

<b>Developmental Area:</b>	<b>Visual</b>
<b>Skill Strand:</b>	<b>Visual Memory</b>
<b>Skill Phase:</b>	<b>At First</b>
<b>Skill Step:</b>	<b>I explore colour, pattern, sheen and movement.</b>

## **Importance of this Skill Step**

This skill step is an important indicator of my exploratory impulse using the visual channel of attention. Exploring the world in this way, alongside focusing and sustaining attention on visual stimuli, underpins the development of future visual skill steps. Visually stimulating and enticing objects will increase the likelihood of early progression with this skill step. However, creating a balance is important. Resources that stimulate auditory and sensory stimulation, sometimes without visual 'overload' are also fundamentally important.

Alongside this skill step, I will be learning to discriminate and sustain attention on a human face, an essential skill for interaction and communication. Later I will bring these skills together, focussing on your face, objects and pictures simultaneously. Initially this will occur in one-to-one interactions and then in groups.

As well as exploring objects visually, I will also, ideally be using my other senses to explore in a multisensory way. I will also be developing motor skills as I hold and manipulate the objects I am exploring.

## **Facilitating Progress**

Provide opportunities for me to explore resources offering a range of visual stimulation at different times. These could include:

- use of pattern and contrasting colours, selecting black and white spirals, checks and stripes at my earlier stages of development.
- visual contrast resulting from different textures e.g. a furry patch of fabric and a shiny, reflective patch.
- use of contrast such as a different pattern or colour to prompt other types of exploration as the difference marks a flap to lift or a patch that makes a squeaky or crinkly noise when touched and explored.
- objects prompting cause-and-effect learning, including flaps to lift, parts to squeeze or press to make a sound or a whole object to shake in order to increase the level of visual stimulation.
- use of mirrored surfaces to explore sheen and to enable me to explore your face and mine.

As always, these varied opportunities create additional opportunities for interaction, and development of other skills such as auditory and fine motor as I hold and manipulate the objects.

## Assessment of Progress

Within early development, a firm level of success would mean that I persist with the exploration of an object that provides me with visual stimulation. I will also, ideally, begin to show some cause-and-effect exploration with certain resources e.g. shaking the glitter balls so that I can see the glitter move and sparkle, moving the mirror in the light or to my face so that I can see the light or my face reflect.

## Things to Consider

Overtime, I will continue to explore objects visually, particularly if you surround me with visually stimulating resources. You will do this to prompt exploration to further develop cause-and effect learning, and to create opportunities for interactions and targeted language enrichment.

However, it may become a concern if I continue to explore the visual 'detail' of objects more often than would be expected, including objects that do not prompt this type of exploration and are not explored in this way by others (e.g. persistently holding a water bottle up to the light and turning it around, holding a laminated picture very close to my eyes to see the sheen and the detail but not the picture as a whole, etc.) If this is the case, you will need to look at my developmental skills and the pattern of my developmental profile more closely. ***This can be an indicator of a disordered developmental pattern so seek support, assessment and advice externally as soon as possible if needed.***

***You will also have concerns if I am overly passive, not demonstrating an exploratory impulse even with resources creating visual stimulation. How do I react to even more high-interest resources using lights, patterns and movements of light? Also, consider if motor skills play a contributory factor? Do I have the skills to move, reach, grab and hold? How do I respond if you bring the resources to me and press, shake or move them to create increased levels of visual stimulation? Seek support, assessment and advice externally as soon as possible if needed.***

## Is this my Next Step?

This will be my next step if I am at very early stage of development. Through sensory exploration my more discrete visual and other skills will develop. Even though it is important that I move on from this skill step and see objects as a whole (see **next steps**) this skill step/way of exploring will not go away completely. When faced with interesting visual resources, particularly if they are new and interesting, I may go back to this process. **Things to consider** will help you to highlight if I am continuing to use this way of exploring more than would be expected and with more familiar resources.

## Preconditions

There are no preconditions for this skill step as it concerns the earliest stage of development. My motor skills will contribute to my visual exploration and your assessment, allowing me to non-verbally convey what I am visually interested in and demonstrate my visual exploration.

### **Next Steps: Direct**

It is really important that, in addition to exploring parts of the object and the visual stimulation it offers, I also begin to see the object as a whole. This is fundamentally important to underpin my visual memory development so that I understand what objects, miniature objects and, later, photographs, pictures and symbols represent. I will also need to recognise objects when I can only see part of them. Therefore, the visual sense of the whole object is fundamentally important (Role Play & Creativity Skill Step 1.)

### **Next Steps: Indirect**

My indirect next steps also involve me moving away from exploring objects for visual stimulation to seeing objects as a whole. In other areas, this will underpin my semantic/vocabulary development, my symbolic skills and, as a result, my play.