



Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Outreach Programs

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Information for General Education Teachers about Telescope Use in the Classroom

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A telescope is a small telescope which enables a student with a visual impairment to see print, pictures, diagrams, maps, faces and demonstrations when (s)he is seated at his/her desk. The following are some facts and adaptations which need to be considered if a telescope is being used:

1. A telescope severely restricts the visual field. The student will be taught by the TVI (teacher of students with visual impairments) to scan to pick up all visual information and increase visual memory so (s)he can copy more quickly and efficiently.
2. A telescope is typically used for distance tasks only.
3. Copying while using a telescope is laborious, and it will take the visually impaired child longer to copy from the board/charts, etc. You can adapt by modifying the length of the assignment. Some ways of doing this include:
 - a. assigning even or odd numbers of problems
 - b. allowing the student to write only the answers to questions rather than re-copy entire sentences, questions, and/or paragraphs
4. When a student is using a telescope, walking up to the board/chart should be discouraged. This annoys other students and severely hinders speed, continuity of thought, and proficiency when reading or completing an assignment.
5. Singling out a visually impaired student's desk (to place him/her closer to the board) is discouraged due to social reasons. A telescope will enable the child to sit within the group at all times.

6. Telescopes break easily and should be worn around the neck when in use (EXCEPT in physical education and/or while on the playground) and stored in a case otherwise. Please encourage your children to keep their telescope out of sight when the room is empty.
7. Encourage the student to take the telescope to other school events, e.g. assemblies, film presentations, athletic games.
8. Do not allow other children to handle the telescope.
9. Do not allow the telescope to be taken home with the student unless arrangements have been made with the TVI.
10. A student who is using a telescope should be seated facing the boards/charts to allow straight-on viewing. This also enables the child to rest his/her elbow on the desk while he is looking through the telescope.