



Unit of Work – The ‘eyes’ have it

Introduction

It can be a daily challenge to ensure that your students are learning to the best of their abilities. Research has shown that as many as one in ten children have a vision problem that can interfere with their ability to learn, often resulting in stress and frustration for the child and the teacher. Early detection of vision disorders by an optometrist is essential.

This five-lesson unit of work will encourage primary-aged children to think about how their eyes work, understand the importance of keeping their eyes healthy, build awareness and understanding of vision disorders and how they affect daily life and consider how their environment and choices can impact their eye health.

Curriculum links

Years 3 and 4

- Being healthy, safe and active
Identify and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPS036)
- Contributing to healthy and active communities
Describe strategies to make the classroom and playground healthy, safe and active spaces (ACPPS040)

Years 5 and 6

- Being healthy, safe and active
Plan and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPS054)
- Learning through movement
Participate positively in groups and teams by encouraging others and negotiating roles and responsibilities (ACPMP067)

Years 7 and 8

- Communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing
Investigate and select strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing (ACPPS073)
- Understanding movement
Participate in physical activities that develop health-related and skill-related fitness components, and create and monitor personal fitness plans (ACPMP083)



Broad learning outcomes

Participating in this unit of work will assist students to achieve the following learning outcomes.

Students will:

- learn about the anatomy of the eye
- experience the difficulties that people with vision problems may have completing simple tasks
- evaluate their classroom and home as 'eye health' environments and make an action plan to address any areas of concern.

Resources required

Lesson 1: The anatomy of the eye (part 1)

- Paper for drawing
- Crayons or coloured pencils
- Mirrors (*optional*)

Lesson 2: The anatomy of the eye (part 2)

- 'Parts of the Eye' diagram (*enlarged or displayed on an interactive whiteboard*)
- 'Anatomy of the Eye' activity sheet (*there are two levels of this; select the one that is suitable for your class*)

Lesson 3: Living with vision impairment

- Several pairs of old glasses or sunglasses (*one per pair or small group*)
- Petroleum jelly
- Blindfolds
- Eye patches
- Various items depending on the activities you select (*see lesson 3 for list of activities*)

Lesson 4: Eye health environment audit

- 'Healthy Eye Environment' information sheet (*enlarged or displayed on interactive whiteboard and copies for students*)
- 'Eye Health Environment – School Checklist' activity sheet
- 'Eye Health Environment – Home/Personal Checklist' activity sheet

Lesson 5: Eye health environment action plan

- 'Eye Health Action Plan' activity sheet
- Completed school and home checklists from lesson 4



Lessons

Lesson 1: The anatomy of the eye (part 1)

Brainstorm what students know about their eyes and record responses.

Divide the students into pairs and have them examine their partner's eyes. Explain to students that this activity requires sensible and responsible behaviour and care should be taken.

Students to draw a large picture of the eye, putting in as many details as possible. Ask students to consider the colour and texture of the eye, and use crayons or coloured pencils to lightly colour the drawing. Students can compare the similarities and differences in the colour, shape and texture of each other's eyes. Alternatively, or in addition, students could make a list of words to describe their partner's eye.

As an extension to this activity, you might like students to observe their own eyes using mirrors. Share the drawings and/or lists.

Lesson 2: The anatomy of the eye (part 2)

Display the 'Parts of the Eye' diagram (*enlarged to A3 or on an interactive whiteboard*). Discuss each part of the eye and what it does.

Distribute 'Anatomy of the Eye' (*there are two levels of this activity sheet; select the one suitable for your class*). Ask students to fill in the parts of the eye. Review and discuss the diagrams with the students.

Lesson 3: Living with vision impairment

The aim of this lesson is for students to experience what it is like to have impaired vision. Explain to students that by undertaking these activities, it is helping them to understand first-hand what it is like to live with a vision impairment.

It is likely that you already have students in your class with vision impairment. Use your judgement to decide if this lesson is appropriate for your class.

Select and set up several activities that you feel would be best suited to your class. There are options for indoor and outdoor activities.

Rub a small amount of petroleum jelly on the outside of some old pairs of glasses or sunglasses (*if possible avoid old prescription glasses*).

Put students into pairs or small groups. The groups rotate through several tasks trying to perform them while wearing the glasses, an eye patch or a blindfold.



Activities could include:

- reading a book or newspaper
- writing or copying some text
- reading or watching something on the whiteboard or a computer
- pouring a glass of water
- making a paper clip chain
- making a paper plane
- throwing or catching a ball
- shooting netball or basketball goals
- identifying some objects from a suitable distance
- counting an array of items.

Provide students with some time to reflect on their experiences, either in written form or as a small group or class discussion.

Lesson 4: Eye health environment audit

As a class discuss the elements that contribute to a healthy eye environment. These are explained in detail on the 'Healthy Eye Environment' information sheet.

Place students into pairs or small groups and provide them with a copy of the 'Eye Health Environment – School Checklist'. Ask each group to do an audit of the classroom and/or other areas in the school (*library, computer room, outside areas, office etc.*).

Provide each student with the 'Eye Health Environment – Home/Personal Checklist' and ask them to complete an audit of their home for homework.

Lesson 5: Eye health environment action plan

Review the school audits completed in lesson 4 and ask students to summarise their findings. They can also do the same for their home audits.

Discuss any areas of school or home that students think could be improved or changed. Students work in their same pair or small group (*as in lesson 4*) to develop some recommendations, or an action plan to improve the school or home eye health environment. They can use the 'Eye Health Action Plan' to complete this activity.

Display the action plans in the classroom and revisit them regularly to ensure you are providing a healthy vision environment.