MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
TE TĀHUHU O TE MĀTAURANGA

Use recommended approaches to support access to information

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Key areas to support' from the Guide: Low vision and learning

Includes:

Describe the visual

Support concept development

Approaches to support reading tasks

Tailor formats

Be alert to vision fatigue

Useful resources

Describe the visual

Verbalise your instructions as much as possible and be very descriptive in your directions so you are filling in visual gaps with words. Your instructions need to be understandable and relevant to all students.

Source:
Australian Government, NCCD
https://www.nccd.edu.au/professional-learning/classroom-adjustments-vision-impairment

Support concept development

Source:
Kathy Cassidy
https://www.flickr.com/photos/kathycassidy57/

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Approaches to support reading tasks

Work closely with the Resource Teacher of Vision, the learning support coordinator and student to ensure appropriate supports are in place.

- ✔ Location – preferred place in classroom, lighting source
- ✔ Presentation of materials – contrast, low-clutter, masking
- ✔ Lighting – glare, too much light, not enough light
- ✔ Ergonomics – posture, desk, seat, slant board
- ✔ Safety issues in the classroom – cords, furniture and equipment placement
- ✔ Alternative workspaces, for example, quieter spaces

Tailor formats

With the support of the student's Resource Teacher of Vision, discuss with the student what multimedia approaches might work best for them.

- ✔ Paper: regular print, enlargement of small amounts of text, large print text, handheld magnification, video magnification, reading guides.
- ✔ Digital: plain text with no enhancements, tracking support, changing text or background colours, magnifying text or the entire screen, auditory supports.
- ✔ Audio: a person reading, MP3 players, podcasts, audio books and video.

Be alert to vision fatigue

Vision fatigue makes it more difficult for students to learn.

- ✔ Alternate activities that rely on vision with activities that don't.
- ✔ Minimise the need to flick between near and distance work.
- ✔ Encourage students to look up and into the distance to relax their eyes after reading.
- ✔ Encourage older students to use quiet spaces and rooms for self-managed breaks.
- ✔ Give students extra time.

Useful resources

Reading strategies for students with visual impairments: A classroom teacher's guide

Read time: 22 min

A comprehensive illustrated resource.

Publisher: Paths to Literacy

Visit website

Dance mat typing

A BBC typing programme, in the form of a game, that has been used to effectively support students with low vision.

Publisher: BBC

Visit website

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