



## WHAT ARE

# VISUAL PERCEPTUAL SKILLS?

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**VISUAL PERCEPTION:** The visual skills needed to understand, evaluate, and interpret what is seen.

- »» **VISUAL MEMORY:** allows a student to remember the order or sequence of numbers, items, pictures, and/or words after viewing them (sequential memory). Allows a student to recall characteristics of what was seen.
  - **ACADEMIC IMPACT:** Necessary for recalling a series of letters and digits for reading, spelling, and math. Allows for quicker and accurate copying of information from books and the board; less omissions and alterations.
  
- »» **VISUAL DISCRIMINATION:** is the ability to identify differences/similarities so as to distinguish between objects in the environment amongst other things such as color, form, shape, pattern, size, and position.
  - **ACADEMIC IMPACT:** Impairments in this area of visual perception may interfere with detecting the difference between symbols, pictures, letters, numbers, and/or words. This is necessary for letter and digit recognition, as well as higher level reading, spelling, and math skills. Helps with discriminating between words with similar spelling.
  
- »» **FORM CONSTANCY:** is the ability to identify or sort objects, shapes, symbols, letters, and/or words, despite differences in size or position (slightly rotated or partially hidden).
  - **ACADEMIC IMPACT:** Allows student to recognize letters and words printed in different font, color, or size.
  
- »» **VISUAL CLOSURE:** is the identification of forms or objects from incomplete presentations.
  - **ACADEMIC IMPACT:** Impairments in this area of visual perception may interfere with the child's ability to perceive the entire presentation of what is to be viewed and/or read. Intact visual closure allows for improved letter recognition and increased reading speed; the eyes do not have to slowly process every letter.
  
- »» **FIGURE GROUND:** is the ability to perceive the foreground from the background in a visual array.
  - **ACADEMIC IMPACT:** Impairments in this area of visual perception may interfere with finding specific pictures, symbols, letters, numbers, or words in a book, on a board, or on other visual material. Intact figure ground allows for quickly localizing specified words or other information on a printed page.
  
- »» **VISUAL SCANNING:** is the ability to use vision to search in a systematic manner, such as top to bottom and left to right. A child needs to use visual scanning to avoid obstacles while navigating their environment. Smooth visual scanning is required for reading.
  - **ACADEMIC IMPACT:** Optimal reading speed requires systematic and efficient movement of eyes from top to bottom and left to right without undue fatigue and poor re-localization.
  
- »» **SPATIAL RELATIONS:** is the ability to perceive two or more object's position in space relative to oneself and in relation to each other. Spatial Relations involves the ability to understand directions, reversals, and identify left and right on one's own body.
  - **ACADEMIC IMPACT:** Necessary for reading (proper order of letters and words), math skills (properly reading and aligning digits and symbols), and construction of 2 and 3 dimensional objects. Also necessary for creating a mental record of the school setting and how to navigate it. Necessary for smoothly using one's body for active endeavors during gym class (sports, dance).
  
- »» **POSITION IN SPACE:** is the ability to perceive an object's position in space relative to oneself and the direction in which it is turned (for example; up, down, in front, behind, between, left, and right).
  - **ACADEMIC IMPACT:** Allows for understanding of the parts of a page (top, bottom, right left) and parts of a book (front cover, back cover). Necessary for distinguishing between similar letters and digits that are frequently reversed (b/d, p/q, 6/9, w/m).