

Teacher Training Decoding/Encoding

Since 1982 thousands of persons have participated in Michigan Dyslexia Institute's Decoding/Encoding seminars. The seminars are designed primarily for persons interested in becoming instructors with one of the institute's centers, and teachers (general and special education) who wish to increase their effectiveness in working with students who exhibit characteristics of dyslexia.

The seminars consist of class lectures, demonstrations, observation, and supervised practice. Focus is upon remediation of reading and related language deficiencies associate with the initial stage of reading development- what has been called the "decoding" stage. The curriculum, based on a flexible adaptation of the internationally known Orton-Gillingham Approach, is designed expressly for use with specific reading, spelling, or writing difficulties characteristic of dyslexia. The seminars are taught by teacher trainers who are Fellows of the academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators, a national certification and accreditation body incorporated under New York State Education Law. The content of the seminar reflects the curriculum criteria established by the Academy.

The seminars involve 48 hours of classroom instruction and approximately 28 hours of observation, practice teaching, and evaluation. Outside preparation time for a seminar varies, depending upon one's background. A minimum of 30 hours is not atypical. Attendance at all sessions is required.

Central Michigan University has accredited some classes to receive up to six undergraduate or graduate credits. The cost of these credits is in addition to MDI's fees.

Persons successfully completing the seminar will be able immediately to apply the teaching technologies they have learned. Their new knowledge can be expanded beyond decoding/encoding to include additional applied linguistics, comprehension, and composition techniques needed to work with dyslexic students at more advanced levels. MDI offers seminar graduates, at a nominal cost, a continuing education program comprised of workshops and conferences.

THE EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

Samuel Torrey Orton (1879-1948) was a neuropsychiatrist and pathologist. He was a pioneer in focusing attention on reading failure and related language processing difficulties. He brought together neuroscientific information and principles of remediation. As early as 1925 he had identified the syndrome of dyslexia as an educational problem.

Anna Gillingham (1878-1963) was a gifted educator and psychologist with a superb mastery of language. Working with Dr. Orton, she trained, compile and published comprehensive instructional materials.

The Orton-Gillingham approach is language-based, multisensory, structured, sequential, cumulative, cognitive, and flexible. Infinitely adaptable, it is a philosophy rather than a system.

Persons with dyslexia need more help than most people in sorting, recognizing and organizing the raw materials of language for thinking and use. What language-talented persons learn easily and other learn with reasonable help and effort, dyslexics need to be taught, expertly,

step-by-step. Fortunately methods have been worked out for doing this. One such approach, the soundness and success for which has been demonstrated over the years, is used by the Michigan Dyslexia Institute and practiced in its Centers. Following are the essentials of this approach.

It is **personalized**. Teaching begins with recognizing the differing needs of learners. While dyslexics share similarities, no two dyslexics are exactly alike. The approach starts, progresses, and ends with the individual student.

It is **multisensory**. It uses all the learning pathways: seeing, hearing, feeling, and awareness of motion brought together by the thinking brain.

It employs a **phonic-alphabetic** system and stresses this in the initial stages of reading development. It takes advantage of the sound/symbol relationships on which spoken and written languages are based. Spoken words are made up of sounds and the letters of written words graphically represent these sounds.

It is based on **intensive phonics** instruction. The sounds which letters represent can be blended into words for reading. The sounds which comprise spoken words can be represented graphically for spelling and writing.

It is **systematic**. Step-by-step learners move from the simple, well-learned materials to that which is more and more complex. They move from one step to the next as they master each level of language skills.

It is **cumulative**. Each step of the way is based on those previously learned by the student.

It provides **continuous feedback and positive reinforcement**. The approach provides for a close teacher-student relationship which permits these two elements so critical to effective learning.

It is a **cognitive** approach. Students are helped to understand the reason for what they are learning. Then, when necessary, they will have the confidence to think their way through language problems instead of counting only on memory.

It is **emotionally sound**. Students' feelings about themselves and about learning are vital. Teaching is directed toward providing the experience of success. With success comes increased self-confidence and motivation.

The purpose of it all, from recognizing a letter to writing a poem, is getting meaning from one person's mind to another's. **Effective communication** is paramount to this approach.

* Michigan Dyslexia Institute, Inc. reserves the right to reschedule announced dates.*

Training public and private school teachers and instructors working in the private sector is one of the objectives of the Michigan Dyslexia Institute. Special Decoding/Encoding Seminars can be arranged for schools, organizations, business, and industry. Fees are dependent upon number of participants, location, and scheduling arrangements. Call for further information.

Tuition: \$1100, Materials Fee: \$200, Practice Teaching Fee: \$200. Total Fees: \$1500. Seminar materials provided include a comprehensive training and reference manual and all other materials necessary for the Seminar and to begin teaching students at the decoding/encoding level. The practice teaching is complete one-on-one as conveniently as can be arranged.

Potential practitioners with one of the Institute's Centers are required to:

- (1) Successfully complete an interview with the Center's Director before beginning the seminar.
- (2) Hold a completed or soon to be completed Bachelor's Degree or an RN degree.
- (3) Successfully complete the seminar followed by an internship no to exceed 15 hours.