
Strengthening Visual Memory Skills

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E D U C A T I O N

P.O. Box 580, Cheltenham,
Victoria 3192, Australia
Phone: (03) 9555 1344 Fax: (03) 9553 4538
Toll Free Ph: 1800 33 4603 Fax: 1800 15 0445
Website: <http://www.hbe.com.au>
Email: brown@hbe.com.au

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About the Author

Penny Groves has an M.S. in special education. After several years of working with 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 years. A teacher for over twenty 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 years K-2; written, illustrated and published nineteen educational workbooks for years K-3; and illustrated for many educational publishing companies.

Credits

Author: Penny Groves

Editor: Debra Olson Pressnall

Graphic Layout: Mark Conrad

Introduction



Visual memory is the ability to recall what is seen. Young students tend to retain visual information more easily than auditory information. Students who find it difficult to remember what is presented visually may also find it frustrating to recall the correct formations of both letters and numbers. As these students continue through school, they may face difficulty in correctly sequencing letters when spelling words or sequencing numbers in addresses or maths problems. This book is written to help you bring such students to a point of success in recalling visual stimuli.

The eyes of a young child continue to develop even as he or she enters kindergarten. The accuracy of information which a child processes is critical in perceiving the environment around him or her. An individual's visual discrimination of details 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, the words in a sentence and so forth.

This book is designed for students who experience visual memory difficulties between kindergarten and year three. The classroom teacher or learning specialist will find *Strengthening Visual Memory Skills* to be filled with easy-to-administer pages which provide students with fun yet challenging exercises that strengthen the area of visual memory.

Strengthening Visual Memory Skills begins with exercises which focus on a student's awareness of shapes, training the eyes to remember a specific order. Recalling shapes is the easiest beginning remedial method. For example, a kindergarten student who displays no visual memory difficulties should successfully be able to complete the two- and three-shape exercises. A student with weak visual memory skills should begin the exercises by learning to recall two shapes. Most young students will be able to reproduce two shapes (that is, draw or place the shapes in order). Once he or she is successful, the student should progress to more difficult recall of three and then four shapes. The second part of the book shifts its emphasis by requiring the student to recall a specific order of two, three or four numbers. The same challenge with letters completes the book.

Assessment of a student's progress in the area of visual memory is based on observation of each completed page. (A check off chart is provided on page 4.) You do not need formal assessment or answer keys. The exercises will more greatly benefit a student when they administered on a one-to-one basis. However, two students, depending on age and maturity may be able to work as partners. You may try small group or whole group instruction as well.

Directions

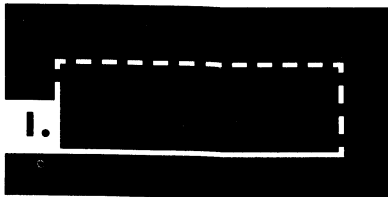


Three methods are presented for remediation: visual recall of shapes, numbers and letters.

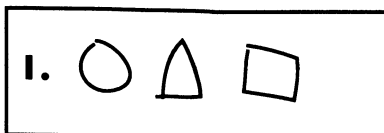
1. Have the student place the shape cut outs (or numbers and letters) in a pile and out of his or her view.
2. The student should use the window card to cover all but the first line of the exercise.



3. Allow the student to view the sequence for five seconds for a set of two stimuli – shapes, numbers or letters (seven seconds for a set of three or four stimuli). Encourage the student to repeat the sequence aloud to reinforce auditorily what is being retained visually. Now close the window.

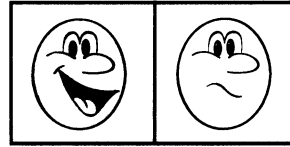


4. The student should try to place the cut outs (or draw the correct shape, number or letter sequence) on the first line in the box at the bottom of the page.

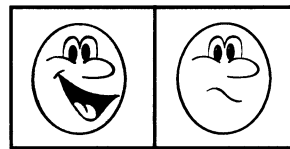


Note: For students who exhibit extreme visual memory difficulties, recalling one shape, letter or number in any given sequence will provide a feeling of success in his or her view of the work at hand.

5. If the student's answer is correct, he or she should colour in the 'You did it!' face.



6. If the student's answer is incorrect, he or she should colour in the 'Good try!' face.



How to Extend Remediation Methods

You can repeat these pages of remediation exercises and you can also extend these methods by providing your student with a physical set of shape cards, letter cards and/or number cards.

Choose the set and quantity of cards that are right for the student's level of remediation. (Shape cards will be easiest to recall.) Explain that you will place the cards face up on the table and that you will ask the student to view the cards and remember the order in which they are placed.

Inform the student that the cards will be removed and placed face down after the specified time period. Tell the child that he or she will use the same set of cards to reproduce the correct sequence that you presented. Allow the student to look at the sequence of two or three cards for five seconds and a sequence of four or five cards for seven seconds.