**Visual Functioning Skills**

These general areas of visual skills are directly related to a person’s academic achievement and their approach to the demands of work in the classroom. Difficulties with vision performance skills usually cause various complaints of visual discomfort and make it difficult to keep focused on any visual task.

**Focusing** (Accommodation): The ability to see clearly at a fixed distance and to shift focus quickly with instantaneous clarity from one distance to another. Efficient focusing abilities are needed to enable one to focus from the desk to the blackboard, and to help maintain visual attention without discomfort.

**Eye Teaming Abilities** (Binocular Fusion and Fixation): The ability to bring the two eyes together so that the images seen by each eye fuse and integrate, creating a single, clear, comfortable image. Difficulty maintaining binocular fusion can result in having to use excess effort to do visual work. This can lead to task rejection (daydreaming or avoidance of visual work), diplopia (double vision), or suppression (blocking out the vision of one eye).

**Depth Perception** (Stereopsis): The ability to visually inspect three dimensional objects and accurately judge distances and spatial relationships between two objects. Accurate depth perception is needed for smooth general movement and skilled sport ability.

**Eye Movement Control**: The ability to move the eyes together quickly, accurately, and in precise coordination. Accurate eye movements are needed in order for a person to accurately perform many tasks such as shifting one’s eye along lines of print in a book, effectively scanning vertical columns, making accurate shifts from desk to blackboard, and accurate tracking in sporting activities.

**Developmental Vision Skills**

Normal basic development is needed in order to develop normal visual skills. Delays in balance, gross motor, and bilateral coordination often cause delays in visual performance and visual perceptual skills. It is necessary for the basic developmental skills to be functioning at the highest level possible before specific visual skills can function at a normal level.

**Balance:** The ability to obtain physical equilibrium that enables the body to maintain an upright position comfortably and efficiently.

**Bilateral Coordination:** The ability to be aware of and use both sides of the body separately and simultaneously. This is a basic spatial skills needed to be able to interact with and organize our environment.

**Primitive Reflexes**: These are reflexes a newborn uses to function during the first month of life. Most of these reflexes should disappear during the first year of life. Retained primitive reflexes can lead to hypersensitivity to sensory input, poor balance, poor eye movement, difficulties with left and right discrimination, poor handwriting, and delayed visual-perceptual skills.

**Vision Analysis/Perceptual Skills**

These visual skills are a group of abilities used for recognition, recall, and manipulation of visual information. They are an important part of many activities including judging similarities or differences among forms and symbols, remembering forms and symbols and being able to write or talk about what is seen.

**Visual Concentration** (Fine Pursuits): The ability to stay on a visual task and follow through a line maze. Below average performance on this measure may result in fatigue, poor concentration, slow reading, or avoidance of visual work.

**Fine Eye Movement Control** (Fine Saccades): The ability to move the eyes from one point to another when reading or writing.

**Fine Motor Speed and Precision**: The ability to use the eyes and hands together fast and accurately. Below average performance may result in poor written assignments, slow work, and difficulty completing tasks.