
Strengthening Visual Discrimination Skills

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Credits

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About the Author

Penny Groves has an M.S in special education. After several years of working with elementary children in a learning disabilities program, she became a kindergarten teacher in order to reach greater numbers of children with minor learning deficits before they reached the upper grades. A teacher for over 20 years, she has worked with a research team from England and developed a program which was designed to build a strong foundation in the language and beginning reading skills of young children. She has co-authored educational workbooks for grades K-2; written, illustrated, and published 19 educational workbooks for grades K-3; and illustrated for many educational publishing companies.

Answer Key

page 6: pillow, hair bow, triangle; page 7: glass, corn cob, turkey/chicken; page 8: branch, scarf, flower; page 9: rock, hat, stick, bird; page 10: sunglasses, stick, hair bow, backpack; page 11: fruit tree, rabbit, corn cob, bird; page 12: ball, pocket, weight, shoe; page 13: baseball, helmet, sun, drinking glass; page 14: hair bow, two desk nameplates, sweater zigzag, book; page 15: girl, bike horn, package, doorknob, ski cap; page 16: bird, cap, ice cream scoop, elbow pad, dog; page 17: bottle, starfish, pail, sun, hat, ball; page 18: eyeglasses, pencil cup, bookend, plant, ball, dog collar.

Introduction

Visual discrimination is the ability to use one's eyes to interpret accurately the surrounding stimuli in one's environment. A greater percentage of young children learn more easily through remembering what they see (visual memory) than through hearing the same information.

The eyes of a young child continue to develop even as she or he enters kindergarten. The accuracy of information which a child processes through the eyes and which the brain receives is critical in perceiving the environment around her or him. An individual's visual discrimination of detail(s) can influence the answers that he or she generates, regardless of whether the person is focusing on the background or foreground of the physical environment, on the letters in a word, on the words in a sentence, and so forth.

This book is designed for students from kindergarten to third grade who experience difficulties with visual discrimination and memory. The classroom teacher or learning disabilities specialist will find *Strengthening Visual Discrimination Skills* filled with easy-to-administer pages that provide fun yet challenging exercises. They will strengthen both visual discrimination and visual memory.

Strengthening Visual Discrimination Skills begins with exercises that focus on a student's awareness of detail, training the eyes to remember a picture and to locate where items are missing once the original image is covered. The second part of the book shifts its emphasis to strengthening visual memory by requiring the student to recall a specific set of two to six items which must be located in a new illustration after the isolated objects are covered up.

The initial exercises are geared to younger students who have a greater visual discrimination deficit. Depending upon the severity of the deficit and the age of the student, a child may find greater success by beginning the visual discrimination exercises (pages 6 to 18) without using the black rectangle (page 5) to cover the initial diagram. This would allow her or him greater ease in distinguishing differences between two pictures, eliminating the need for visual recall.

The assessment of a student's progress in the area of visual discrimination and visual memory is based on the teacher's observation of each completed page. You do not need formal assessment. The visual discrimination exercises will benefit a student more greatly when they are administered on a one-to-one basis. However, two students, depending on age and maturity, may be able to work as partners. You may also try small group or whole group instruction, if the requirement is to keep the visual discrimination diagram uncovered. Copy the chart on page 3 to help your students keep track of their progress.

Directions

Directions for Visual Discrimination Exercises

The exercises on pages 6 to 18 can be used to work on visual discrimination or visual memory. Use the approach that best suits your student's needs.

1. Visual discrimination

A student can be shown both pictures simultaneously and then asked to identify the differences (or what is missing) between the two pictures. These exercises can be done in either of two ways.

- A) The student can find the items in picture #1 that are not in picture #2 and then draw these items in picture #2.
- B) The student can circle the items in picture #1 that are not shown in picture #2.

2. Visual memory

Older students may enjoy a greater challenge.

- A) Have the student fold the paper in half or cover picture #2 with the black rectangle (copied and cut out from page 5) and carefully observe the details of picture #1.
- B) Once the student feels confident in remembering the details of picture #1, she or he should then place the black rectangle over picture #1.
- C) Next, looking at picture #2, the student can choose to circle the places where items are missing, draw in the missing objects, or list the items that were in picture #1 but are missing from picture #2.

Directions for Visual Memory and Discrimination Exercises

Pages 19 to 48 offer a series of enjoyable picture games to help students overcome memory deficit. The exercises involve the student in viewing specific images in isolation and then remembering and coloring them when they are presented together and among other stimuli. Very young students or those who exhibit greater difficulty with memory should begin with the exercises that use just two items to remember, then progress to more complexity.

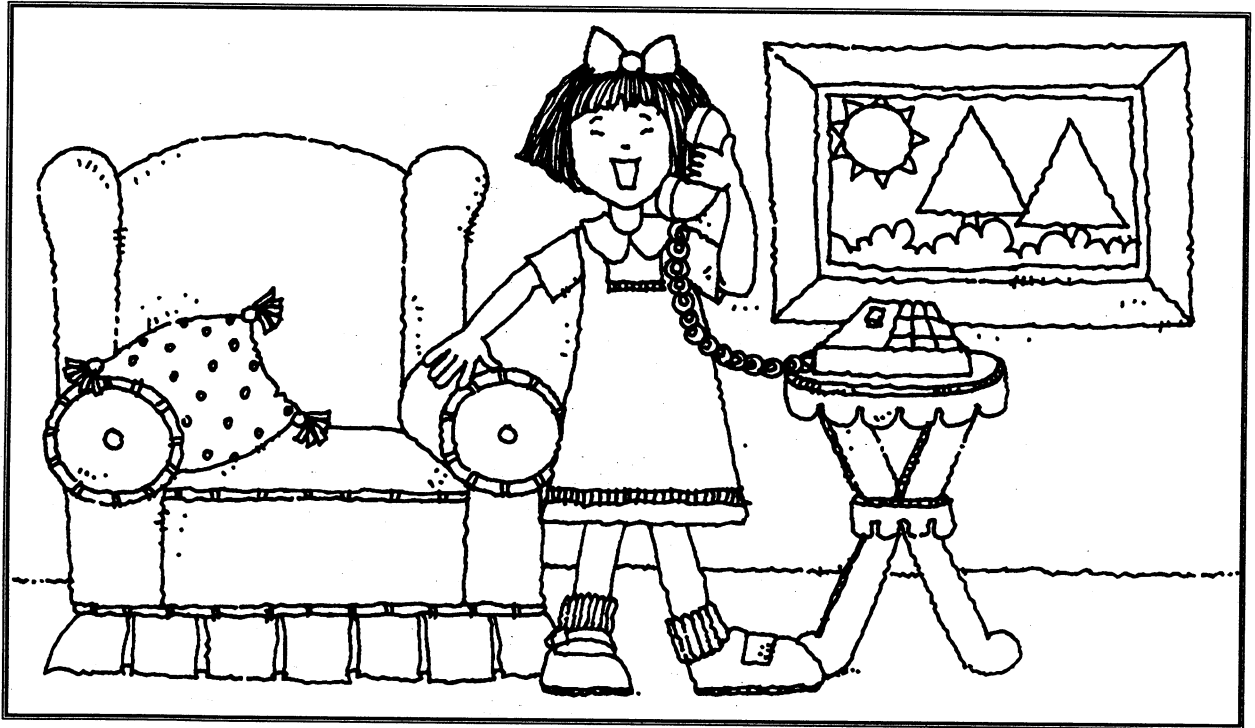
1. Have the student cover the bottom picture with the black rectangle.
2. Allow 10 seconds for the student to look at and name aloud the isolated pictures at the top of the page.
3. Ask the student to place the black rectangle over the isolated pictures at the top.
4. Have the student locate and color each of the isolated images in the bottom picture.
5. Alternate step: For students who need to start slowly, have them locate just one isolated image from the top box as it appears in the lower picture. Proceed at their ability level.

Exercise I

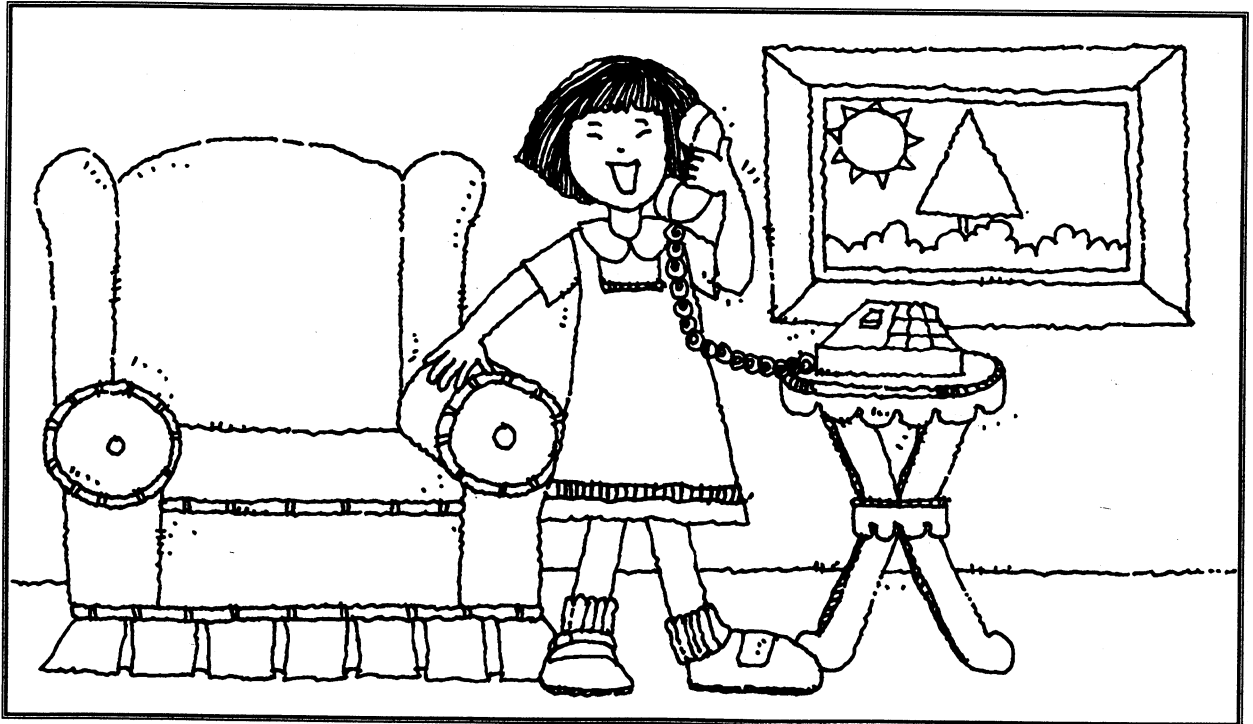
Name: _____

Visual Discrimination

Picture # 1



Picture #2



**There are 3 items missing in this picture.
Can you find them?**