

Section 4 - Visuals

Visuals are things that we see:

- Body movements
- Environmental cues
- Pictures, photographs, drawings
- Real objects, artefacts
- Written language, signs, symbols
- Videos

Visual support assists pupils to process language, organise their thinking and remember information.

Who can benefit from Visual Strategies?

All sighted pupils can benefit from having visual supports to help them remember and understand.

Visual strategies provide a way to help with memory and organized thinking.

Visual strategies are especially helpful for pupils with communication or behavioural needs.

Why do Visual Strategies help?

It is often wrongly assumed that children understand everything that is said to them.

Using visual strategies to support communication provides an effective way to improve understanding and expressive communication.

Auditory information is fleeting. It is there and then it is gone. Visual information, however, can remain available.

Reasons to use visual strategies:

Use of visual cues when teaching vocabulary is important as they;

1. Establish attention.

(Looking helps students establish attention better than just listening. Once attention is focussed the rest of the communication message can get in.)

2. Aid memory.

(Remembering what to do and when to do it.
Remembering the name of an object or a person.)

3. Support language retrieval.

(E.g. remembering someone's name/ word retrieval.)

4. Clarify verbal information.

(What a pupil understands may not be what you meant.
Visuals can help with clarification and eliminate confusion.)

5. Organise life information.

(E.g. timetables, calendars)

6. Review and remember

(Making something visual means it can be kept. Verbal language disappears but visual information is able to be reviewed over and over again.)

Visuals and behaviour

Visuals assist pupils to:

1. Support transitions.
2. Stay on task.
(what does it mean to be finished?)
3. Ignore distractions.
4. Manage time.
(Time is invisible. Timers and clocks turn time into something students can see.... Something concrete and visual.)
5. Communicate rules.
(Don't presume that pupils know the rules.)
6. Assist pupils in handling change.
7. Guide self-management.

Please see sections 3, 8 and 9 for examples of visuals.