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Letters

A sound comparison?

"Dyslexia: Reading words, missing letters" (SN: 10/3/92, p.212) describes a core problem in dyslexia as being an inability to match letters to individual sounds that make up words. Am I reading "sounds" too literally, or is there any information to be gained by comparing the reading patterns of dyslexics with those of persons deaf from birth and therefore without sound representation for any letters?

Leonard T. Furlow Jr.
Gainesville, Fla.

Blowing in the wind

In the blurb for the cover story "Dancing Dust" (SN: 10/3/92, p.218), you say, "Seemingly out of nowhere a dust storm can appear. . ."

Having grown up on a farm in southwestern Minnesota — where the farmers have a deep-seated resentment toward trees of any kind and where the general attitude is one of wall-to-wall farming at the expense of any ground

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Cover: Calgene Fresh, Inc., endowed these tomatoes with a gene that slows down the ripening process. Claiming that its tomato offers fresh taste and extended shelf life, Calgene expects to market the first genetically engineered tomato — possibly as early as next year. (Photo: Calgene Fresh, Inc.)
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Science Service, a nonprofit corporation founded in 1921, gratefully accepts tax-deductible contributions and requests to assist its efforts to increase the public understanding of science, with special emphasis on young people. More recently, it has included in its mission increasing scientific literacy among members of underrepresented groups. Through its Youth Program it administers the International Science and Engineering Fair, the Science Talent Search for the Westinghouse Science Scholarships, and publishes and distributes the *Directory of Student Science Training Programs for Precollege Students*.

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cover whatsoever — I can assure you that the term "seemingly out of nowhere" is sheer fantasy.

The picture on the cover says it all. Standing on the seat of that tractor, I'm sure you could see Chicago, Pike's Peak, and Dallas with no trouble.

It may be useful to study the mechanism of wind erosion, but the answer to the problem has been well known for hundreds of years. "Thus, in a knee-high space, a dust storm is born" says everything that needs to be said on the subject. If any vegetative debris whatever had been left in the field, there would have been a dramatic reduction in wind erosion.

John Peterson
Englewood, Colo.

I am quoted as saying, "Terrestrial dust probably supplies the ocean with much of its iron, a nutrient thought by some scientists to limit the productivity of deep-sea algae." Two parts of this statement are not correct.

Terrestrial dust is thought to be a major

source of iron not for the ocean as a whole, but for the southern Pacific Ocean, the equatorial Pacific, and other deep-ocean areas far removed from the continental margins. In these areas, iron appears to limit the productivity of phytoplankton, the microscopic algae that grow in the sunlit upper layers of the sea. The term "deep-sea algae" appears to describe algae living at great depths and is thus incorrect as a reference to phytoplankton.

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