

Comfortable Reading

Comfortable reading depends on a combination of factors, not just spectacles. A good print size, coupled with adequate light and good print contrast (the level of black on white and sharpness). We must also read within our reserves.

Reserves

None of us are able to read for any length of time at our limits; that is the smallest size print you can possibly see. The analogy is if you try to lift something very heavy - you might be able to lift it for a minute but you couldn't hold it for an hour. Likewise we could never expect you to read at your limit for more than a moment. As a general rule, if you double the size of print which represents your limit, then you should be able to read with comfort. So we push you to your limits, not because we expect you to read at that level but because it gives an idea of the print size you should be able to read comfortably. If you can read N5 print then N10 should be comfortable - this would allow easy reading for most daily tasks. If, because of cataracts your limit is only N10 then nothing smaller than N20 would be easy to read. This would make most reading tasks very difficult. To make things easier we need to think:



BIG
BRIGHT
BOLD



BIG

A magnified image will be easier to read. We can do this by making the spectacles stronger, but this carries the disadvantage of having to hold the book closer. It can be done with magnifiers, often with a light (helps two of the 3Bs - Big & Bright!). Finally we can simply use larger print. In the past this was achieved with large print books. Now-a-days we can tap into modern technology. Download a book onto an iPad and you can increase the print size; but it allows you to control BRIGHT and BOLD as well.

BRIGHT

Within our own homes this is the aspect of vision we can most control. Light must never be underestimated and is as important as correct spectacles. No matter how good the glasses are, without light you will struggle. The light must be directed, so that it is over your shoulder onto the work. Ceiling lights, if they are not behind you, are less adequate. Enhanced light can often push your limits to smaller levels, say from N8 to N5, which suddenly allows newsprint to be read.

BOLD

Very little of what we read is high contrast (pure black on pure white with sharp edges). Think how difficult it is to read coloured labels on containers. Newsprint comes the way newsprint comes; Unless.....
Downloading a book or newspaper onto an iPad or Tablet allows BIG, BRIGHT and BOLD to be controlled.

Think BBB for all optical options. Spectacles fulfil general needs but certain SPOT TASKS, such as reading ingredients on packets are helped by using a magnifier. A simple magnifier does BIG, but an illuminated one does BIG and BRIGHT.