

TeachingEnglish webinar series

Divergence in EFL Teaching: Supporting Neurodivergent Students

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2nd DECEMBER, 2022

WHO ARE WE?

OZGU OZTURK

2005- EFL Teacher

**2009- International School Partnership
Projects Coordinator**

**2017- Applying Approaches to SEN Course -
by British Council**

**2020- Dyslexia Trainer- by Freud Universitat
Continuing Education Center**

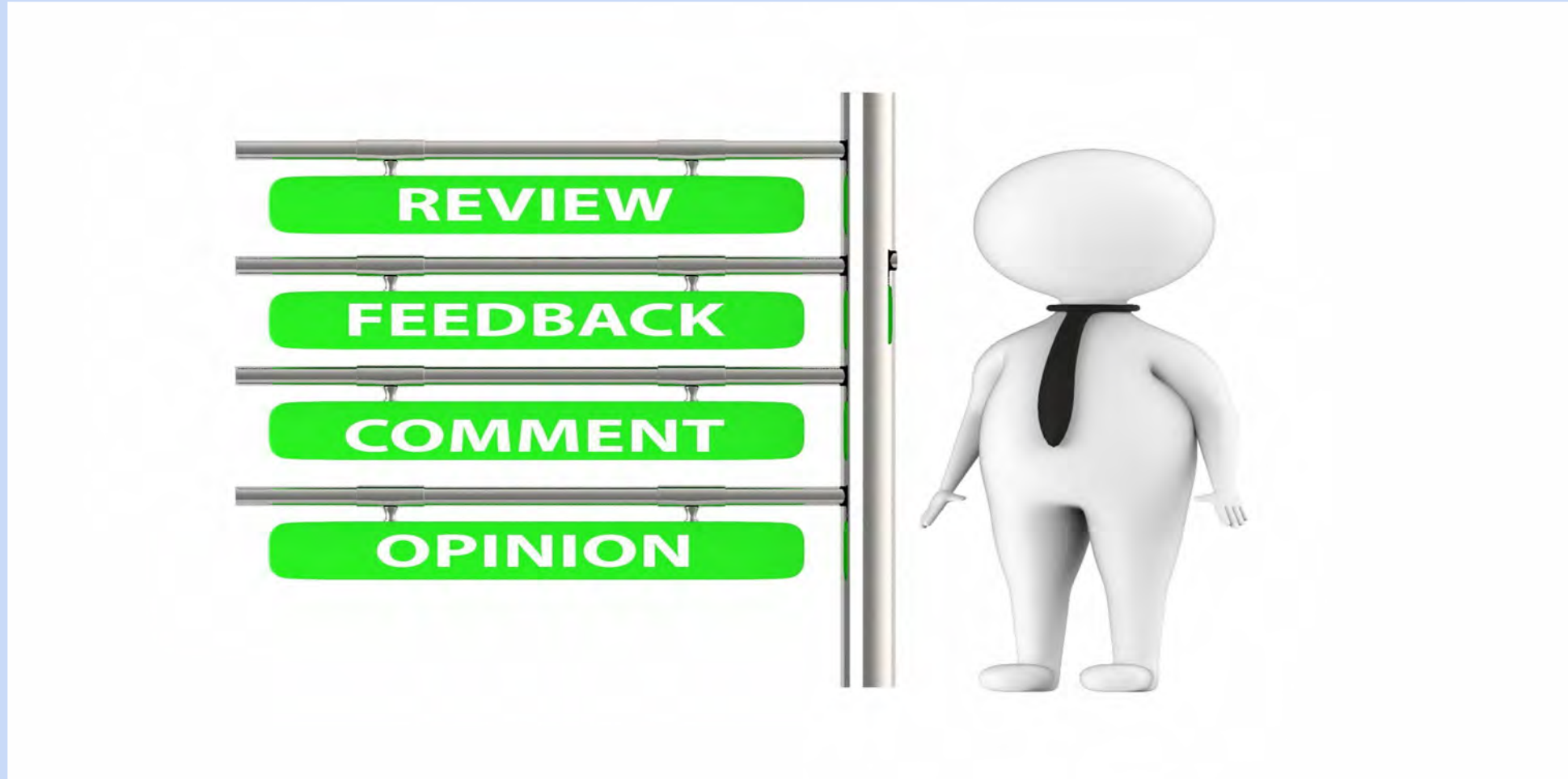
2021- MA degree in ELT (16 years later :)

**2022- Supporting SEN in Every Classroom- by
European School Education- Teacher
Academy**

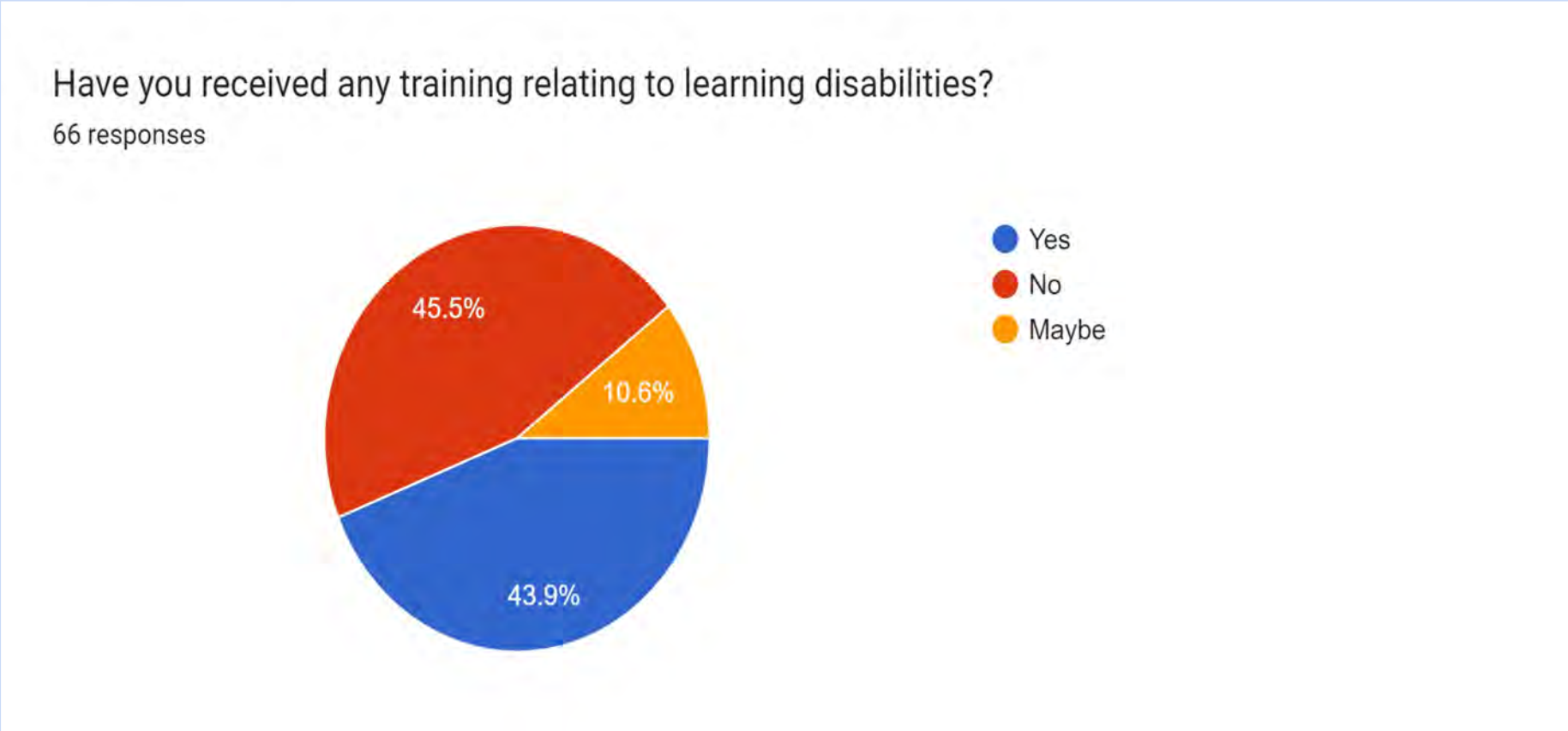
-Action Researcher



PRE-WEBINAR SURVEY RESULTS



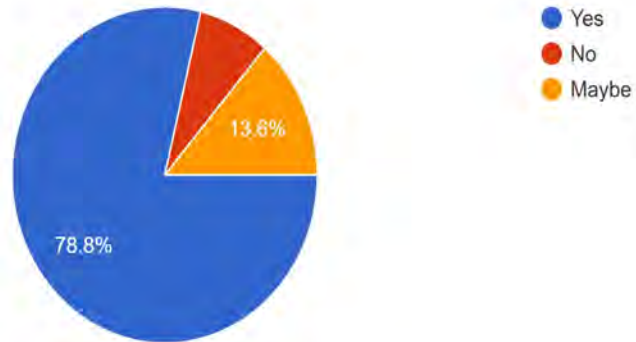
REMARKABLE RESULTS OF THE PRE-WEBINAR SURVEY



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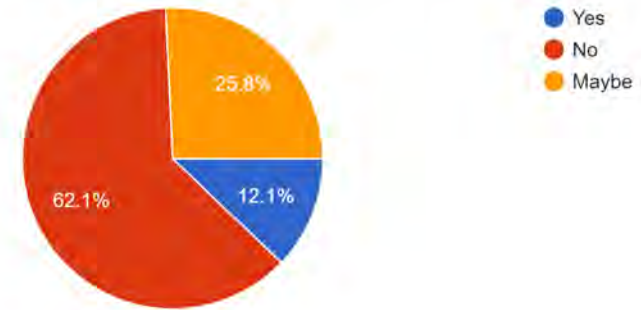
Have you got any students with learning disabilities in your classrooms?

66 responses



Do you believe your knowledge about learning disabilities is sufficient to teach English as a Foreign Language to the students who have learning disabilities?

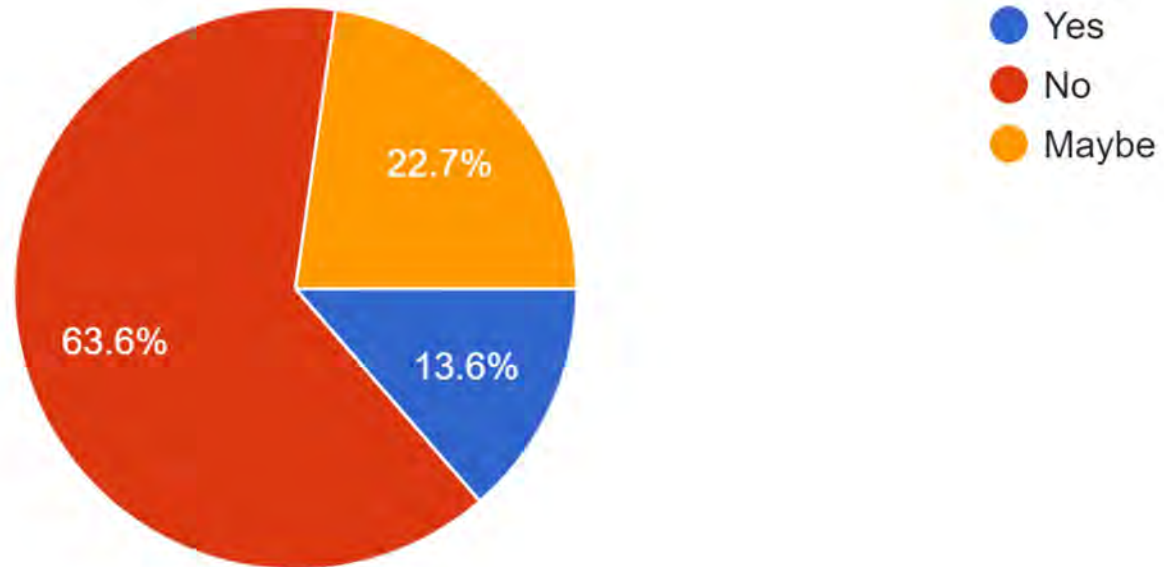
66 responses



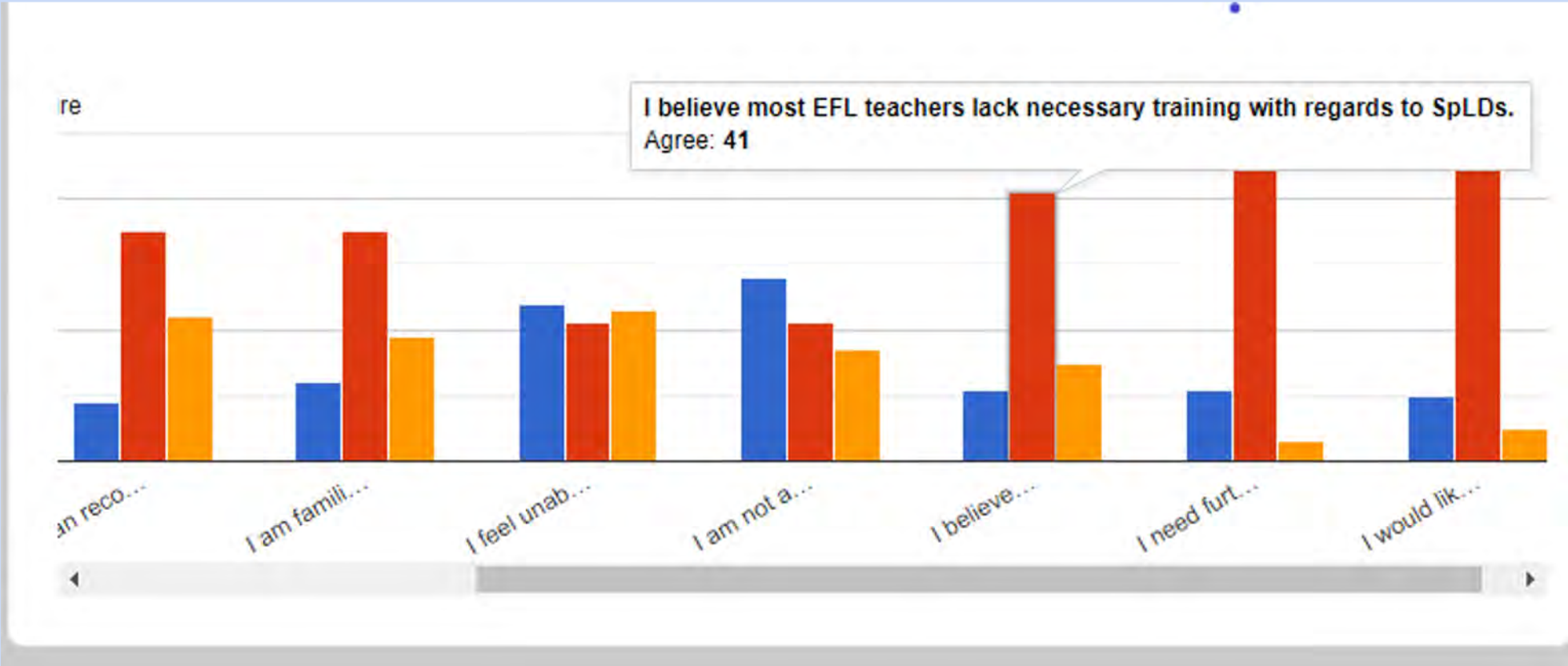
REMARKABLE RESULTS OF THE PRE-WEBINAR SURVEY

Do you have knowledge about specialized methods of EFL teaching to students with LDs?

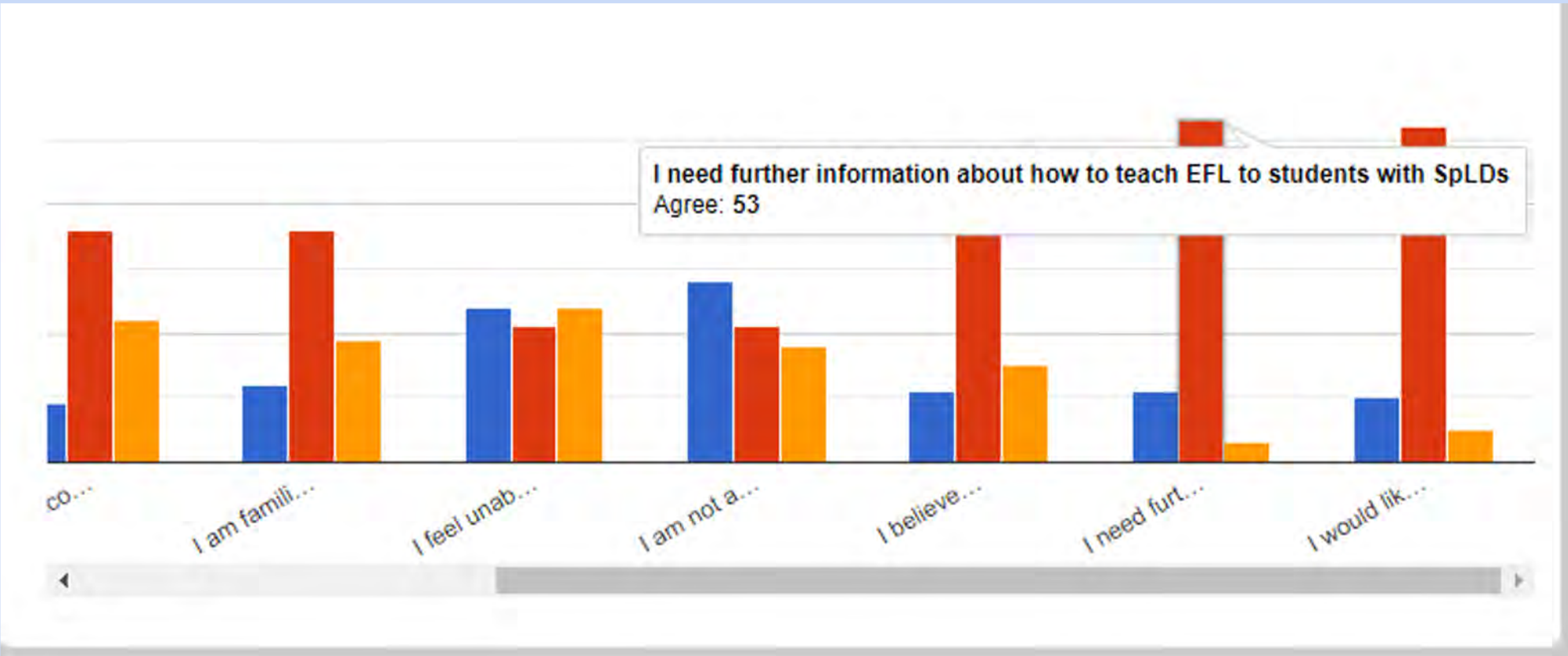
66 responses



REMARKABLE RESULTS OF THE PRE-WEBINAR SURVEY



REMARKABLE RESULTS OF THE PRE-WEBINAR SURVEY



FINDINGS

TEACHERS WANT TO BE TRAINED!



Understanding Dyslexia

EDUCATION, the privilege of all children

13-14 % special education needs

every 5 students



Understanding Learning Disabilities

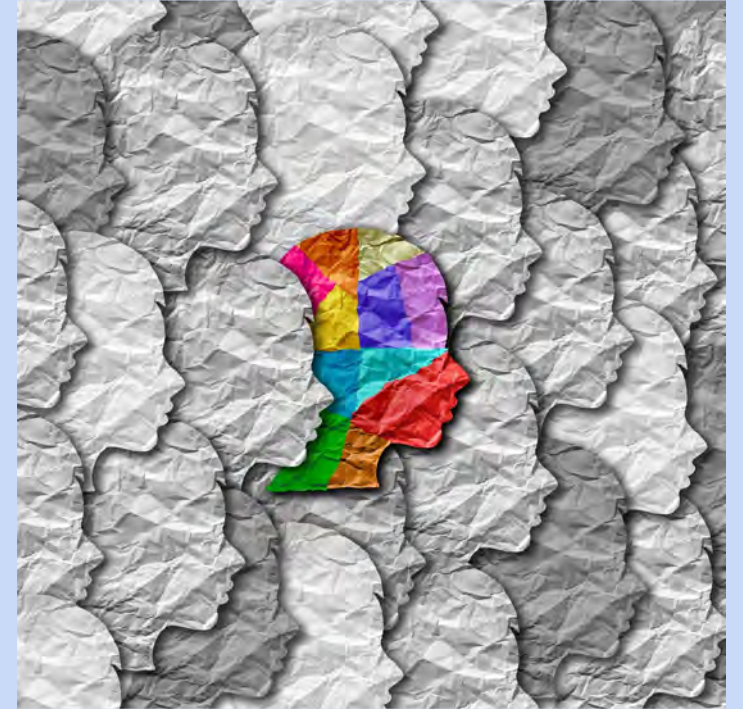
“A learning disability is a neurological disorder that affects one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language. The disability may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, and spell or to do mathematical calculations.”

***Types of Learning Disabilities – Learning Disabilities Association of America**

Understanding Neurodiversity

Problematic term “SEN”

**multitude of ways in which brains develop,
resulting in a continuum of cognitive abilities and difficulties**
(Kormos, 2012)



Understanding Neurodiversity

DYSCALCULIA

DYSGRAPHIA

DYSLEXIA

NON-VERBAL LEARNING DISABILITIES

SPECIFIC READING COMPREHENSION DEFICIT

RELATED: ADHD/ DYSPRAXIA/ EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

DYSLEXIA

Dyslexia is difficult to define because four different levels need to be considered in its definition: behavioural, cognitive, biological and environmental (Frith, 1999).

-neurological in origin.
level



Biological

-accurate and/or fluent word recognition & poor spelling and decoding abilities.



Behavioural level

-result from a deficit in the phonological
relation to other cognitive abilities



Cognitive level

- effective classroom instruction.

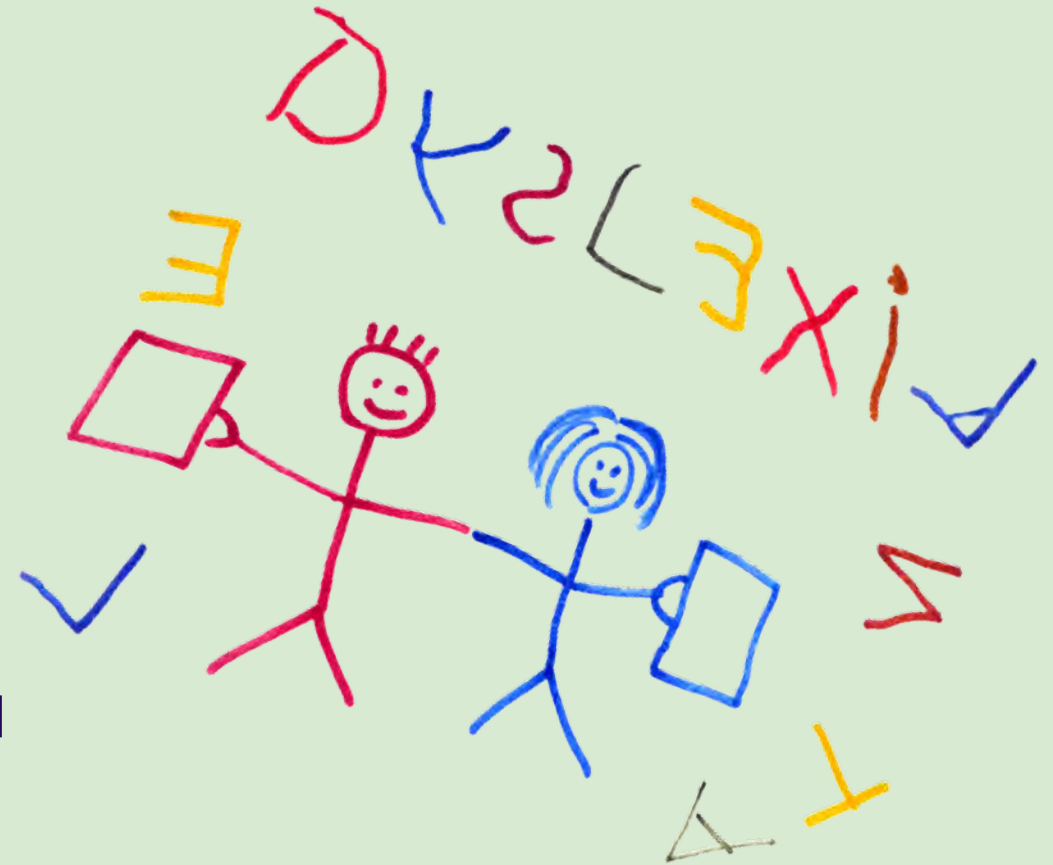
Environmental level

Problems with SLA

- **75% phonological problems**
- **Auditory problems**
- **Working memory**
- **Transparent languages > Opaque Languages**

MISCONCEPTIONS

- reading and writing letters backwards
- dyslexic people can't read and write
- dyslexia occurs in school ages
- dyslexia ends when the child begins to read
- dyslexia is caused by visual problems
- they can not learn foreign languages



REAL SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA

General: - Difficulty/slow to copy information from the board

- Can seem disorganised and forgetful
- Can be slow to recall information/find the correct word from memory
- Difficulty in learning sequences e.g. the alphabet, months of the year

Vocabulary: - Quick to forget new vocabulary

- Difficulty with prefixes, suffixes and identifying the root of the word.

REAL SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA

Reading: - Skipping lines, letters and words in a text

- Forgets what a text was about immediately after reading
- Needs more time to read texts

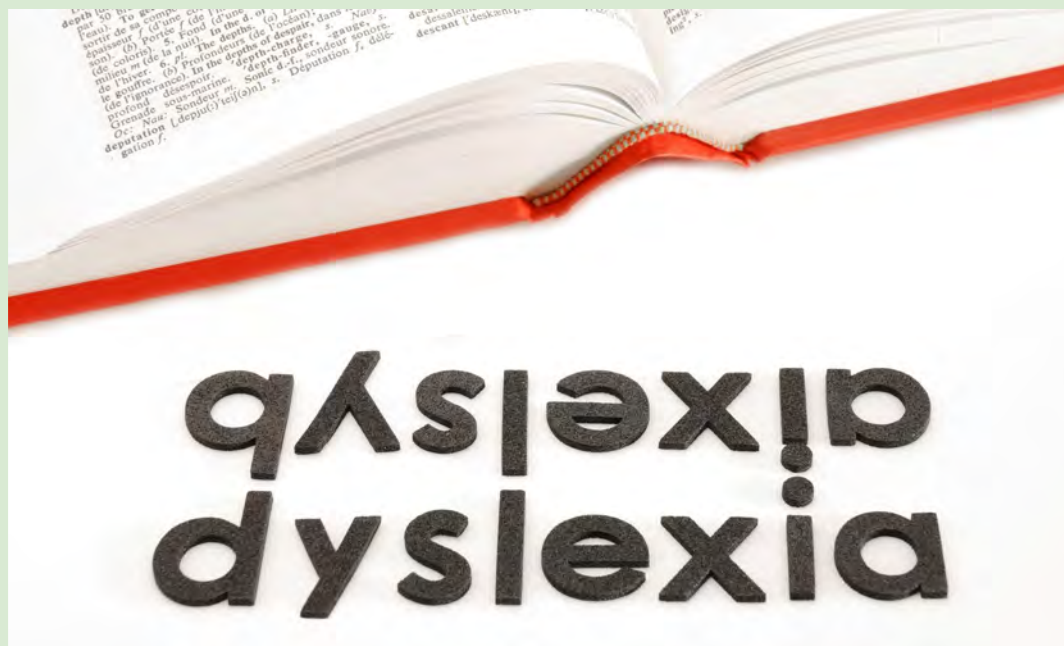
Listening: - Forgets verbally given information quickly

- Difficulty differentiating between long and short vowel sounds
- Difficulty hearing different syllables/sounds in a word

REAL SIGNS OF DYSLEXIA

Writing: - Flipping of letters such as 'd' 'b' 'p'

- Reversing sequence of letters
- Spelling words as they sound
- Writing in long sentences with little punctuation
- Changing tenses mid sentence Poor handwriting Ideas unorganised



STRENGTHS OF NEURODIVERGENT STUDENTS

- **curiosity;**
- **outstanding creativity;**
- **capability of deducing information;**
- **using fresh innovations willingly;**
- **a good knowledge of emerging ideas;**
- **remarkable maturity;**
- **takes pleasure in solving puzzles;**
- **strong model-building skills;**
- **the ability to see the big picture**
- **reasoning and imagination: logical and creative thinking: strategic planning**

TEACHING TIPS

Reading: sentence level- short paragraphs

breaking text into smaller sections

motivating texts

colours to highlight

larger fonts and wider line spacing

never reading aloud

stop and review after each paragraph

Listening: no background noise

visuals to listening tasks

pronunciation exercises with visual cues



Writing: Mind maps, brainstorming

extra time to complete task

No underlining errors & self correct

Speaking: simple personal questions

online dictionaries

small groups or pair work

podcasts

TEACHING TIPS

Grammar: clear and concise explanations

color - coding of

interactive whiteboard activities

online games: <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/grammar-exercises>

Working Memory- giving the notes beforehand

Vocabulary: words into chunks

frequent repeats

multisensory Methods

mind maps/ mnemonics

SOME HELPFUL RESOURCES

Books:

Kormos, J. (2017). The second language learning processes of students with specific learning difficulties

Nijakowska, J. (2010). Dyslexia. London: Routledge.

in the foreign language classroom. Chapter 2 (Phonological Coding Deficit Hypothesis) and Chapter 6.

Tools:

ABC Spelling Magic

Sentence Maker

Anki cards

Dragon Dictation & Texthelp

www.teachingenglish.org.uk

CONCLUSION

Teachers are in need of further instruction on the subject of supporting neurodivergent students.



SUGGESTIONS

The quick brown
fox jumped
over the lazy
brown dog.

(OPEN DYSLEXIC FONT)

*<https://axesslab.com/fonts-dont-matter/opendyslexic/>

FIRST, KNOW THE CHILD!

- Listen to the feelings.
 - Rewarding effort
 - Realistic goals
- Planning the lesson & materials
- Assistive Technology
- Mind Maps...

REFERENCES

American Psychiatric Association (2019). What is Specific Learning Disorder? Retrieved from <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/specific-learning-disorder/what-is-specific-learning-disorder>

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Who am I?

I am an ELT Professional who has been teaching English to all age levels for about 22 years. I graduated from Ege University, English Language and Literature Department in 2000. I have another Bachelor's degree in International Relations and a Master's degree in English Language teaching. I am also a Mind Mapping, Speed Reading, and Memory techniques instructor and an NLP practitioner as well. I am focused on Linguistics, Neuroscience, and Languages and has been conducting academic research on Linguistics, ELT, Mindmapping, and Education. I have attended numerous webinars and international congresses as a presenter focusing on English Language Teaching Education, Linguistics, Speed Reading, and Mind Mapping.

www.teachingenglish.org.uk



NEURODIVERGENT STUDENTS AND MIND MAPPING

- Through the use of keywords, images, associations, and connections instead of focusing on spelling and grammar points in neurodivergent students experience difficulty handling, they enjoy this learning tool's advantages. As most dyslexic students see pictures rather than words and numbers as visual thinkers, mind maps in which they can personalize the keywords with associations and images, provide a much more effective and fun way of learning.
- As a result of research conducted on ASD, it was found that The student was more motivated to study because a mind map is more interesting than a mere text and it was easier for the student to comprehend the lesson because mind maps resembled the work of the brain(Winardi, 2022).



DYSLEXIA AND MIND MAPPING



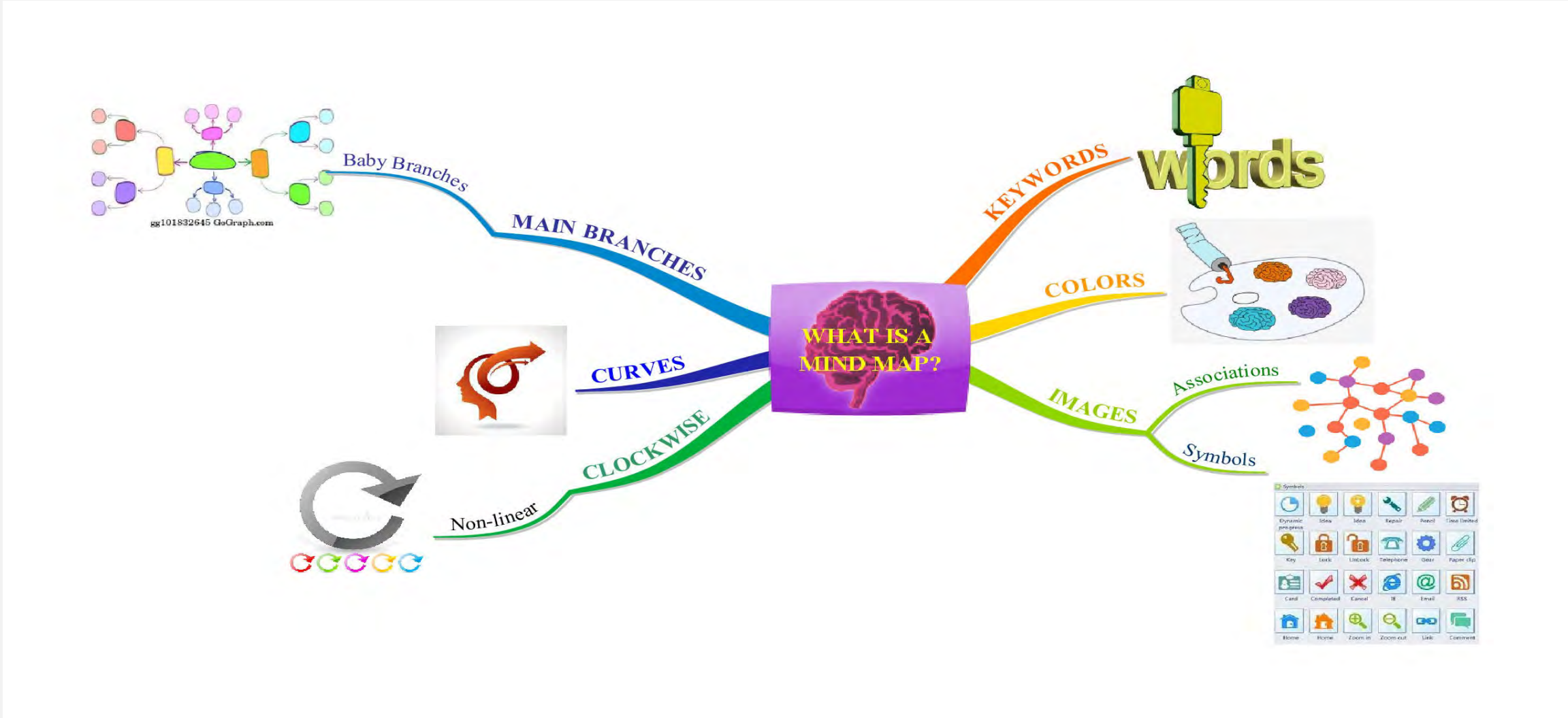
The British Dyslexia Association states, “Dyslexics struggle with their spoken and/or written language, following instructions, poor concentration and carrying out analytical or logical tasks. Strategies such as mind mapping are recognized as valuable learning tools.”

The human brain has left and right brain symmetry with its own nature and can process information which initially appears to have no pattern or order. However, the brain has the ability to process visual information much more efficiently.

Tony Buzan

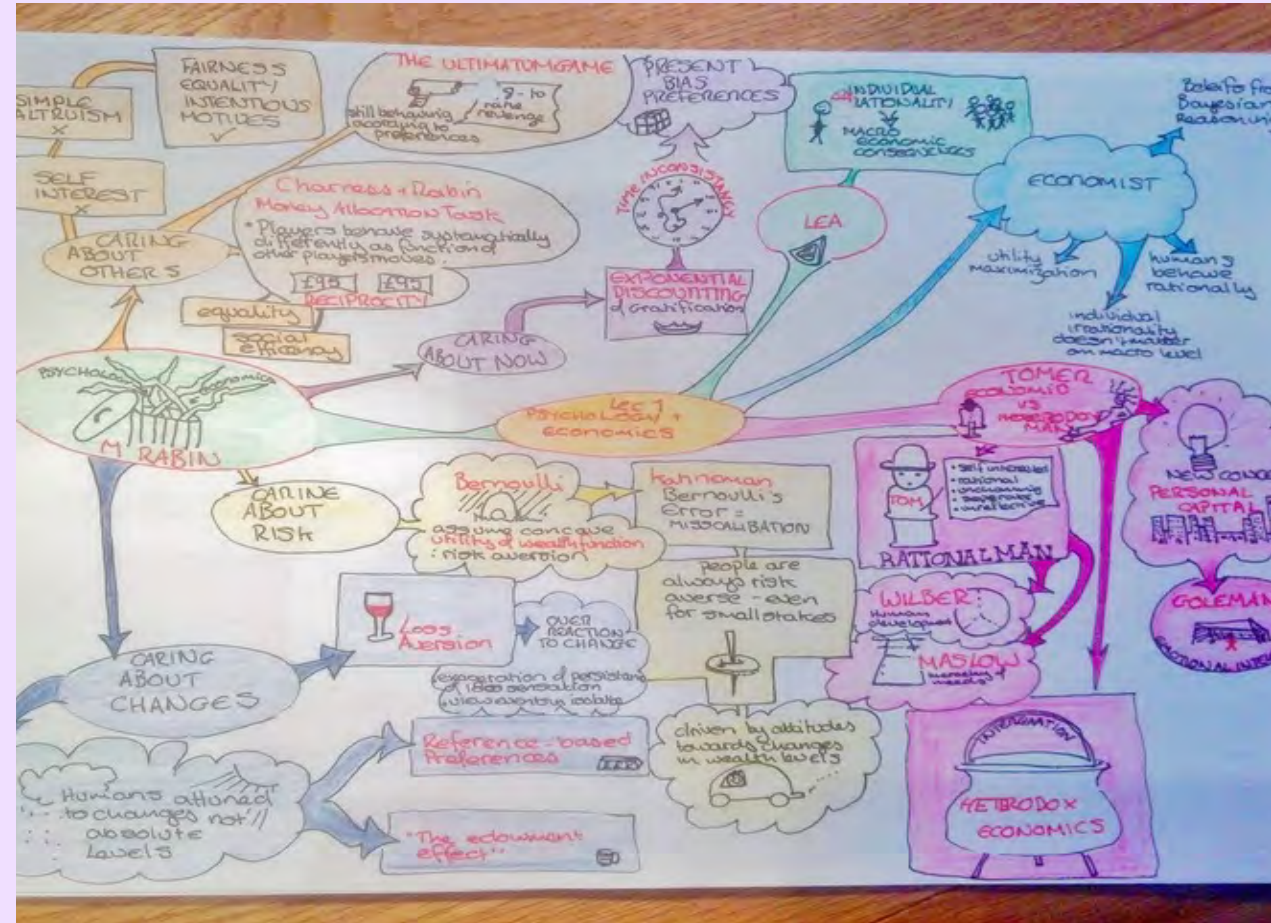
"The Mind Map Book". Book by Tony Buzan, 1991.

WHAT IS A MIND MAP?

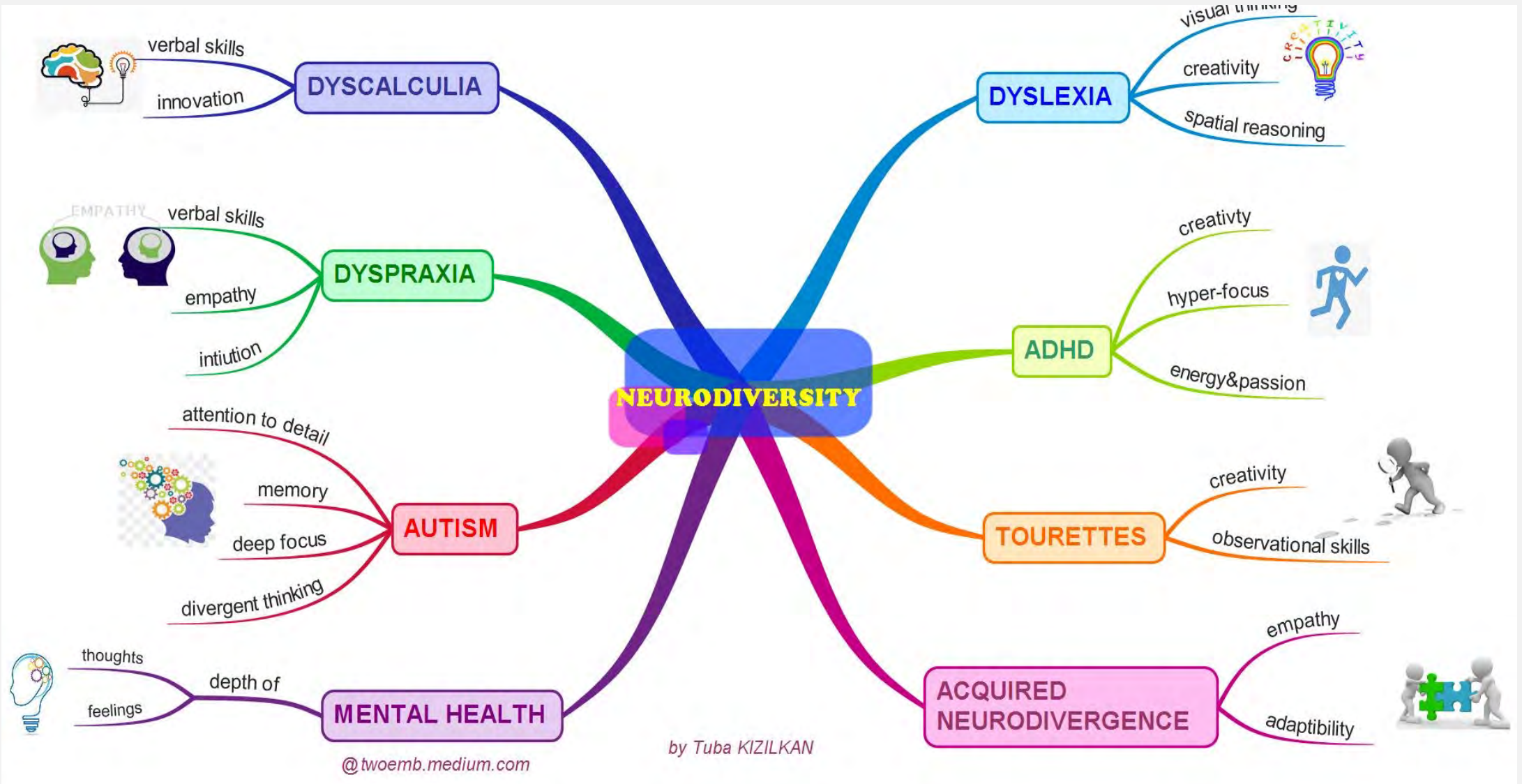


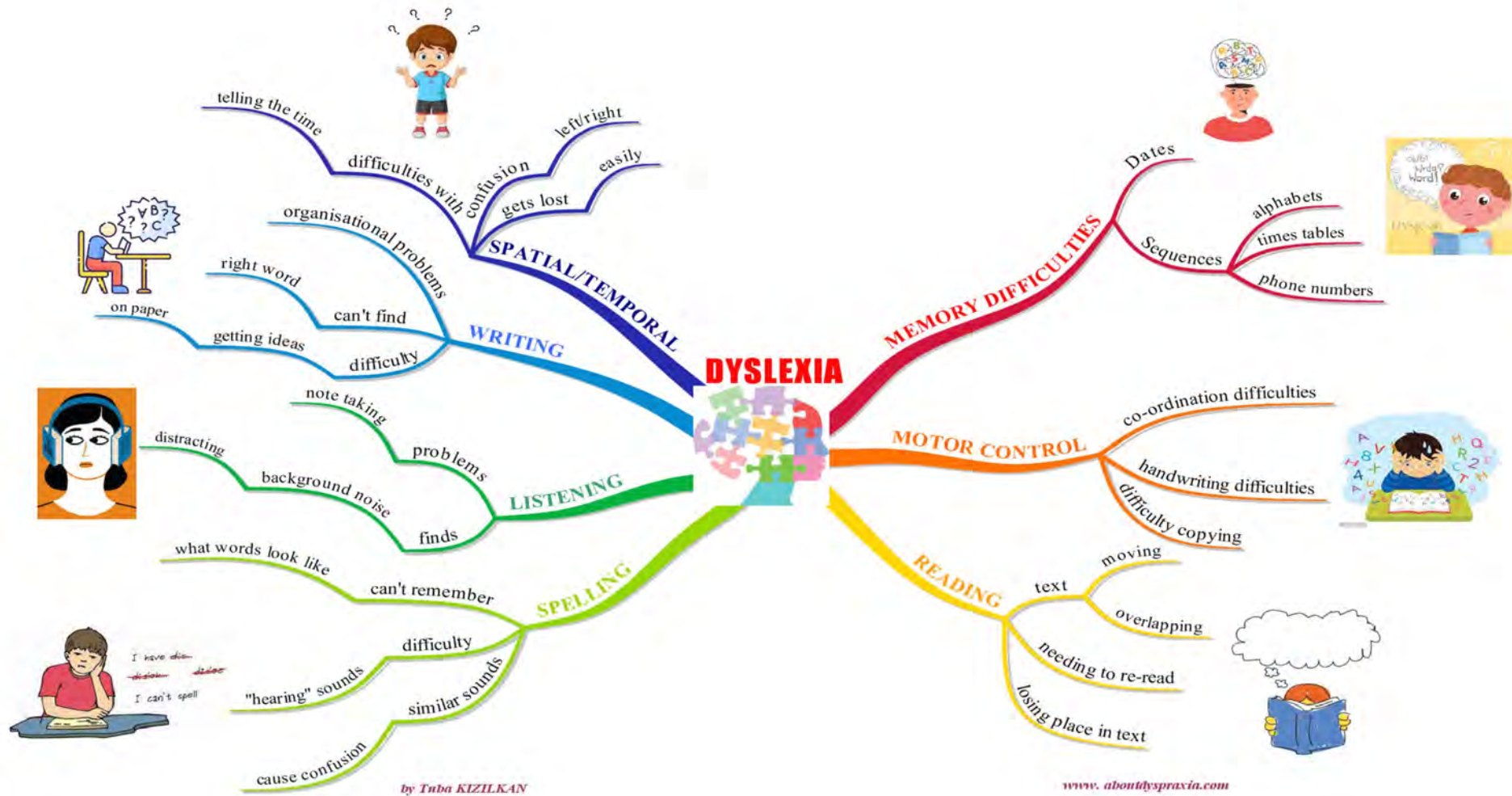
HOW DO MINDMAPS WORK WITH NEURODIVERGENT STUDENTS?

- A mind map is the most powerful tool that can help the brain to think properly (Tony Buzan, 2006: 4) A mind map, which was first introduced by Buzan, is a diagram with a particular central idea and branches drawn to sub-topics represented by keywords. They have a non-linear shape with vivid colors and images which helps retain and memorize information easier. Neurodivergent students may have difficulty in retaining and processing short-term information, planning and problem-solving skills, memory, perception, motor processing, and information processing speed. According to Tony Buzan (2013), the individual who had learning difficulties such as dyslexia and autism are more easily absorbed the tasks after being exposed to the techniques of mind mapping, especially in the opening function of both sides of their brains.

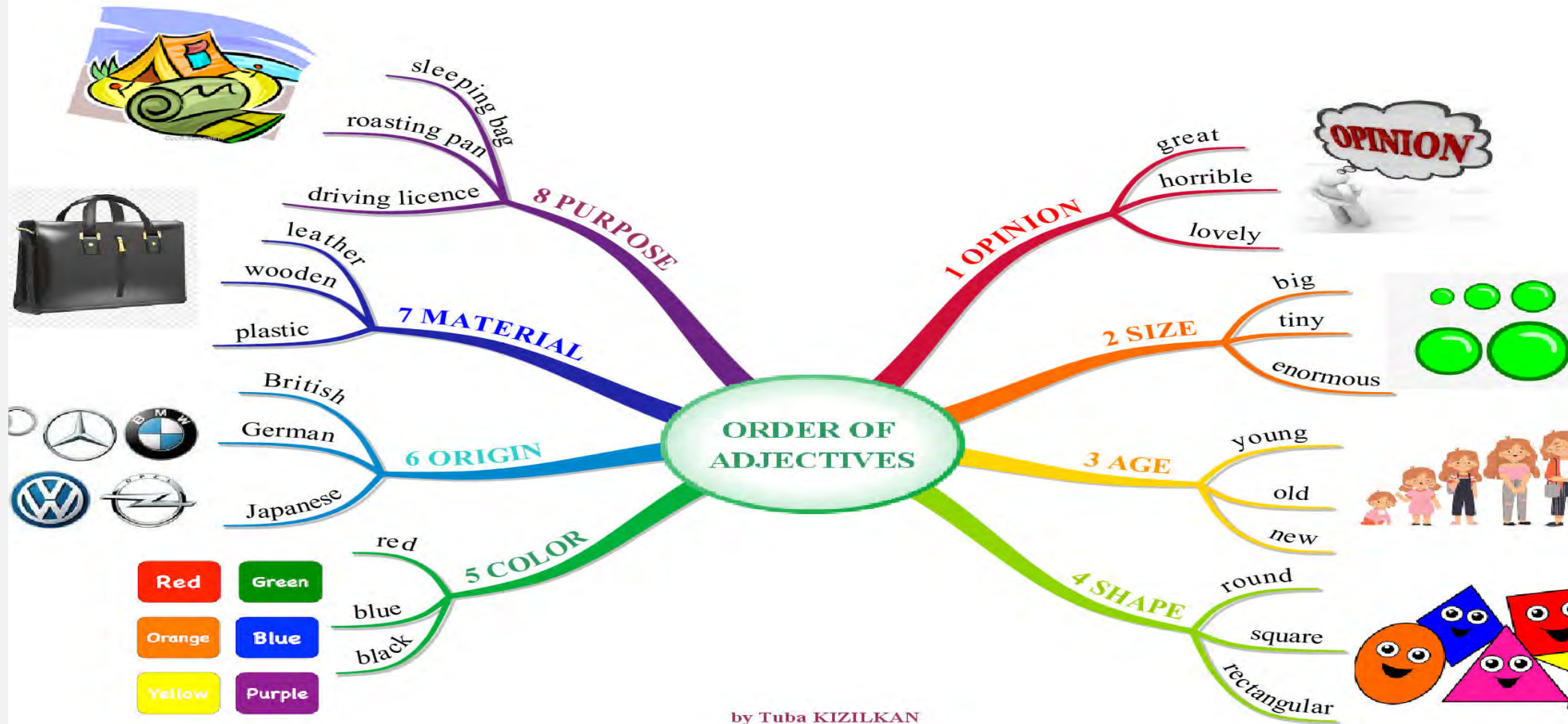


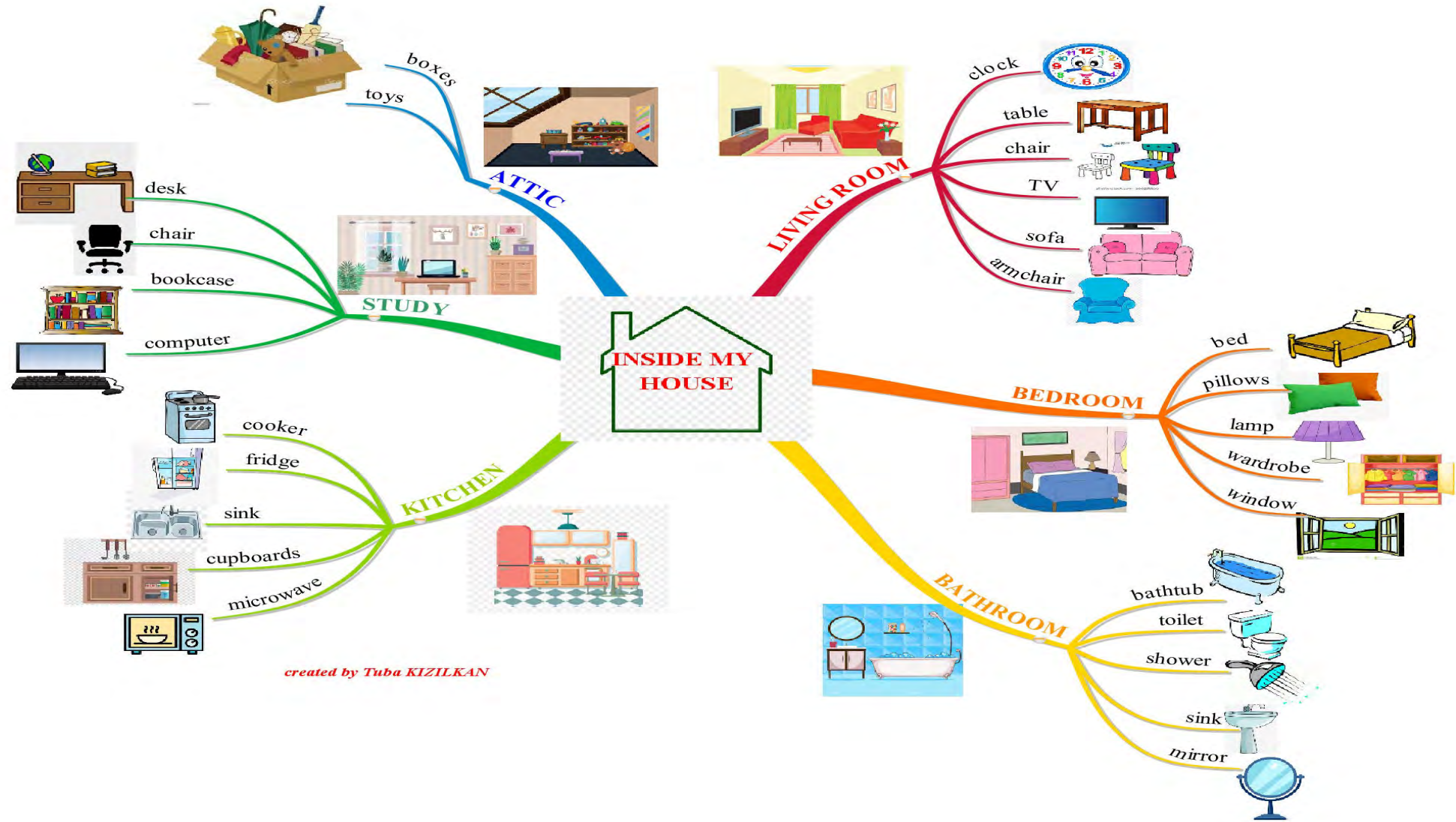
<https://www.dyslexiclogic.com/blog/2015/10/30/teaching-mind-mapping-to-children-with-dyslexia>



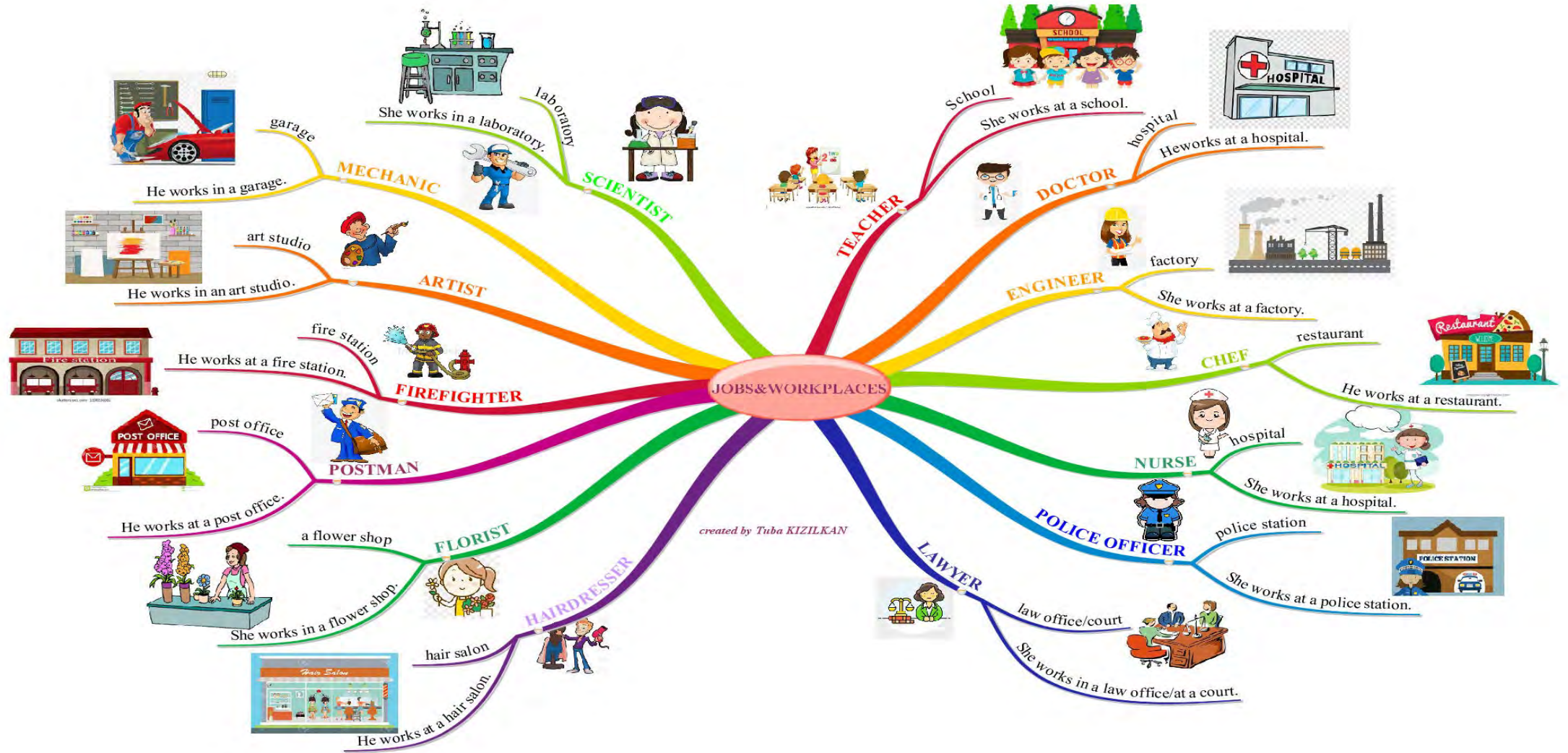


AN EXAMPLE OF MIND MAP FOR NEURODIVERGENT STUDENTS





created by Tuba KIZILKAN



DYSLEXIA AND HISTORICAL FIGURES

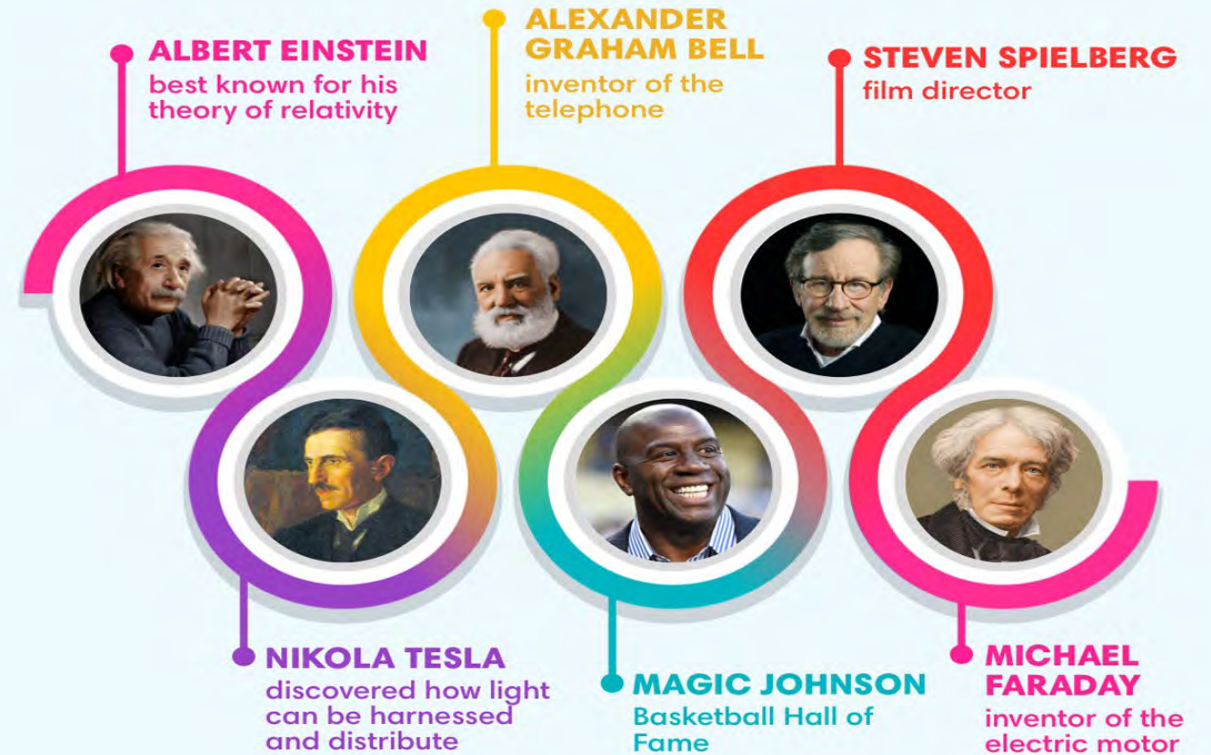
Leonardo Da Vinci

This Renaissance engineer, mathematician, architect, inventor, and painter of the Mona Lisa, often wrote in reverse mirror image. He also had inconsistent spelling in his notes, which some people have suggested points to dyslexia. Moreover, Da Vinci was a creative genius and an original thinker of the highest order, qualities commonly associated with dyslexia.

Pablo Picasso

Picasso, the famed Spanish artist and sculptor whose paintings now sell for millions and millions notoriously struggled with reading in school. He was said to have difficulty seeing the letters correctly and could not read. Yet, he also had a keen sense of space, and more advanced visual-spatial ability is often found in dyslexia.

Famous Dyslexics



Some Mind Mapping Tool Recommendations for teachers

- [Coggle](#): Easily create visuals of your ideas with this online tool that allows you to create and share mind maps.
- [Imindq](#): Brainstorm, plan projects and create amazing presentations with this robust online mind mapping tool. You can even test drive it for free to see if it is the right application for your students.
- [MindMaple Classic](#): Personalize your mind maps with colors, images, and pictures by using this tool that works with various platforms, including Windows, iOS, macOS.
- [Popplet](#): Capture facts, thoughts, and images and learn to create relationships between them with this free online tool that allows you to create mind mapping and brainstorming diagrams.
- [MindMeister](#): An online mind mapping tool that lets you capture, develop and share ideas visually using a variety of platforms including Windows and Mac OS.
- [SpiderScribe](#): This online mind mapping tool allows you to organize your ideas by connecting notes, files, calendar events, etc. in free-form maps. You can collaborate and share those maps online.
- [Bubbl.us](#): Use this online tool for brainstorming, creating colorful mind maps and collaborating with others.
- [Lucidchart](#): Try this free, quick and easy-to-use tool for creating your own mind map.
- [Canva](#): This free resource provides ready-made templates and simple, drag and drop design tools that help you create perfect mind maps in minutes.
- [Matchware](#): This mind map is especially designed for Dyslectic students. It offers seamless integration with Microsoft Office. Users can turn their mind maps into Microsoft Word or PowerPoint documents with one click.



SUGGESTED LINKS&RESOURCES:

- <https://medium.com/neurodiversity-at-work/how-mind-mapping-can-help-you-connect-with-neurodivergent-employees-bdbbd1ebc29f>
- <https://www.lexxic.com/blog/2019/8/13/mind-maps-for-neuro-diversity-and-beyond>
- <https://www.mindmapping.com/mind-mapping-in-education>
- <https://www.dyslexicadvantage.org/mind-mapping-for-dyslexic-teens/>
- <https://www.ayoa.com/ourblog/how-mind-mapping-can-help-with-dyslexia/>
- <https://www.dyslexiasupportsouth.org.nz/parent-toolkit/resources/mind-mapping/>
- <https://www.structural-learning.com/post/neurodiversity-in-the-classroom-a-teachers-guide>

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<https://btog.innerdrive.co.uk/5-ways-to-support-neurodiversity-in-the-classroom>

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<https://www.dyslexiclogic.com/blog/2015/10/30/teaching-mind-mapping-to-children-with-dyslexia>

<https://www.qualitymatters.org/qa-resources/resource-center/articles-resources/mind-maps>

Thank you

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