Activities to Improve Your Child's Visual Attention & Visual Memory

Kids First Occupational Therapy team

There are a variety of different visual memory activities and tasks that you can use at home to help your child develop their memory skills. As you begin to search and explore these activities, keep in mind that all children function at a different level and you may need to adapt the activity to meet your child's individual needs.

Start with simple activities and move to more a complex one... and don't forget to always make the task achievable and successful for your child. Most importantly, have fun playing and learning together!

If you are in doubt, seek help for your child from the children’s occupational therapy team at Kids First!

Games that support children’s visual memory skills

1. I Spy.  
   Try playing this game using the colour of objects as a clue rather than the first letter.

2. Simon Says

3. What’s missing?  
   Get somebody to put a number of objects on a tray for a few seconds (start with 5 then work up as recall improves). Cover them up and ask the child to remember them, or cover them up and remove one, asking the child to identify which object is missing.

4. What moved?  
   With a friend sit in a room and have a good look around. Close your eyes whilst your friend carefully moves one object in the room. Open your eyes and try to remember what has been taken away or moved.
5. Find it in a book
   Using a very detailed picture book, ask somebody to name an object and see how quickly you can
   find it, or remove the picture and ask the child to remember as many items in the picture as
   possible (can use words / sentences / numbers)

6. Spot the difference
   These days it’s easy to download worksheets from the internet or puzzle books that will challenge
   your child to find objects that are similar and different.

7. Unscramble those words
   Choose a word that you know your child can spell. Write the letters of that word on separate pieces of paper
   – jumble them up and ask your child to unscramble them to spell the word correctly.

8. Matching card games
   Old fashioned favourite like Concentration and Memory are great...and so is one of Kids First’very favourite
   card games, Spot it. Why not search on-line for apps that add a bit of digital device excitement to your child’s
   Visual Memory practice too?

9. Copying
   You would be surprised at how tricky it can be for a child with Visual Memory problems to copy a picture.
   Start with very simple drawings from a colouring book and encourage your child to work their way up.

10. Construction games
    Games that engage your child in 2D or 3D copying are great for building Visual Memory skills. Try games like
    Blokus, Rush Hour and Jenga.

Other Strategies to Help Develop Visual Memory

- Write small lists of things to do
- Place items of similar classification in the same places
- Chunk words together into known symbols, or two or three letters at a time
- Memory teaching techniques i.e. read – cover – write – check
- Visual imagery e.g. S looks like a snake
- Memory hooks – making things meaningful e.g. a ‘u’ can catch rain like a cup

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