

Sample of Reading Stamina Assessment Results

Introduction

Jasmine's reading stamina was assessed using a modified *Print Media Assessment Profile* (Koenig & Holbrook). Before starting, Jasmine was offered an APH reading stand, which she politely refused. When asked if she would like to instead use a 3 inch 3-ring binder turned sideways on which to place her reading material, she accepted this adaptation. Ambient classroom lighting was used.

Procedure

Jasmine was asked to read for a 10 minute (timed) silent reading period broken into two 5 minute intervals. She selected 22 point font size, using literary material that was on her independent reading level. Following the reading exercise, Jasmine's word per minute count for the first 5 minutes of reading was compared to the second 5 minutes of reading. Her results were as follows:

1. 1st 5 minutes of reading: 534 words read in 5 minutes, or 107 words per minute
2. 2nd 5 minutes of reading: 546 words read in 5 minutes, or 109 words per minute

Since there is not a statistically significant difference in these two timings, we can say that Jasmine does not experience visual fatigue within 10 minutes reading time.

Jasmine had stated previously that her perceived reading stamina lasted about 30 minutes before her eyes became too strained to continue. On a second day we wanted to test this perception, so asked Jasmine to read for 30 minutes, checking word count every 5 minutes. Because she was interested in reducing print size and using a magnifier, before starting this session, Jasmine was introduced to a 6x illuminated hand-held magnifier and a stand (dome) 4x magnifier. Whereas she preferred the 6x hand-held magnifier because of the light, she had difficulties holding a fixed focus with this. Instead, an APH desk lamp was situated on her left, to be used in conjunction with the dome magnifier. Using 16 point font, a 3 inch 3-ring blinder as a slant board, a 4x dome magnifier, and a desk lamp, Jasmine's results are as follows:

Time Frame	Total Words Read	Words per Minute
1 st 5 minutes	270	54 wpm
2 nd 5 minutes	283	57 wpm
3 rd 5 minutes	233	47 wpm
4 th 5 minutes	250	50 wpm
5 th 5 minutes	109 (appeared to nod off at this point)	22 wpm

Results

1. Reading speed is fairly consistent for the first 20-25 minutes
2. Reading speed falls sharply after 25 minutes
3. We don't know if Jasmine is experience visual fatigue, or if sleep apnea is an issue
4. She read faster with the larger print size
5. She is not adept at using a magnifier fluidly

Summary

With a diagnosis of retinitis pigmentosa, we can expect Jasmine to have difficulties with poor lighting and large letters, due to the reduction in visual fields. Whereas 22 point font might be easier for Jasmine at this point, it is unrealistic to assume that all materials will be enlarged for her. Given her preference for an illuminated hand held magnifier (due to its portability and convenience), I would suggest consistent training with progressively smaller print (from 16 down to 12 point font) using this type of device and reading materials that are conducive to timed fluency exercises. A slant board helps to elevate the materials so that she doesn't strain her neck and also situate a lamp so that her head is not blocking the light.

In order to keep up with the volume of reading needed in post-graduate work, Jasmine is not currently reading at a speed that will allow her to keep up. She would benefit from training to use audiobooks in conjunction with print and braille reading activities (also referred to as "supported listening"). This would boost her speed and stamina as well. For more information on supported listening, visit the Learning Ally website, www.learningally.org, and www.learningthroughlistening.org.