

IDENTIFYING BLOCKED LEARNING GATES

Dianne Craft, MA, CNHP

The Four Learning Gates

*“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, MA, CNHP

I. Maturity Issue?

- 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 *Check the characteristics your child has, and email back to me for the Internet Consultation.*

A. Visual Processing Gate Blocked?

- Reading reversals after age 7 (on=no, was=saw, of=to)
- Oral reading starts smooth, but becomes more labored
- Yawning shortly after reading begins
- Smart kids who don't want to read (due to eye fatigue)
- Skips small words when reading...and lines
- Needs to use finger to track when older
- Oral reading has no fluency

B. Visual/Motor (Writing) Gate Blocked?

- Frequent or occasional reversals in letters (b/d) (after age 7)
- Poor spacing in writing and math papers
- Writing is slow and laborious
- Great stories orally, but writes very little
- Does all math problems mentally to avoid writing down
- Writing looks sloppy and child is often considered lazy and unmotivated
- Can do “journaling” but can't write a paragraph
- HATES TO WRITE!..groans and complains....doesn't finish work

C. Auditory Processing Gate Blocked?

- Phonics sounds and rules don't stick (you're on your 3rd phonics program!)
- Sounds out the same word over and over in a story
- Sight words hard to memorize (sounds out all words... "what, many, could")
- Easily misunderstands verbal information
- Guesses at long words
- Can't remember multiplication facts
- Difficulty saying months in order
- Delayed speech
- Articulation issues
- Difficulty sequencing events or stories orally
- Difficulty remembering names of things
- Low expressive (quiet)

D. Attention/Focusing/Behavior Gate Blocked?

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

III. Levels of Processing Problems

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!

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