



### Shelley's Story Never Too Late



#### Shelley

Age: 65

Location: NE

Diagnosis: Dyslexia



#### Protocol

Shelley worked for 50 minutes per day, 5 days per week, for 12 months. She completed Fast ForWord Literacy, Literacy Advanced, and Reading 2-4. She also participated in our Reading Assistant program.



#### Results

Shelley is reading with new confidence. She is catching up on reading material that she had always wanted to read. She shares her story with family and friends to encourage a greater understanding of learning struggles.

Shelley is 65 year's old. She comes from a family of doctors and nurses, and her siblings all excelled in school. Shelley's path, on the other hand, was very different. Reading was always a struggle. Challenges with sounding out words made material hard to understand. She could usually do the work, when given substantial time to complete it, but the process was often frustrating. Because of her fluency challenges, being called on and asked to read aloud was a constant fear. Shelley had difficulty concentrating too, and remembers feeling like her "brain was disorganized". She worked really hard and used coping mechanisms, such as studying early in the day, when she felt rested and more able to focus. Good listening skills also allowed her to compensate for these issues and earn "B's" and "C's" in most classes, with the occasional "A". Around 4<sup>th</sup> grade, when board games and other activities that her peers wanted play became more about strategy than chance, she began to withdraw socially.

Shelley was eventually diagnosed with dyslexia during her senior year in high school. As the years went by, she tried a few programs, but career and family consumed most of her time. Although a registered nurse, Shelley says she chose to work in her husband's clinic, instead of a hospital, due to the constant pressure situations and complicated doctor's orders. She developed systems to check and double check everything, but found the whole process arduous. In time, Shelley reached a place where she realized that she would really love to read and not have her "mind spin" when she looked at words. This led her to Gemm Learning.

*"Whether you are middle-aged or older, it is never too late for a fresh start!" -Shelley*

She saw some of the testimonials on our website and found that there were older students who seemed to really benefit from the software. Shelley loved that someone would be monitoring her progress and making decisions regarding what would work best to meet her goals and what wouldn't. As she started the exercises, Shelley also found kinship with a program manager who had experienced similar learning challenges. She appreciated the staff member's ability and willingness to break things down in a way in which Shelley could understand. This was especially helpful when beginning a new exercise or tackling difficult objectives. She feels they developed a level of trust that allowed her to follow our recommendations and fully engage. Shelley liked working on the program and viewed it as an opportunity to be back in school, this time, mastering the skills she was given.

Shelley is now reading more fluently and enjoying novels she feels she missed out on when she was younger. She says she has a sense of comfort with her strengths and challenges now that never existed before. She's able to talk to her grandchildren about her prior struggles and help them understand why it was once a source of pain. Shelley especially enjoys encouraging others and plans to continue to practice and grow. "Whether you are middle-aged or older," she shared, "It is never too late for a fresh start!"