

# TIPS FOR SELECTING TUTORS AND EDUCATIONAL THERAPISTS

The primary caregiver bears the ultimate responsibility for choosing a professional and monitoring the student's progress.

The following information has been adapted from material posted by the Learning Disabilities Association.

- Check the tutor's credentials. Ask about training, experience and references. It is important that the tutor is a certified teacher or has expertise in the subject being taught. Find out whether the person has experience working with students at your child's grade level. When working with a child with dyslexia or a language disability, it is essential that the teacher has been trained to use teaching approaches that are known to address the student's specific needs. How much Slingerland training has the tutor received? How long has the tutor used the Slingerland® Approach?
- A teachers using the Slingerland® Multisensory Structured Language Approach should include all of the following in teaching sessions:
  - Oral language
  - Phonological/phonemic Awareness
  - Handwriting
  - Encoding
  - Spelling and written language
  - Decoding
  - Preparation for reading
  - Structured reading from the book

*The session should not include workbook pages, though the instructor may use those for reinforcement and homework.*

- The instructor should set clear goals for instruction and provide an instructional plan. Whenever possible, ask your child's classroom teacher to participate in the design of this plan so that it links to school work. Try to create a partnership between you, your child's teacher and the tutor.
- For students with a learning disability, such as dyslexia, a minimum of two lessons per week should be scheduled. Students with learning disabilities need practice and repetition to master skills.  
**REMEMBER THAT IT TAKES TIME TO SEE IMPROVEMENT. DO NOT EXPECT A QUICK FIX.**
- Observe your child working with the instructor. The session should include hands-on learning and be very interactive. The instructor should be guiding your child through explicit, systematic instruction and guided practice.
- Request periodic reports from both the instructor and your child's classroom teacher. There should be noticeable academic improvement within a few months.
- Explain to your child why you think additional instruction is needed and what a tutor or educational therapist does. Talk about what you hope will be accomplished.
- Ask your child's classroom teacher or other parents for recommendations.
- Consider interviewing several instructors with [or without] your child. Once you narrow down your options, your child can participate in these meetings. (If your child is a part of the process, he/she will be more open to accepting help.)
- If possible, schedule instruction for the times of the day when your child is most ready to learn. After-school hours are the most common time for instruction, but this is also when students are tired or distracted by other activities. Consider before-school as a option. Allow for much-needed breaks from the school routine.

*Adapted From the Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities*

The Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities (CCLD) is a collaborative public awareness effort of 7 national organizations on learning disabilities, including LDA, and supported by the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation.