



Noosa Tutoring Centre



Leaders in One to One tuition

Visual Sequential Memory

Children with visual memory problems often have difficulty reproducing words. They will find it even more difficult to read words with no shape.

This is because a mixture of tall and small letters, define a break in the word and reduce it to a smaller number of units.

For want of a better name, words with no shape are called 'flats'. An example of these words are: come, am, is, as, was, were. However, words like: th-at, th-is that have a natural break in height of the letters, are easier to read, remember and reproduce.

When flats come into text, the reader has 3 options:

- They may sound it out at letter level.
- They may use searching skills at a letter level. (In both cases, it means they are increasing the number of units they have to deal with by looking at the word at letter level).
- They may be able to predict the word from the meaning or structure from the text.

Often parents are concerned that their children mis-read flats, which appear simple, but can read more complicated words that have shape.

Children need to be taught various strategies to cope with these words and learn a means of recalling them accurately.

Researchers have proved that an average adult can hold up to 6 units of information in memory.

If we can reduce the number of units a word makes, it is easier to read.

For example, y p p a h are 5 separate units and are difficult to remember.

However, if we can see the word as hap-py in two meaningful units, then this is easier to remember and read.

When we read, we read in a haptic fashion, that is, it is like reading from a helicopter. I.e. we look down on the words as a whole.

If children with visual sequential memory only see the word as a whole, without a line and shape, the word becomes a blur.

Here are some examples where children mis-read words.

shouted/should stared/started

Looking at the similarity of these words, normally young readers would automatically go to a letter level or identify the main word using clusters, to self-correct or decode these words.

Children with visual memory problems see the word as a blur, and reading and writing presents difficulty.

Children must be able to form a visual image in their mind (such as a word), and then be able to recall it accurately in order to read.

Here are some behaviours of children with visual memory problems:

- They cannot reproduce a correct sequence of words
- They cannot reproduce or recognize words previously taught
- They cannot reproduce the correct sequence of spelling e.g. was/saw, nitgh/night, ma/am
- They cannot develop a good sight vocabulary
- They do not look at words properly and see them more as a blur

Students with visual memory problems cannot break words down to syllables, do not recognize visual patterns and see words as a whole, and therefore, leave parts of the words out.

E.g. in ter est ing could be read as intering

What can be done?

The Noosa Tutoring Centre program is designed to improve visual memory. The program focuses on

- Stretching the visual memory beyond 2 units with structured steps.
- Developing visual memory.
- Teaching the child how to look at words in a new way.

In the end, children learn the strategies of searching skills and how it feels to read a word correctly. Ultimately, children learn to self-correct their own reading strategies.

Call Noosa Tutoring Centre for more information or to make an appointment.

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