



Introducing Helen Maclean Danks Davis Tutor



169 Centreway Road Orewa

Ph: 09 426 2426 Mob: 021 022 56435 Email: helenmaclean.nz@gmail.com

In 2012 I completed the **Danks Davis** program for assisting children and adults with dyslexia and reading recovery. This method recognises the difficulties created by an auditory perception problem. That is “*mishearing*”, resulting in a lack of understanding. The program places a high importance on creating a “*visual memory*” for words. Using cues and clues, words can be imprinted on the memory and recalled long term.

In addition I am an **Irlen Assessor**. Irlen is a problem with the brain’s ability to process visual information and can lead to difficulties in reading, poor comprehension, difficulty concentrating and other persistent problems. For some, irlen coloured lenses alone may solve the problem but for many it is one of the pieces of the puzzle in addressing reading and learning difficulties.

I have worked as a teacher aid at both Colwill Primary, and Rangeview Intermediate Schools. During my time at Colwill I worked with a boy with severe behaviour problems. While at Rangeview I assisted a student with Asperger’s Syndrome, supporting him on a one to one basis for a year. I went on to work within a Syndicate of 5 teachers assisting with reading and maths.

As a Dyslexic myself, I had found it difficult to progress at school as the condition was not then recognised or supported. I felt I must have just been less bright than others and struggled to keep pace but, through hard work and determination, passed University Entrance by examination (NCEA level 3). Maturity bought the opportunity to find out about other dyslexics and study solutions that worked for them.

I began studying the Danks Davis program, which a friend had been tutoring for some years and felt it provided a fantastic level of benefit for a reasonable cost and time commitment. In particular, it let children who felt they were failing, see tangible results from day one and gave them much needed confidence at a time critical to their developing study habits.

I have successfully been tutoring the Danks Davis program for the past five years assisting students with Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Aspergers, and ADD.

Quick Answers:

- Each student is tutored individually for the duration of one hour per session.
- Lessons are held at my home address in Orewa. Occasionally I am able to offer lessons in the local schools.
- Cost is \$50.00 per lesson
- How long will I need to take lessons? This is difficult to answer as each person learns at their own pace. As a comparison, think about taking music lessons. After a term you can play simple tunes; learning for a year you will expect to be competent; and from there on you continue to learn to the level you desire. Remember you are starting a new method of learning as past teachings have not worked out for you.

Below you will find an introduction explaining the Danks Davis Method that I would be teaching.

Wishing you all the very best.

Helen Maclean

Hyperlink Link to: irlen



<http://irlen.com/who-we-help/>

Danks Davis Method

The Danks Davis program is an effective multisensory method of tuition to help dyslexic people achieve literacy success. It has also proved highly effective for children and adults with other literacy problems. The program was developed over 7 years, taking individual needs into account. Mishearing (an auditory perception problem) is successfully dealt with by teaching the student to hear how a word is spelt, breaking down sounds and phonemes. A high importance is placed on the visual pathway for word recognition using flash cards and cues to prompt the memory. The *Seven Steps to Literacy Success™* program is a 1 hour long lesson providing one-on-one tutoring. Improvements in spelling, reading, writing, and comprehension can be demonstrated by reassessment results of standardised tests given by registered psychologists.

Seven Steps to Literacy Success™

This programme uses a list of just over 2700 words adapted from the New Zealand Council for Educational Research, Wellington, book, "Alphabetical Spelling List: Book 2". Words are broken down in to either visual or auditory categories, and their teaching will differ.

- Step 1. Brain Gym® – Is used to open up the auditory and visual channels to the brain.
- Step 2. Retesting of words from the previous week.
Tutor continues testing words from the word list to find the 10 miss-spelled words that will make up this week's lesson. Correct spelling and the meaning of the words is given.
- Step 3. Student and tutor select miss-spelt words from flashcards.
Tutor pronounces the word correctly and provides cues to help provide a spelling scaffold for the word.
- Step 4. Words on the flashcards are sorted into visual and auditory categories. 'Visual' words (in which the pronunciation gives a sound different to the letters) are committed to the brain using imagery. Auditory' words are broken down by sounds and cues are given to help commit them to memory.
- Step 5. Student tests the tutor by asking them to spell the word out loud; this lets the tutor know the student is sounding out the word correctly and remembering the cues and meaning. The student is encouraged to move around and relax while doing this.
- Step 6. The Tutor tests student as noted in step 5.
- Step 7. The student writes down the words without cues from the tutor.

The student is always encouraged throughout the seven step program. Emphasis is placed on finding out what is needed to be learned, not what is wrong. Small successes soon compound to form a sense of achievement and a growing willingness for the student to build on their success; their self-esteem just blossoms.

About the Founder: Zannie Danks Davis

Zanny's interest in dyslexia comes from her own acute, painful, experiences as a dyslexic who dropped out of school at 14 years old, functionally illiterate.

The turning point in her life came in the 1970's when a school teacher, who had Specific Learning Disabilities (SPELD) training, told her one of her children was dyslexic. After reading the symptoms of dyslexia her feelings were a mixture of shock, acute sadness, and pain. It was only then that she realised she was herself dyslexic.

She became involved with the organisation SPELD, and for four years was President of the Auckland Branch. Through this involvement she brought Educational Kinesiology into New Zealand with Phillip Crockford; this brought in parts of Brain Gym®. Zanny then became involved at the national level in SPELD, and for 4 years was the Vice President of SPELD New Zealand. Zanny became a Life Member of SPELD in August 1987.

An employment opportunity brought Zanny into contact with youth-at-risk, where she was a supervisor in a behaviour modification programme for offenders 11 to 17 years old (now called Felix Donnelly College). Zanny quickly realised that 90% of the youth were not only from dysfunctional backgrounds, but they also had dyslexic tendencies. Working in this multicultural environment and teaching the kids to read was when Zanny started to develop her method. With the help of others, Zanny perfected the program, and the success of her one-on-one tutoring method has been widely used for over 12years.

Danks Davis, Z. (2002). *Seven Steps to Literacy Success Using a Spelling Method: opening the mind to the world of words*. Danks Davis Ltd: Auckland, N.Z. ISBN: 0-473-09250-6