

# IDENTIFYING and CORRECTING BLOCKED LEARNING GATES

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*“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 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, MA, CNHP, Brain Integration Therapy Manual*

- I. **Maturity Issue?** (over age 7 and...)
  - A. Desire to learn...if wants to learn to read, but can't, then there is a block
  - B. Alphabet learning...if this is hard, then consider an Auditory Processing Problem
  - C. How did other children in family learn...consider interventions if much slower than others
  - D. Listening to stories...if loves to listen to stories, but can't read, then do interventions
  - E. Writing and letter reversals?...if still doing reversals, then child has to work too hard to learn

*There are many bright kids and teens who have to work too hard to learn!*

## II. 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)
5. Skips small words when reading...and lines
6. Needs to use finger to track when older
7. Oral reading has no fluency

#### **CORRECTION:**

- 1) **Brain Integration Therapy** (daily eye exercise and once a week Visual Brain Training to teach eyes to work together as a team while reading..works very well)
- 2) **OR 2) Vision Therapy;**
- 3) **OR 3) Combination of Brain Integration and Vision Therapy** (although most parents don't have to do this combination of therapies if they are faithful to do the daily midline eye exercise with their child, and the once a week Visual Brain Training to increase these visual processing brain connections needed for reading ...save \$ on therapies. This, consistently, was my experience while working with these struggling readers who had visual processing issues or Dyslexia, in my Resource Room in school).

**Teaching Products you will need:** (or you can make some of these yourself)

1. *Brain Integration Therapy Manual*
2. *Right Brain Phonics Reading Book*
3. *Right Brain Phonics Cards*
4. *Colored Reading Transparencies (very inexpensive)*
5. *Sight Word Cards (if child is a non-reader or reads at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade level or lower)*
6. DVD, "Teaching the Right Brain Child" for demonstration of methods

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

1. **Frequent or occasional reversals in letters (b/d) (after age 7)**  
(Sometimes parents say, "Oh, they just write a reversal once in a while." Remember that if they make ONE reversal, we know that there are at least 5 other times that they had to "think" about the directionality of letters. That is taking way too much of this child or teen's writing/typing energy. We need to give this child an internalized "plumbline" or midline to make the process of writing automatic.)
2. **Poor spacing in writing and math papers**
3. **Writing is slow and laborious**
4. **Great stories orally, but writes very little**
5. **Does many math problems mentally to avoid writing down**
6. **Writing looks sloppy and child is often considered lazy and unmotivated**
7. **Can do "journaling" but can't write a paragraph**
8. **On Cognitive testing, low test scores in Coding and Visual/Spatial subtests**
9. **HATES TO WRITE!...groans and complains....doesn't finish work**
  - Read article, "Smart Kids Who Hate to Write" or "Gifted with a Glitch" on my website [www.diannecraft.org](http://www.diannecraft.org)

### **CORRECTION:**

- 1) ***Daily Writing Eight Exercise*** (in *Brain Integration Therapy Manual*...very powerful technique that removes the block between "brain and hand" whether in writing or typing. Writing fluency (thinking and writing at the same time is greatly improved in all ages...especially teens). Takes 15 minutes a day, but cannot be done without supervision, or it won't work). If you want to see a thorough video presentation of what a blocked writing gate looks like in a child or teen, plus a **DEMONSTRATION** of the writing eight exercise done with kids ages 7, 10, 14, 17, and in a group, order the **DVD, "Smart Kids Who Hate to Write."** Many schools use this DVD as an "inservice" training for their teachers to recognize Dysgraphia, and learn how to get rid of it.
- 2) ***Writing Brain Training*** (from *Brain Integration Therapy manual*. If a teen or child had a significant block in writing...many symptoms from this checklist..., in my classroom, besides the daily writing eight exercise, I added the very powerful once a week Writing Brain Training, in which the child/teen looks upper left to help the "right, automatic" brain hemisphere take over all internalization of left/right, and to totally remove any fine motor, spatial or writing blocks. For my students, we did this instead of working with an OT, since their caseload was so large. We got rid of reversals, and all my students were writing fluently by the end of the school year without any need for other therapies).

### **Teaching Products you will need:**

1. DVD "Smart Kids Who Hate to Write" if this is the ONLY blocked learning gate your child has...in other words, is reading on grade level
2. *Brain Integration Therapy Manual*, if your child has this gate blocked and has many of the symptoms...then it is best to do the once a week Writing Brain Training that is in the Manual.

3. The DVD, "Teaching the Right Brain Child" for a demonstration of the Right Brain Spelling Strategy to use to train your child's photographic memory for spelling. If spelling is an issue for your child/teen.
4. Most Commonly Used Spelling Words (free)
5. Right Brain Writing and Composition program (free)

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

1. Phonics sounds and rules don't stick (you're on your 3<sup>rd</sup> phonics program!)
2. Reading is 2 or more years below grade level (Use **Quick Word Test** for this)
3. Sounds out the same work over and over in a story
4. Sight words hard to memorize (sounds out all words... "what, many, could")
5. Easily misunderstands verbal information
6. Guesses at long words
7. Can't remember multiplication facts,
8. Difficulty saying months in order

#### **CORRECTION:**

##### **1) Brain Integration Therapy**

*There are 10 Auditory Channels that can be blocked, making learning very difficult. In this manual you will identify which of your child's channels are blocked, and then be shown how to systematically unblock those channels at home. Nothing works as well as Brain Integration Therapy for correcting Auditory Processing glitches, in my experience. This is what I used in school with great success.*

##### **2) Right Brain Teaching Strategies**

*(see Daily Lesson Plans for these strategies)*

1. Right Brain Phonics
2. Right Brain Sight Words
3. Right Brain Writing and Composition
4. Right Brain Math

##### **3) Essential Fatty Acids and Lecithin**

*Both of these essential oils greatly increase auditory processing in children and adults. One boy called the sandwich in which his mom put the Lecithin granules, his "smart sandwich." He said that he could remember his words so much easier with the Lecithin. All instructions are in the Biology of Behavior CD set with PRINTED STUDY GUIDE THAT GIVES THE WEEK BY WEEK STEPS.*

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4. Colored Reading Transparencies (very inexpensive)
5. Sight Word Cards (if child is a non-reader or reads at 2<sup>nd</sup> grade level or lower)
6. DVD, "Teaching the Right Brain Child" for demonstration of methods
7. Biology of Behavior CD set with all important Printed Study Guide giving the week by week program with amounts, ages, brands, etc.

### **D. Attention/Focusing/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.)
7. Many careless errors in math
8. Reads on level, but comprehension is poor
9. On Cognitive tests, low in Working Memory (Digit Span)...long and short term memory scores are affected.

## **CORRECTION:**

### **1) Targeted Nutritional Intervention**

*This child or teen is using too much battery energy to sustain focus for subjects that do not hold their interest. It looks like they have a “poor memory.” This difficulty with maintaining sustained focus can make learning harder than it should be, and keeps many a teenager from doing well in high school subjects, or in college. It is correctable, but it must first be seen as a physical/biological issue, rather than merely a psychological or behavioral or character issue. So many changes can be seen when this is recognized.*

### **2) Dietary changes**

*Reduce sugar and carbs dramatically for 3 months to see the changes in your child. They can have bread for sandwiches, but not pancakes, cereal, cup of noodles, a lot of pasta, bagels, etc. Keep sugar drinks to a minimum. These all upset the nervous system so that the child or teen has to work too hard to retain focus or behavior.*

### **Teaching Products you will need:**

*Many parents find that when they follow the 3 month step by step nutritional information found in the **Biology of Behavior CD** set that they see significant changes in their child’s focusing, behavior, sleeping ability, etc. This CD set comes with a printed Study Guide that gives the order of supplements to introduce one week at a time, in this easy to follow three month program. It also gives the amounts, ages, brand names and methods to get the supplements into the child. After three months, the parent will stop one supplement at a time, just as they were introduced. This CD set with Study Guide can be ordered at [www.diannecraft.org](http://www.diannecraft.org)*

#### **Levels of Processing Problems**

(you can determine your child’s grade level of reading skills by giving the **Quick Score Reading Test** that can be found in the **Daily Lesson Plans for a Struggling Learner** (available online, or in the **Brain Integration Therapy Manual**).

- a. **Glitch**
  - i. Child has to work harder, but is not behind
  - ii. This does not need intervention, but it would help
- b. **Dysfunction**
  - i. Child has to work harder, and is about a year behind
  - ii. Intervention can get this child caught up easily
- c. **Dyslexia or Dysgraphia**
  - i. Child has to work harder and is about two years behind
  - ii. Intervention is vital to help this child learn

**Many children or teens have all 4 Learning Gates blocked to some degree. These can be unblocked using therapies and teaching strategies at home. Learning doesn’t have to be so hard, and it doesn’t have to be so expensive!**