



OT Mom Learning Activities



Visual Perception

Making sense of what you see is vital for school skills such as reading, writing and math, as well as life skills such as reading signs and maps, finding objects in a busy space, and taking part in hobbies and crafts.

Recognizing letters and numbers, matching shapes, recognizing a face, finding a toy in a messy cupboard, reading a road sign – these are all examples of how visual perception can be used in everyday life.



When visual perception has not developed properly, the child may still learn to read and write, but it can take a lot of cognitive effort and may slow down the learning process.

Signs of Visual Perceptual Delays

These are just a few of the signs that may suggest that your child is to process what he or she sees.

The symptoms depend on the type of delay and can vary greatly from child to child.

- struggles to copy words or drawings accurately
- quality of written work is poor despite adequate fine motor skills
- avoids puzzles, mazes and other “visual perception” activities
- letters or words are reversed or inverted when reading and/or when writing (this is normal for young children but not for a 10 year old)
- does not see the difference between similar numbers or letters
- struggles to learn letters and numbers, can't make sense of letters and numbers
- very poor reader – struggles to remember sight words or to identify letters in order to blend

Either the brain is not making sense of what it sees (ie a visual perception issue)...or it is not receiving accurate information from the eyes in the first place (a vision issue)!





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Your child may have perfect eyesight, but if the eyes are not working together properly to send accurate information to the brain, then your child will struggle to make sense of the incorrect message being sent.

Signs Of Possible Vision Problems

If your child's eyes are not working well together, these are a few of the signs that you may see in your child during school work:

- tilts or moves head while reading or writing
- covers one eye when reading or writing
- loses place or leaves out words when reading or writing
- complains of tired eyes / rubs eyes / eyes watering during reading and writing work
- reading or writing deteriorates as the lesson goes on
- reads very slowly, with a great deal of effort
- easily distracted and shows poor concentration, owing to the great deal of effort it takes to maintain visual focus during classwork



If you notice any of these signs in your child, please take your child to a behavioral optometrist for an evaluation. (Even if they have passed a basic 20/20 vision eye exam!)

Further Information:

Visual Perception and how it develops:

www.ot-mom-learning-activities.com/visual-perceptual-skills.html

Information on Visual Processing Disorder:

www.ot-mom-learning-activities.com/visual-processing-disorder.html

There are many areas of visual perception and sometimes teachers and professionals differ in the terms they use to describe various visual perceptual tasks.

The list on the following pages is not comprehensive, but should cover the areas most commonly referred to within the school environment, and gives a brief description of what a delay might look like.





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Form Constancy



What it is:

The ability to recognize and label an object correctly even when it is viewed from a different perspective, or even if the color and size are different.

Kids with delays may struggle to: recognize numbers and letters when the font changes, or when they are presented in a different context (eg when they see them in the playground instead of in the classroom)

Visual Discrimination



What it is:

The ability to see subtle differences and to see if something matches up or if it does not belong.

Young kids with delays may struggle to: match clothing, socks, or cutlery, especially when the differences are subtle, and may not see the difference between similar objects. They miss out small details in pictures and books.

School-going kids with delays may struggle to: see differences between similar looking letters and words (eg b / d, b / p, 5 / S, won't / want, car / cat)

Figure-Ground Perception



What it is:

The ability to visually focus on one specific piece of information in a busy background.

Kids with delays may struggle to: find information on a busy blackboard and find words in a dictionary. Map skills may be poor. They may also lose their place when reading or copying work.





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Visual Closure



What it is:

The ability to correctly perceive an object or word, even when it is partly hidden.

Kids with delays may struggle to: make sense of smudged words and different fonts. They may find it hard to read messy or cursive writing, and can't make sense of road signs that are partly obscured.

Visual Memory



What it is:

The ability to recall the visual details of what you have seen.

Kids with delays may struggle to: copy words and sentences quickly as they can only memorize one letter at a time. They may struggle with basic phonics, easily forgetting what the letter for a particular sound looks like. They may struggle to learn sight words.

Visual Sequential Memory



What it is:

The ability to remember the visual details in the correct sequence.

Kids with delays may struggle with: spelling and reading, where the correct sequence of letters must be recalled. When doing multiple digit addition and subtraction, visual sequential memory is essential to aid in the correct copying of the digits from the board or from a book.

Visit my Visual Perceptual Activities page for lots of different, inexpensive activities that parents can do at home to help develop their child's skills:

www.ot-mom-learning-activities.com/visual-perception-activities.html

