

My Brother Jack

The person I would like to talk about today is my youngest brother Jack.

I admire Jack for many reasons; the way he can change a person's frown into a radiant smile, the fact that he is always first to offer his hand when others hide them in their pockets. But more than that, I admire how he copes with his dyslexia.

Dyslexia is hard to define, but people like Jack find it difficult to read, spell and learn new words, despite having lots of opportunity to do so.

In truth, even the experts don't really know what causes dyslexia. It has something to do with how the brain breaks down individual sounds and puts them together, and how it then stores that information in its long-term memory.

When he was younger, Jack was always frustrated; not saying much and lashing out at anyone who dared call him 'thick'. You see, dyslexia is many things but it isn't a sign that somebody lacks intelligence. Did you know Albert Einstein was dyslexic? Neither did I until Jack told me!

I asked him once what being dyslexic was like.

"It's hard to explain," he said. "But when the words I'm trying to grab begin to blur on the page or when I'm asked to write a story and I can't hunt down a good word in my head, it's like I'm walking down a busy street, everyone hustling and bustling past me to reach the same place. I'm there too, only I'm balancing on the kerb trying not to fall in the road".

I don't feel sorry for him, not any more, and nor should you. He gets plenty of help and just wants you to see him as 'normal', which he is! He may be one of the 10% of people who have dyslexia but he is also 100% annoying when he wants to be.

Thank you for listening to my class presentation. I hope it has helped you understand Jack a little better. If you want to ask me any questions please do. Better still, why not ask Jack himself? He'd be happy to talk to you, as long as you also wanted to talk about football or what happened in last night's episode of Dragon's Lair, that is.

