



TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS
ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

HOW VISION LOSS IMPACTS LEARNING	HOW A SHORT-TERM PROGRAM CAN HELP
<p>FACT Vision loss causes deficits in underlying concepts, which affects all aspects of instruction.</p> <p>80% of learning is acquired through vision. Classroom instruction is designed for sighted students who share a core of visually-acquired concepts. Students with weak underlying concepts lack a base for understanding higher order concepts taught in the general curriculum (TEKS). Subsequent learning is always built upon that weak foundation.</p>	<p>We support academic achievement by providing hands-on, experiential instruction to demonstrate basic concepts that sighted children learn visually. Even secondary students need to fill in these gaps in order to master the curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading: much vocabulary is learned visually -- e.g., prepositions (under, after), adjectives (few, full), nouns (branch vs. tree, vehicle types), verbs (shrug, crash). • Math: e.g., number, portions, spatial & temporal sequence, shapes, measurement
<p>FACT Students with visual impairments have difficulty accessing the general curriculum (TEKS). They must learn unique access skills not addressed in the general curriculum.</p> <p>Tailored, intensive instruction in specific tools and techniques is required to master the core academic areas of "No Child Left Behind." It can be difficult for local teachers of visually impaired students to stay current in these rapidly changing technologies, or to provide the level of intensity needed.</p>	<p>We provide a short time away from multiple classroom demands to teach the unique knowledge and skills needed by academic students. We assist students with their school assignments so they don't fall behind.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer technologies: screen readers /enlargers, electronic notetakers, scanning textbooks electronically, and unique strategies for creating and reading word documents, databases, spreadsheets. • Braille for literacy or abacus; Nemeth Code for math and science. • Tactile graphs, maps, tables. Tactile tools to measure time, weight, distance, etc.
<p>FACT Research documents significant social isolation and dependence in visually impaired students taught in inclusive settings. Self-esteem correlates highly with motivation and success in school & adult life.</p> <p>Learning in the company of peers and adults who experience similar difficulties can be a life-changing experience.</p>	<p>Short Classes at TSBVI allow students to belong to both worlds: they remain a part of their family and community while developing lifelong friends who share their unique experiences.</p> <p>Students often return home with a renewed commitment to learning and enhanced feelings of self-worth. They are better able to describe and advocate for adaptations they need in order to compensate at school and in life.</p>
<p>FACT Adults with visual impairments often remain unemployed and dependent upon others, even if they were successful in school.</p> <p>National data indicate a 30% employment rate for persons who are visually impaired.</p>	<p>Students attending Short Classes meet a range of successfully employed adults who are visually impaired. They listen as these people describe the challenges that they overcame to live independently, successfully, richly, and happily.</p>

For more information about TSBVI Short-Term Program contact:
 Dr. Lauren Newton, Principal of Special Programs; Phone: (512) 206-9119; email: laurennewton@tsbvi.edu
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