

Though I am writing from my current home in Mississippi, my story of dyslexia in our family occurred in Kansas in the 1960s.

I had graduated in Elementary Education from the University of Iowa in 1951, a few years after Dr. Samuel Orton, in Neurology at that Medical school, was identifying and working at helping persons with dyslexia in Iowa.

In the Department of Education of Iowa University, I learned that if a child cannot learn to read and write, there was likely a problem at home, probably the mother.

One of our sons could not learn to read and write. What did we do when he failed third grade at Arkansas City, Kansas?

I had been reading everything about 'dyslexia coming out of the medical world' in newspaper clippings sent by friends and family everywhere.

We drove from our home in Arkansas City to Emporia to visit a day with a professor's wife who had taken their twin sons to Renton, Washington for a year of schooling in the public school system. There, a teacher, Beth Slingerland, had implemented the Orton-Gillingham language program along with her own version of making it work in classrooms rather than in the original tutorial program.

Then, I went with our son to Texas to take a summer grad course; he was in the demonstration group of children. I learned to teach the Orton-Gillingham language program using the Slingerland classroom approach. Yes, I did later approach the Arkansas City public school administrators. No, they were not open to the concept of dyslexia ... nor were our son's principal and teachers open to the neurologically understood and utilized language program developed in the collaboration of Dr. Samuel Orton and Anna Gillingham, educator.

Yes, our family drove to a Kansas institution, Medical School I believe, across the River from Kansas City, MO. That experience was another heart breaker dealing with the Experts who were not experts, yet.

The years' long experience of standing-by our son through his education was crammed with twists and turns, ups and down, taking the lead because public education could not.

Now, 30-plus years later, our son and his business partner with crews have a successful enterprise which, incidentally, the Presidents of the U.S. have employed.

Ruth Jaeckel
once of Arkansas City, Kansas
and now of Tupelo, Mississippi
3403 Kimbrough Ave.
1-662-844-3132
HFandRE@aol.com