Free sample from the book The Source for Dyslexia and Dysgraphia
(SKU THS52636) available from www.therapro.com

The following list of similarities between these two processing styles reveals why many students may experience both struggles.

Similarities Between Dyslexia and Dysgraphia

- Both have a poor processing base causing sequencing struggles: poor ability to organize information or movements in a specific automatic order
- Both involve a struggle to develop automaticity of overall performances: skill performance is labored, resulting in decreased efficiency and poor automatic use
- Both involve a struggle with automatic visual recognition and/or retrieval of letter form
- Both benefit from similar strategies:
  - ✔ Systematic instruction
  - ✔ Multisensory techniques
  - ✔ Focus on making connections
  - ✔ Staging (performing one subtask at a time)
- Both benefit from similar compensations:
  - ✔ External assistance (books on tape or dictation of papers)
  - ✔ Extra time

The overall intent of this book is to help you better understand the struggles experienced by dyslexic and dysgraphic students, as well as appreciate the amazing gifts exhibited by these students. Many times such students appear to be paradoxes. What is typically easy for others (such as reading small words or performing elementary math tasks) may actually be very difficult for dyslexic students. Conversely, what is hard for others provides areas for the dyslexic students to shine, primarily because of their brightness and creativity. Eileen Simpson, a dyslexic, struggled with rote, mechanical knowledge. However, she began to excel in high school when she was allowed to take courses such as logic and philosophy because her ability to deal with abstractions was highly developed. (Simpson 1979, 153) As teachers and parents, we need to focus on helping all students find their way to shine in the academic world.

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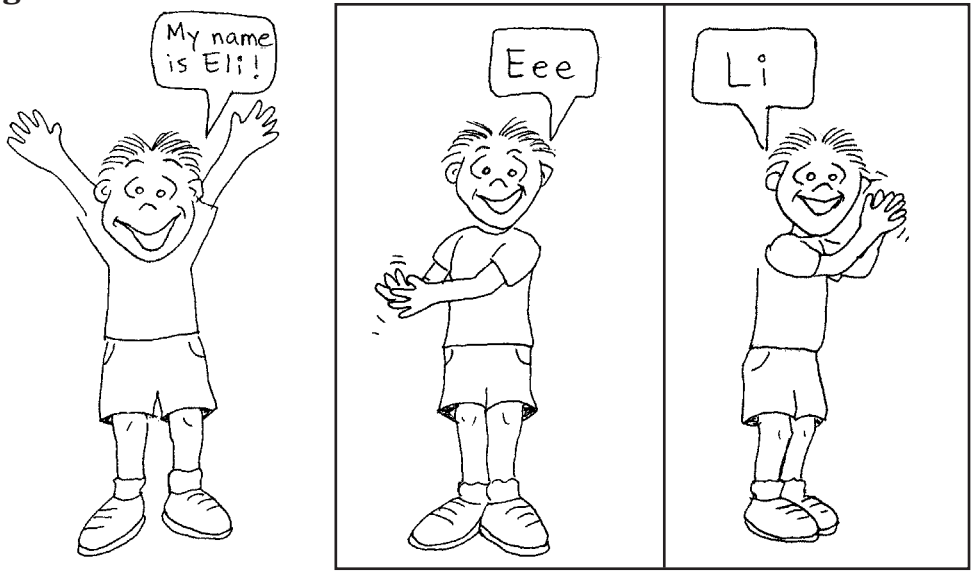
Figure 8b.1



each syllable is said, counting the syllables with the fingers on your other hand.

- Using Unifex Cubes® (or other manipulatives that hook together), display three cubes and say, "This represents the three parts, or the syllables, in the word *jellyfish*. Who can separate these cubes while telling us each syllable?"

  Vary the activity using one-, two-, three-, and four-syllable words.

  Vary the activity by saying a word and having a student select the correct number of cubes.

5.4 Sorting activities: sort pictures of words by the number of syllables

- Make three columns on the chalkboard, numbering each 1, 2, or 3.
- Place facedown a set of simple picture cards representing words of one to three syllables.
- Student selects a picture, claps or taps the number of syllables in the word, and places the picture under the corresponding number (using masking tape on a chalkboard or a magnet on a magnetic board).
- Variation: add columns 4 and 5 and pictures of four- and five-syllable words as students progress.

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- **Large muscle activities.**
  - ✔ Students make up a dance, using a conga line, the stroll, or bunny hop, and they chant the letters to their spelling words while dancing.
  - ✔ Stomp or thrust. Words are written in a list on the chalkboard. Students read the letters of each spelling word in unison and stomp, clap, or thrust an arm or leg according to specific criteria.
    Stomp on each consonant (or vowel).
    Thrust the arm forward on each vowel (or consonant).
    Kick a leg forward on each consonant (or vowel).
  - ✔ Vowel hop. The class reads the letters of each word in unison. When a vowel appears, they make a small hop in place while saying the letter.

    Variation: instead of hopping, the class can be seated and stand up (and sit back down) each time a vowel is said.

    Variation: they can stand up (and sit back down) each time a consonant is said.

    Variation: they begin standing and briefly sit each time a vowel is said.
  - ✔ Students create a body alphabet of letters and pantomime each letter of each spelling word.
  - ✔ Students pantomime the meaning of each spelling word and classmates try to guess at the meaning.
  - ✔ Students take turns reading the letters of the word from a chalkboard or large chart while performing a motor activity.
    Use a trampa (36" round rebounder or exerciser).
    Use a balance beam.
    Hit a suspendable ball.
    Bounce a basketball.
- **Textures.** Students write spelling words on textures or using textures, using their finger instead of a pencil. It is important that they say each letter name as they write it. Use textures such as:
  - ✔ Carpet
  - ✔ Light sandpaper
  - ✔ Chocolate pudding
  - ✔ Whipped cream

- **Self-directed goals.** Students create their own goals for how they will study and learn their spelling words.

- **Independent work.** Students work independently to study the words by selecting two different activities which draw upon different learning preferences.

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