

Dyslexic Advantage Movie Kit

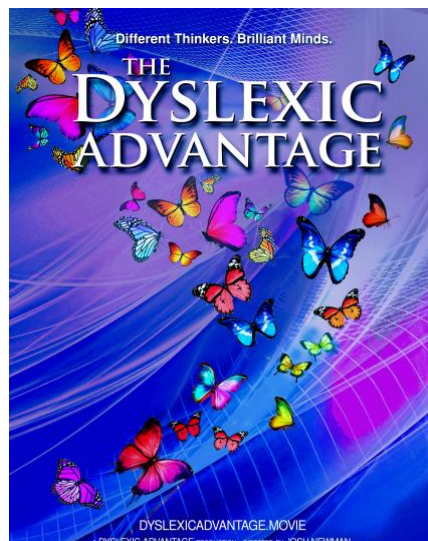
Year of Release: 2025

Length: 43 minutes

Director: Josh Newman

Starring: Dr. Robert Ballard, Drs. Brock and Fernette Eide, Dr. Chris Ford, Lauren Havel, John Muir Laws (Jack), Krista Weltner

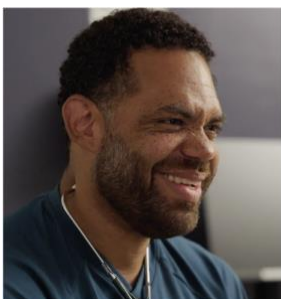
Themes: Cognitive Diversity, Cognitive Strengths, Creativity, Dyslexia, Dyslexic Advantages, Education Innovation, MIND Strengths, Resilience, Self-Understanding



Context

Dyslexic Advantage is a documentary film that explores the experiences, challenges, and remarkable strengths of individuals with dyslexia. The film highlights the journeys of students, artists, scientists, and professionals, as well as the world-leading researchers who have reshaped our understanding of dyslexia from a learning “disability” to a powerful brain difference with unique advantages. Through personal stories and expert insights, the film encourages viewers to appreciate the many ways dyslexic people contribute to society—often by thinking outside the box.

The Cast



Dr. Chris Ford
Emergency Room



Lauren Havel
Filmmaker



John Muir Laws (Jack)
Naturalist



Krista Weltner
Puppeteer, Children’s
Book Author-Illustrator



Dr. Fernette Eide and Dr. Brock Eide
Physicians, Authors, Co-Founders



Dr. Bob Ballard
Undersea Explorer

Terms

Dyslexia:

A brain-based processing difference that affects reading, spelling, and rote learning, but is also connected with strengths in areas like creativity, pattern recognition, spatial reasoning, and innovation.

Neurodiversity:

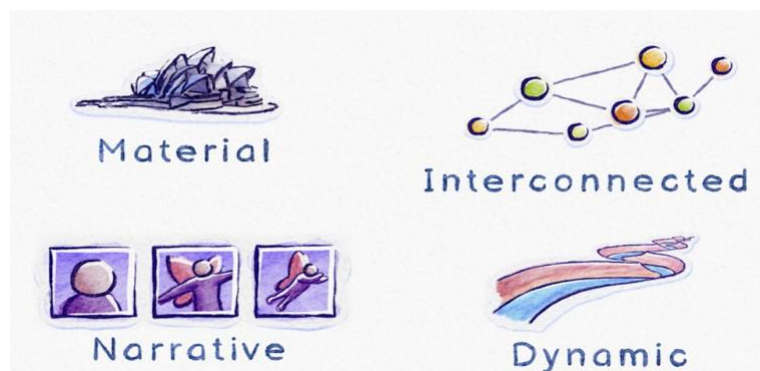
The idea that differences in people's brain structures, as can be found in dyslexia or ADHD are part of normal human differences and not diseases.

Automaticity:

Being able to do a task (like reading or spelling) quickly and without thinking about each step. For example, many people who ride bikes can ride without having to consciously think about every action they are taking when they are riding a bike.

MIND Strengths:

A framework introduced by Drs. Brock and Fernette Eide describing four common areas of dyslexic talent. The acronym MIND stands for:



- **M (Material/3D Reasoning):** Thinking or reasoning through physical materials
- **I (Interconnected Reasoning):** Seeing how ideas or different phenomena may be related or fit together
- **N (Narrative Reasoning):** Remembering and thinking in stories
- **D (Dynamic Reasoning):** Imagining how things will change under changing conditions or how processes may change over time.

Background

Dyslexia affects up to 20% of the population and is the most common cause of reading, writing, and spelling difficulties. Historically, people with dyslexia have been misunderstood and often faced stigma, being labeled as “slow” or “unmotivated.” However, scientific advances in neuroscience and education have shown that dyslexia is not a sign of low intelligence or laziness, but a different brain wiring.

Dyslexic processing differences can make some tasks—like decoding words or memorizing facts—more difficult. Yet, these same differences are linked to unique cognitive strengths. Many successful artists, inventors, entrepreneurs, and scientists are dyslexic. The film challenges the deficit-based view of dyslexia and reveals how, when supported, dyslexic individuals can thrive and make extraordinary contributions.

- The MIND strengths and how they appear in real lives
- Role models who turned challenges into opportunities
- The importance of understanding, support, and self-acceptance

Discussion Guide

This film reframes dyslexia from a “learning disability” to a cognitive difference that can produce distinctive strengths—shared through first-person voices rather than outsider commentary.

Use discussion to surface lived experiences, challenge assumptions, and notice strengths. A simple shared language (the MIND strengths: Material, Interconnected, Narrative, Dynamic reasoning) can help viewers name what they’re seeing and feeling.

Expect strong feelings. Common themes include early confusion, hiddenness and shame, not yet finding a niche, and difficulty conveying the internal experience to others. Make room for emotion, stories, and strengths.

If you’re a principal, librarian, or community leader screening the movie without a personal connection to dyslexia, see if you could ask a dyslexic adult to present to say a few words and be involved in the discussion. Dyslexia is still hidden among many

adults, but when you open up the question to people that you know, you may be surprised at some of the people in your circle who offer to help. Dyslexia is very common – nearly 1 in 5 people are dyslexic, so chances are some of people you know well is dyslexic or has a child who is dyslexic.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the film change your understanding of dyslexia?
2. What are some of the strengths and talents discussed in the film that are connected to dyslexia?
3. What challenges do people with dyslexia face in school and in life? How did the people in the film cope with or overcome these challenges?
4. Why is it important to recognize both the difficulties and the strengths of dyslexia?
5. Many people in the film talked about finding their own way to learn or solve problems. Can you think of a time when you did something differently—and it worked?
6. Who are some role models in the film, and what did you learn from their stories?
7. The film talks about “neurodiversity.” What does this term mean to you, and why is it important for understanding differences in learning and thinking?
8. How can you use what you learned from the film to support yourself or others with dyslexia?

For small group sessions, 5-10 minute activities may involve “noticing strengths” in the film they watched or in someone they know. Prompt the groups to think about different thinkers that they know – at least different from themselves, and what positive things these people do.

Learn more

Sign up for the free Dyslexic Advantage newsletter at DyslexicAdvantage.org
The Dyslexic Advantage book is available at local booksellers, Bookshop.org, Amazon.com and [Barnes and Noble](https://BarnesandNoble.com). It's available in audio too!

Encourage your Dyslexic students to enter the [Karina Eide Young Writers Awards](https://KarinaEide.com)

Become a [Premium subscriber](https://DyslexicAdvantage.org) to Dyslexic Advantage Magazine

Take the free [Neurolearning MIND strengths screener at Neurolearning.com](https://Neurolearning.com)

Support Dyslexic Advantage by volunteering to help spread awareness about this movie. [Donations](https://DyslexicAdvantage.org) help us reach more people with this important message.
