

February 2014



Tutor in Touch



Year-End Testing: TABE & BEST Plus

LVR assesses students each year using standardized tools mandated by the State of New York. Annual testing takes place from April-June. The office has sent post-cards to learners asking them to call us to schedule their test. Please encourage your learner to come in before June.

NOTE: All students are **REQUIRED** to come in for annual post-testing between April and June in order to remain eligible for our programs. The results will help: measure the effectiveness and efficiency of LVR's programs; gauge our learners' progress, and identify areas that have improved, as well as those with room for further advancement.

If you have any questions about testing, please contact Mellissa Woodhams or Jennifer Eaton at (585)473-3030.

Irlen Syndrome is a visual perceptual difficulty that can affect individuals of all ages. Symptoms can include: word movement or distortion; headaches, migraines, fatigue, and poor depth perception. Visual stress can also exacerbate reading and writing difficulties.

Visual Stress Syndrome

Have you noticed your student suffering from eye strain or complaining of difficulty seeing words on the page? He or she could be suffering from Visual Stress Syndrome (VSS), also known as Meares-Irlen Syndrome.

CONTINUED...

Visual Stress Syndrome, continued...

In simple terms, the theory behind VSS is that some signals from the eye are not getting to the brain intact and/or on time. Though the reader's eye may be functioning correctly, the signal received by the brain is somewhat like a double-exposed picture in which the location of items is confused, causing the brain to try to filter out the bad information to send a reconstructed image to the conscious mind. For the reader, this reconstructed image may be of the items moving, blurred text, gaps in wrong spots, and a variety of other minor errors. VSS can also cause exhaustion due to the extra mental effort required to unscramble the images, as well as significant eye strain and headaches.

VSS is often treated with the use of colored overlays over reading material or tinted lenses which alleviate the reader's symptoms. If you believe your student may be suffering from VSS, a free test is available online at <http://www.visualstresstest.com>, and a copy is available at the end of this newsletter.

Instructional Ideas and resources

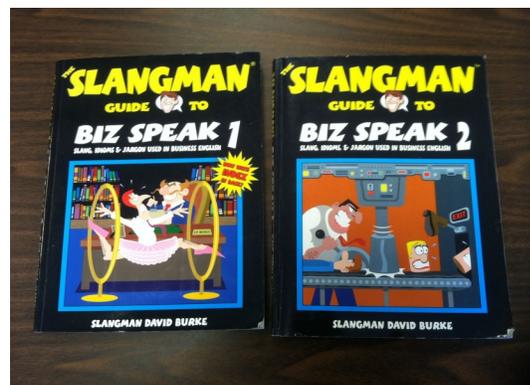
Vocabulary Development: The Frayer Model



If you attended our January conference, you may have seen the presentation about the Frayer model, an excellent tool for helping to develop vocabulary. Research indicates a strong correlation between vocabulary skills and reading proficiency, and successful vocabulary instruction requires exposure and interaction with new words by activating prior knowledge and attaching personal meaning to new words. In the Frayer model, students are asked to provide a definition of the word, facts or characteristics of the word, examples, and non-examples/antonyms, or to draw a picture related to the word if antonyms are difficult to determine. This graphic organizer will lead students to a deeper understanding of a word and its relationship to their own lives. If you'd like to make use of the Frayer model when tutoring, an example model and blank model are available at the end of this newsletter.

Instructional Ideas and resources

Idioms and slang can be some of the hardest vocabulary concepts for new English speakers to grasp. Located in the LVR library, *The Slangman Guide to Biz Speak* series features lessons on common workplace slang and idioms, as well as computer terminology, with reading, speaking and visual exercises for your learner to practice.



Literacy Navigator

LVR recently started a new service for our students and the general public called Literacy Navigator. The role of a navigator is to help an individual with immediate literacy needs, such as completing a job application or creating an email address. We have volunteers in Arnett Branch Library on Mondays, from 12-3PM, the downtown Bausch & Lomb branch on Wednesdays, 10AM-1PM, and at Greece Community Education Center in Greece Ridge Mall on Tuesdays, 12-8PM and Wednesdays, 10AM-6PM.

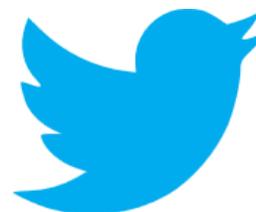
LVR 50th Anniversary Luncheon—SAVE THE DATE!

Literacy Volunteers of Rochester will be celebrating 50 years of service to the Rochester community at a luncheon on May 8, 2014 (noon-1:30 PM) at the Country Club of Rochester. This luncheon will be an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of thousands of LVR's adult learners, thank our many volunteers, donors, and community partners who make LVR's work possible, and increase awareness and make new connections with others who share the goal of fighting low literacy in our community. We hope to see you there!



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Follow us on Twitter at [LiteracyVolunteers@LVofRochester](https://twitter.com/LVofRochester)

Visual Stress Test

For each statement choose Never, Sometimes or Always.

Answer

1. I often lose my place or skip a line when I am reading. _____
2. I strain my eyes when I am reading. _____
3. Reading makes me tired. _____
4. I get headaches or pain around my eyes or temples as I read. _____
5. My eyes become sore or water when I have to read. _____
6. I rub or close one eye when I read. _____
7. The words fade in and out when I read. _____
8. I cover one eye after several minutes when I read. _____
9. White paper and computer screens seem too bright and there is a lot of glare. _____
10. I see streams of white running down the page or patterns between the text on the page or screen. _____
11. The letters seem to bunch into each other or form black blocks as I read. _____
12. Words seem to move in and out, slide around on the page or make swirling effects. _____
13. I use my finger or a marker/ruler to keep my place on the page. _____
14. I keep moving my head or fidget when I am reading. _____
15. I get neck ache or backache when I am reading. _____
16. I need to mumble or talk aloud when I am reading. _____
17. I guess at a lot of words when I am reading. _____
18. I get very easily distracted when I am reading. _____
19. I avoid reading. _____
20. My problems get worse the longer I am reading. _____

Results

Give the following points for each answer and then check the score against the table below:

Never 0 points

Sometimes 1 point

Always 2 points

< 5	Visual stress is unlikely to be a problem
5 to 10	Visual stress is causing some difficulties
10 to 25	Visual stress is probably causing difficulties and limiting your performance
25 to 40	Visual stress is a major problem

Success

Definition

Accomplishment of an aim or purpose

Attainment of fame, or wealth

Achievement, victory

Characteristics

Happiness, content

Has everything he/she needs

Examples

One who has "everything he/she wants"

A rich or famous person

Accomplishing something

Having set a goal and attained it

Non-examples (antonym)

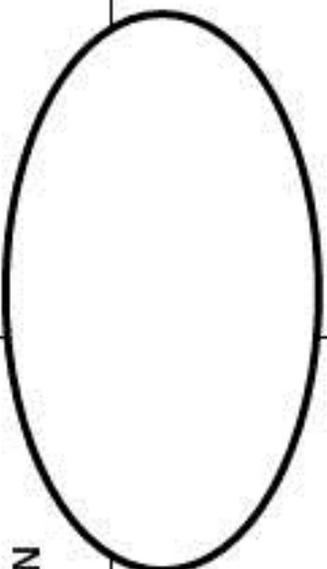
Not having what one desires

Failure, giving up

Not being able to attain a goal

Definition

Characteristics



Examples

Non-examples (antonym) or draw a picture