



The LATI News

LOUISIANA ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE



Visual Learners

There are three different ways we learn. We either learn by seeing (visual), hearing (auditory), or doing (kinesthetic).

Sometimes students use a combination of two or more of these learning styles. Why is it important for students to know their learning style? Research has shown that students can perform better on tests if they change study habits to fit their own personal learning styles. Generally, visual learners have certain characteristics.

These are some of the characteristics of students who are visual learners:

- Learns through seeing
- Reader/observer
- Scans everything; wants to see things, enjoys visual stimulation
- Enjoys maps, pictures, diagrams, and color
- Needs to see the teacher's body language/facial expression to fully comprehend
- Often closes their eyes to visualize or to remember something
- Daydreams: a word, sound, or smell causes recall and mental wandering
- May think in pictures and learn best from visual displays such as diagrams, illustrations, textbooks, overhead transparencies, PowerPoint presentations, videos, and handouts
- Remembers faces better than names
- Benefits from illustrations and presentations that use color
- Is attracted to written or spoken language rich in imagery
- Is usually a good speller

Strategies for helping a visual learner?

- Have a clear view of your teachers when they are speaking so you can see their body language and facial expression
- Use color to highlight important points in the text
- Take detailed notes and utilize handouts
- Use visual materials such as pictures, charts, maps, and graphs
- Use multi-media such as computers or videos
- Study in a quiet place away from verbal disturbances
- Visualize information as a picture to aid memorization and learning
- Make charts, graphs, and tables in your notes
- When memorizing material, write it over and over

Resources from: http://www.lehigh.edu/~inacsup/cas/pdfs/LS_Visual_Learner.pdf
<http://homeworktips.about.com/od/homeworkhelp/a/learningstyle.htm>
http://www.education.com/magazine/article/Helping_Visual_Learners/

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JUNE 6 - 8, 2012

Louisiana Assistive Technology Institute
 Lake Charles, LA

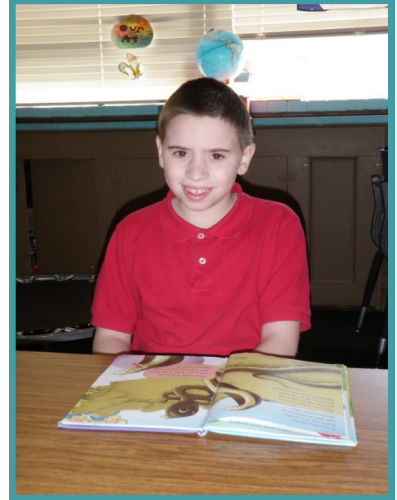
Travel reimbursement will once again be provided this year for the 2012 LATI Summer Institute on a first come first served basis.

Further information to follow at a later date.



Ian is a fifth grade student at Princeton Elementary in Bossier Parish. Although Ian was able to express his wants and needs through gestures and approximations, he was unable to express himself through language.

Ian
 Bossier Parish
 Donna Scroggins SLP
 Angie Dredge SpEd Teacher



Last fall Donna Scroggins, his SLP, attended a workshop presented by Dr. John Halloran who developed the LAMP program for Prentke Romich Corp. LAMP is Language Acquisition through Motor Planning and is a therapeutic approach based on the blending of neurological and motor learning principles. The goal is to provide individuals who are nonverbal a method to independently and spontaneously express themselves using an augmentative communication device. Donna immediately thought of Ian and felt the program would be a good fit for him. The program was introduced to Ian through the use of a Smartboard and the free trial software download then a device was acquired for assessment. Ian was required to learn a sequence of symbols to access the information he needed. He responded to the device very quickly and more importantly, realized that it was a way for him to communicate his ideas. He learned the sequences quickly, and just as Dr. Halloran had said he would, he remembered the sequences from one session to the next and over breaks. An analogy that was used by Dr. Halloran was, "Teaching the series of sequences to communicate an idea is like when you learned to use a keyboard. If someone moved the 'A' key, you would have to look down and hunt for it until your brain got rewired for the new position, but eventually you would get used to it and wouldn't have to look anymore. Your brain would hardwire itself to learn the new position." Thinking of it that way made it less daunting for Donna to teach Ian new sequences.

This program has opened up a new world for Ian, allowing him to create complete sentences as well as begin working on syntax and comprehension activities. The staff that works with Ian knew he was a very smart student but had no idea that he had that much language to express.

Ian also uses ProLoQuo2Go and other iPad apps to complete activities. Donna says they still have a long way to go for Ian to be a fluent communicator but they have certainly uncovered tools that can be built upon from year to year that will move him in that direction!

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Our Lending Libraries

Did you know that your regional AT Center has a lending library? One of the goals of the regional AT Centers is to provide districts with a representative sampling of the most popular and current assistive technology tools. These items can be checked out by participating district personnel for a period of four weeks, which allows the user time to try the item with a student to determine its effectiveness. One of the advantages of this service is to prevent the district from buying items that may not work for the intended purpose. The regional AT facilitators are a valuable resource when districts are researching new products to purchase. Very often, another district may have purchased the product you are considering and can share their experiences with it. Teachers and parents are encouraged to use the center as an experimental lab by bringing their child and collaborating with the AT facilitators to determine the best tool for the child's needs.

Please contact your regional AT Center whenever considering the purchase of any assistive technology items and visit your AT Center to take advantage of the lending library services.

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VISUAL SUPPORTS

Quick Tips

Visual tracking aids enable students to maintain their place on a page of text. Teacher made reading



windows are easy to create by cutting a rectangular window in a strip of card stock. You can purchase bar magnifiers that not only magnify but also have a horizontal colored line for visual tracking. Reading Helpers, like the one pictured, can also be purchased from the [Really Good Stuff](#) website.

Contrast aids provide visual contrast between text and background. One way to use this technique is with highlighters or highlighting tape. Another strategy is to use color overlays. You can purchase cover overlays that are designed for this purpose or you can use colored acetate report covers. Take into consideration that acetate covers are very glossy and can create reflection issues with certain types of light. The following websites provide information about Colored Overlays :



- [National Reading Styles Institute](#)
- [Onion Mountain Technology](#)
- [See It Right](#)

VISUAL TIPS

Visual cues can make reading and remembering easier. For example, some fonts are easier to read than others. Some colors are more pleasing to the eye and stand out better. Lines with larger spacing are easier to track visually.

Fonts

The easiest fonts to read are Arial, Verdana, Helvetica and Comic Sans.

Bolded fonts appear larger.

Color makes key vocabulary stand out. Color can help with visual tracking.

How do I change the Font?

Highlight the text to be changed, click format, then font on the toolbar, select the desired font, size, style and color.

Backgrounds

Changing the background color provides visual contrast and can also assist with visual tracking. Make sure you choose a color combination that meets student needs.

How do I change the background color?

Click format on the toolbar. Select Background, then the desired color.

Spacing

Increasing the space between lines of text or between words can help with visual tracking.

How do I change the line spacing?

Click format on the toolbar and select paragraph. On the line spacing drop down menu, choose the desired spacing.

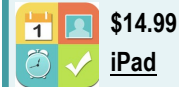
How do I change character spacing?

Click format on the toolbar and select font. Click the Character Spacing tab and select expanded in the spacing drop down menu.

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An App A Day

VISUAL SCHEDULE PLANNER



\$14.99

iPad

A completely customizable visual schedule app designed to give an individual an audio/visual representation of the "events in their day".

AUTISM SCHEDULER



\$49.99

iPad, iPhone, iTouch

Use either pre-loaded or insert your own pictures in this fully customizable visual schedule app. Schedules can be saved and loaded for future use. Comes with a locking feature to prevent deletion of items.

TIME TIMER



Free – 1.99

iTouch/iPad

Depicts time using a bright red disc that slowly disappears as time elapses. You can set it three different ways to help you improve productivity.

IPROMPTS



\$49.99

iTouch/iPad

This app provides several useful visual prompting tools (no audio prompts or voice output) to help impaired individuals transition from one activity to the next, understand upcoming events, make choices, and focus on the task at hand.

FIRST THEN VISUAL SCHEDULE



\$9.99

iTouch/iPad

Designed to provide positive behavior support. Fully Customizable! Use your own photos or add photos from the built in internet image search feature. Record your own voice to the images. "Save and Share" schedules via "File Sharing" on iTunes.

Using Boardmaker Software to Draft Schedules

STEPS TO MAKING A VISUAL SCHEDULE

1. Gather Materials:

Velcro, glue, colored fabric, etc.

2. Decide on pictures:

Either digital or cut outs.

3. Laminate, cut/glue/

velcro your pictures.

4. Keep the schedule in a

place where it can be seen/used.



Levels of Communication

There are different levels at which people communicate and understand symbol and language. It is important to keep in mind the individual user when designing communication tools. Users may fall on or in between the following categories:

Object stage: Use of actual objects for communication.

Photo stage: Use of real photos cut or printed and attached to the board.

Picture Symbolic stage: Abstract symbol can be understood and used on the board (Ex. bathroom signage).

Line Drawing Stage: Very abstract symbols can be taught and used on the board.

Text stage: Use of written words or numbers is appropriate for the user.

Boardmaker Share

This online community is a great source for finding hundreds of Boardmaker activities for nearly any topic.

Simply create an account at:

www.boardmakershare.com

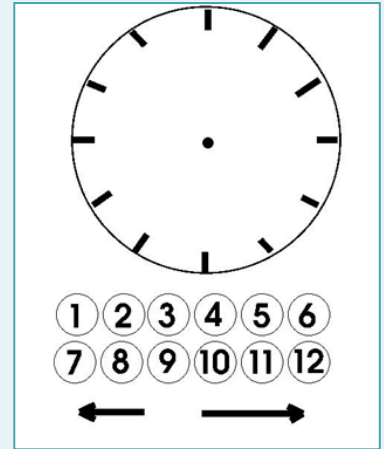
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Introducing Time

USING TIMERS TO INTRODUCE TIME MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT TIME ON TASK

Using clocks to demonstrate the length of activities is a great way to introduce the concept of time to students. A clock can be added to each calendar or activity and can be adjusted as the day progresses.

Allow the student to move the hands of the clock when moving from one activity to another and use the opportunity to relate periods of time and how they relate to activities.

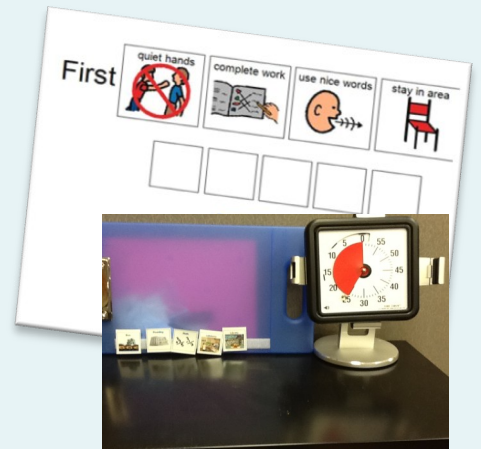


Making a First/Then

Useful for communicating a sequence of events, a “first/then” board can be used to schedule tasks in their proper order, show the relationship between several activities and can assist in completing “non-preferred tasks” by showing preferred tasks as a reward.

Tips:

- Organize activities from left to right.
- Use a binder to create a “flip book” for travel and storage of pages.
- Use text along with symbols to promote reading.
- Use a solid, high-contrast background for pictures.



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UPCOMING CONFERENCES & STATE TRAININGS.....



<p>March 1-2, 2012</p>	<p>Spring Into A T 2012 Conference - Ruston, LA</p>
<p>May 2-4, 2012</p>	<p>Solutions for Assistive Technology Conference</p>
<p>June 6-8, 2012</p>	<p>LATI Summer Institute</p>

IT'S TIME TO COMPLETE THE QIAT SURVEY!

The Louisiana Assistive Technology Initiative collects data about our state's AT programs through a biennial survey. The [Quality Indicators of Assistive Technology \(QIAT\)](#) were developed by a group of national experts and provide important information to assist in planning professional development and activities that will directly benefit teachers and students. The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. LATI is seeking the input of LA teachers, administrators, therapists, AT specialists and coordinators of programs for students with disabilities in public schools pre-k to 12. Please complete the online survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WWHSFGJ> by February 27, 2012. Results of the survey will be shared with districts through the Regional Assistive Technology Centers.

BENEFITS OF USING A VISUAL SCHEDULE WITH STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

Visual schedules:

- Provide visual organization and structure to daily activities
- Increase predictability of events, lessening student anxiety
- Provide consistent clear expectations to students and foster an atmosphere of security and trust
- Functionally introduce and teach vocabulary and concepts
- Facilitate smooth transitions between activities
- Provide consistent cues about daily activities and environments
- Serve as an alternate form of receptive and expressive communication for students who are nonverbal
- Motivate students to work through one activity to get to a preferred activity
- Support the development of student independence from adult cues and prompts



References:

- <http://www.setbc.org/setbc/communication/vss/default.html>
- <http://www.do2learn.com/picturecards/howtouse/schedule.htm>

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FREE TRAININGS

AT LATI Centers

February

2	<u>iPads: A Class Act Kurzweil 3000</u>	Region 3 Region 5
7	<u>Fluency and other interventions for struggling readers</u>	Region 6
8	<u>AT for Organization: A 2 Day Module</u>	Region 7
9	<u>Trash to Treasures</u>	Region 4
14	<u>AT Tools for AAC</u>	Region 3
16	<u>Flip Cameras in the Classroom</u> <u>Digital Camera Basics</u> <u>Intellitools</u>	Region 4 Region 6 Region 5
23	<u>Alternatives to Writing</u>	Region 8

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March

6	<u>Fun with Foldables Kurzweil 3000</u>	Region 3 Region 6
8	<u>Free Internet Resources</u> <u>Using APPS in the Classroom</u> <u>Flip Cameras Across the Curriculum</u>	Region 3 Region 4 Region 7
14	<u>Power Points: Not Just for Presentations</u>	Region 3
20	<u>EBook Make & Take</u>	Region 6
22	<u>Project Based Learning</u>	Region 4
27	<u>Boardmaker</u>	Region 5
28	<u>Communicate: Symwriter</u>	Region 5
30	<u>Flip Cameras Across the Curriculum</u>	Region 8

Please check with AT Regional Centers to confirm trainings are as scheduled.

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District AIM Liaisons
District Competent Authorities



**AT Regional Centers provide these free services:
Professional Development, Consultations & Technical Assistance**

The Assistive Technology Centers are a project funded by the Louisiana Department of Education. Reference in this printed material to any specific commercial products, process, service, manufacturer, or company does not constitute its endorsement or recommendation by the Louisiana DOE.