

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF LD COLLEGE STUDENTS¹

The following is only a partial list of difficulties that LD college students often experience. These problems persist even though the student has had adequate academic instruction or remediation.

Reading:

- Slow reading rate
- Poor comprehension and retention
- Difficulty identifying main ideas
- Poor mastery of phonics, decoding difficulties
- Difficulty integrating new vocabulary

Written Language:

- Difficulty with sentence structure
- Frequent spelling and/or grammar errors
- Inability to copy from book or blackboard
- Poor penmanship

Oral Language Skills:

- Inability to concentrate on and/or comprehend language
- Difficulty orally expressing ideas which he/she seems to understand
- Written expression is better than oral
- Cannot tell a story in proper sequence

¹<http://www.smc.edu/disabledstudent/ld/Definition.htm>

Math Skills:

- Incomplete mastery of basic math facts
- Reverses numbers, confuses symbols
- Copies problems incorrectly one line to another
- Difficulty recalling sequence of operational processes
- Inability to understand or retain abstract concepts.
- Difficulty with word problems

Organization and Study Skills:

- Time management difficulties
 - Slow to start and complete tasks
 - Difficulty following oral and/or written directions
 - Lack of overall organization in notes and essays
 - Short attention span/inability to listen to lectures
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- The student raises and/or answers questions in class well but seems inadequate on paper.
 - The student's quizzes provide acceptable or better responses to questions relating to lecture information, but it appears that the student has not read the required material.
 - The student's quizzes reflect acceptable understanding of course readings, but her responses to questions regarding lecture material make you wonder about class attendance.
 - The student squints a lot and/or rubs her eyes.
 - The student asks frequently for repetitions or constantly interrupts for additional explanations; her note-taking is incredulous or non-existent.
 - The student shares a chronic health problem, arrested drug abuse, or eating disorder with you.

- The student seems to begin well in a course but later is making errors that suggest loss of initial learning.
- The student confuses course assignments and/or due dates.
- The student seeks extensions to extensions to extensions.
- The student provides class contributions that seem peculiar or seems to make strange associations. She seems to lack common sense or ask inappropriate, perhaps even "off the wall," questions.
- The student's papers earn appreciably higher grades on content than on mechanics. Or, her content is good but disorganized or, at least, poorly sequenced.
- The student has memorized much information but fails to make appropriate associations, generalizations, or applications.
- The student's work with graphic materials is distinctly more or less astute than language-based products.
- The student is a distraction to herself or others.
- The student appears "lazy," "unmotivated," or "too social" for academic success in spite of protestations that she studies extensively.