



# The Learning 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 which 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 which 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 Learning centre program is designed to improve visual memory.

The program focuses on

- Stretching the visual memory beyond 2 units with structured steps,
- Develops visual memory
- Teaches 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 a centre near you for more information or make an appointment

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