

LIGHTING, GLARE AND CONTRAST

LIGHTING

Children with low vision can enhance their remaining vision by improving/increasing lighting. Lighting can be improved in the following ways:

- Lighting can brighten a space while reducing glare and eyestrain.
- Allow student to sit in an area that lessens direct exposure to bright light.
- Increase task light. Try a lamp with a flexible neck so light can be directed exactly where needed.
- Ensure that lighting is adequate at night.
- Providing even levels of light both inside and outside the home will make it easier for eyes to adapt from one space to another. For example, entering a dark house on a sunny day can cause temporary blindness, but a well-lit foyer will make it easier for your eyes to adjust to the change in light levels. Time may be needed for eyes to adjust to different lighting situations.
- Teacher should not stand in front of window or light source when teaching/speaking to student.
- Increase general lighting. Use several lamps to light a room to create even light levels. This will vary if child experiences photophobia (sensitivity to light).
- Adjustments in room lighting may be required, for example, removing bulbs from fluorescent lighting directly above student.
- Use task lighting if student finds this helpful. (Consider OTT lights.)
- Student may not see the lines on the gym floor due to lighting and poor contrast. Add optimally coloured tape so student can follow activities during physical education classes.

GLARE

Glare can be caused by sunlight, other lighting sources, white paper, as well as reflections from sources around the classroom. Some children may experience increased sensitivity to glare. Glare can be reduced in the following ways:

- When presenting materials to the class, ensure drapes or blinds reduce direct sunlight shining through windows.
- Wearing sunglasses/brim hats will help eliminate glare.
- Avoid the use of laminated materials.
- Photocopy reading materials on pastel coloured paper if child is photophobic.
- Use coloured overlays to improve visual viewing. Plastic or acetate sheets available at stationary stores may tone down glare/brightness.
- Permit students who are sensitive to light to wear a hat or visor to help reduce glare and visual discomfort. Use polarized glass or tinted shades.

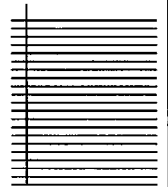


- Smart Boards/white boards reflect large amounts of glare. Reducing the lighting will improve acuity. Use line or colour screen shade features to improve contrast, reduce glare and assist with tracking.
- Encourage student to move closer to whiteboard, chalkboard or Smart Board for optimal viewing.
- Place computer in preferred area in room with least amount of glare. Computer screen should be at eye level and tilted to avoid glare.

CONTRAST

Adaptations for improved contrast may include:

- Black print on white paper is usually optimal. Some students with vision loss prefer white print on black. This can be changed on their computer screen. Students who are photophobic may benefit from use of pastel-coloured paper to reduce glare.
- Use clear font (i.e., Comic Sans, Arial, Tahoma, Verdana, Century)
- Use of a 20/20 pen or a medium felt pen.
- Use of bold-lined or raised-line tactile paper/scribblers.
- Black marker on a whiteboard is preferred for improved contrast.



May be helpful for children to access resources around the room using the following:

- An individual white board at student desk when required.
- A mini office desk resource/reference that other students use around the room can be placed at student's desk for optimal viewing and access. These resources can be glued into a file folders.

Never ask a student, "Can you see this?" Ask them to read the print to you. In this way, you will see if they are able to read it and what they have to do to actually access the print.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR OTTlite USE

- The use of an OTTlite provides an increase in illumination, reduces glare and improves visual contrast for students when reading or performing tasks.
- For students with complex needs the lighting provides focus area.
- Make the child responsible for recharging the light at the end of each day. Place the OTTlite charging station in a convenient location.
- **Fully charge the OTTlite light prior to initial use.**

