


Strategies for Learning and Teaching



(Teachers should note that the Visiting Teacher Service for children and young people with a visual impairment supports parents/guardians, teachers and other professionals involved with the student. More information is available in the Visiting Teacher Service information leaflet [PDF 508KB].)

- Encourage the student to use visual aids/resources that have been prescribed (e.g. glasses, magnifiers, big-print books, etc).
- Seat the student appropriately in the classroom (e.g. in the middle towards the front).
- Make sure lighting is suitable.
-  Make efforts to eliminate the risk of glare from the desk and whiteboard.
- If possible ensure lights are coming from behind or to the side of the student.
- Give clear instructions as the student may misinterpret gestures and facial expressions.
- Consider the use of enlarged print/magnified worksheets.
- The less configurations on a page the better (worksheets can be cut in strips and stapled together to present less work at a time).
- Print materials need to be clear and dark.
- Have lined paper for assignments (the darker the lines the better).
- Nearpoint work should be limited to fifteen minutes or less. The student should be encouraged to look away from his/her work, sharpen a pencil or participate in another activity as this will allow the student to refocus his/her eyes so that the student is less likely to become fatigued.
- Have students measure from their elbow to their fingers and tell them they need never get closer to their work than that distance.
- Slanted desks may be of benefit to individual students.
- Provide contrast on any visual materials used: black and white is best.
- Avoid italic or ornate script. Remember that lower-case letters are easier to read than capital letters because they have a greater number of ascenders and descenders, making them more visually distinctive.
- Supplement visual material with clear verbal explanation.
- Require less copying from the board or elsewhere.
- Increase oral activities.
- Use concrete material and hands-on experience whenever possible.
- Allow more time to complete tasks and provide breaks to combat fatigue.
- Do not lower expectations because the student has a visual impairment.
- Provide mobility and orientation training as students with visual impairment experience great difficulty in acquiring skills in direction, mobility and travel. This is particularly important at post-primary level where the student may have to move for individual subjects.
- Arrange for other students to act as buddies and use peer tutoring. Peer-groups should be encouraged to include and support the student.
- Use the student's name when seeking his/her attention.

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