Practical Considerations for Educational Support

Students with Vision Impairment & Additional Disabilities

Bronwyn Hein
Statewide Consultant Vision Impairment
1983-2009
The Student

- Cause of vision impairment
- Location of brain injury
- Clinical information
- Presence and level of additional impairments
- Medical conditions
- Medication
- Behavioural aspects
- General background
- Past data on visual functioning
Information Gathering

FOLLOWING COLLECTION AND COLLATION OF VISUAL FUNCTIONING ACTIVITIES OVER TIME

- Assume some functional vision
- Innate focussing – accommodation
- Visual range
- Developmental level
Visual Functioning

Universal Elements

Lighting
Glare
Time adjustments
Posture

Spatial Awareness
Learning styles
External attitudes
Self esteem
Impediments to Visual Functioning

- Fatigue
- Illness
- Medication
- Levels of alertness
- Poor contrast
- Suboptimal lighting
- Unfamiliar surroundings
- Too many people
- Too much ambient noise
CVI Teaching Strategies

- Information gathering/observation
- Facilitate physical positioning
- Customise learning environment
- Presentation of learning materials
- Verbal, Tactile / Visual Cueing: why, how, when and where?
Reach patterns to the side to facilitate trunk activity

Preferred visual motor range for desk work
From light gazer
To engager
QuickTime™ and a H.264 decompressor are needed to see this picture.
STRATEGIES FOR DORSAL STREAM DYSFUNCTION

- Reduce amount of complexity
- Reduce extraneous stimuli
- Check spacing between objects, symbols, letters
- Maximise contrast
- Placement of materials
- Allow time for processing – LATENCY PERIOD
- Provide a concise and consistent label for item, etc.
- Slowly increase amount of stimuli
- Seek assistance for orientation & mobility, e.g. marking steps, etc.
STRATEGIES FOR VENTRAL STREAM DYSFUNCTION

- Present faces/objects in high contrast
- Use voice
- Allow time for recognition
- Add another face/object for comparison
- Continue to add faces or objects as recognition and scanning skills develop
- Use consistent language when labelling
- Seek assistance and support from O & M teachers through your AVT VI – for mobility
Mobility...
Face Recognition

- Unable to recognise familiar people
- Unable to recognise people out of context
- Difficulty understanding language via facial expression
- Use associated cues to help recognition
Facial Recognition ???

How can we evaluate?

- Try using **bright lipstick**, **high contrasting hat**
- Try smiles & frowns @ different distances
- Avoid using voice/noise
Face Recognition
Skills to Look For

✓ Sustained attention
✓ Object permanence
✓ Imitation
✓ Cause & effect
✓ Choice
✓ Locating people & objects in space
✓ Exploration
CVI
GUIDELINES for SUPPORT

- Not too quickly
- Not too much
- Careful choice of materials
- Minimise, then add
- Pace instruction
- Check alertness/energy levels
- Reduce number involved
- Meaningful sequencing
viewing materials of low contrast
Choosing materials
Which figure is the biggest?
They are all the same height!
Where is the man with the brown suitcase?
Modifying the environment

- Visually quiet environment
- High contrast
- One to one communication
- Close viewing distance
Variability
lear, concise, consistent language

variable visual responses need patience & flexibility

incorporate visual images