

# **Visual Processing Problems**

**By Lisa Harp**

Can you imagine seeing the world as if it were tilted? Perhaps upside down? How about spinning constantly? So many children (and adults) view the world this way. And the sadness of it is that they know nothing different, because they were born this way.

If you viewed the world this way, can you imagine what it would be like to try to read? The words would be moving or tilted as well. The amount of energy you would need to perform a simple task would be astronomical.

And then, you would be told to try harder. Practice more. Do the same thing over and over again that wasn't working to begin with.

Finally, the thought that you were dumb might kick in. When you were retained, perhaps. Or when you were held after school for more reading practice. Or when you went to a special class and the other kids made fun of you.

Living in a world with visual processing disorders is real. These kids are up against a lot, and I am always amazed at how well they actually do. How hard they try. How willing they are to please.

Our primary learning sense is visual. 75 to 90% of what we take in is visual. So, if a student suffers from visual processing problems, it is important to look into a method that will help correct these problems. Waiting for the student to outgrow this problem just won't help. Some people learn to cope with their visual disorders, but they won't go away on their own.

That is why we spend so much time on the visual level at the Harp Learning Institute. We build a learning foundation for students through this important skill. We teach students to track their eyes across the page with smooth motions. We teach them to discriminate between shapes, letters, and words. We practice visual closure. We strengthen visual memory. As these skills are strengthened, academic success begins to take place.

Also, as we work with the left and right hemispheres of the brain and practice directionality, the student whose world was not holding still, begins to experience stillness. Images are perceived correctly. With that, the student can take in information, process it, and spit it out correctly. Just as learning should be.

If you have a child who you think has a visual processing disorder, remember to be gentle and kind. The world can be scary if this is something on your plate. And always remember, these visual processing problems can be corrected. Just like training for a marathon, muscles and memory "muscle" can be strengthened until a learning marathon can be won!