

Chad Haunschild

Junior Behavioral & Social Sciences

Exercises: Can The Eyes Learn?

This project was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of eye strengthening exercises toward improved visual acuity for people with nearsighted or farsighted limitations, and those with normal vision. Following research and interviews with Optometrists and a Vision Therapist, a baseline was established for each participant based on certified eye exams, acuity level on the Snellen Chart, and reading level on the Large Word Chart. Visual limitations of the nearsighted and farsighted participants were the manipulated variable. A participant without vision problems, and the method and amount of time conducting eye exercises each day were the control variable. Four exercise: follow, fixation, focus, and eye yoga exercises, followed by a relaxation exercise, were conducted on a daily basis. Participants were monitored for consistency and accuracy. Data was recorded on charts for each participant stating challenge or goal results. Measurements of eye movement, speed, accuracy, refocusing, and ability, provided exercise effectiveness results. The fixation exercise resulted in tracking skills improving by 3-5 seconds in a period of 30 days. Each of the other exercises showed slight improvement. The nearsighted participant gained the most benefit. Test results and analysis of the data indicate through consistent repetition, the eyes can learn by training the brain to coordinate and strengthen the focusing system and improve overall visual acuity.