can monitor the eye movements of the students.** Many students with reading difficulties will not be able to “track” smoothly in both visual fields, especially at first. The eyes will skip around. The teacher, as the monitor, can encourage the student to go slowly, and keep his eyes on track. With some students, who have great difficulty tracking, the teacher can slowly move an object in a “butterfly” pattern in front of them, being sure to keep the object comfortably within the student’s visual field. It is always best to do this exercise with just a few students at a time to ensure that they are really tracking smoothly. If not monitored this can become a great arm exercise but little else.

## Cross Leg Toe Touch

Cross one foot over the other at the ankles, and wait to gain your balance in this position. While slightly bending the knees, bend forward, letting gravity take over. Let your arms swing, reaching down as far as is comfortable. Exhale as you reach down and forward. Inhale as you come back up. Repeat three times, counting to eight while touching your toes, if possible. Then do the same on the other side.