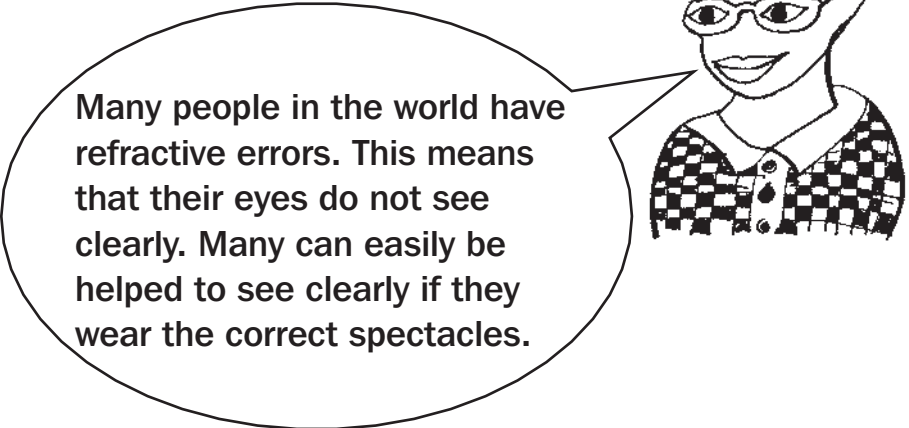
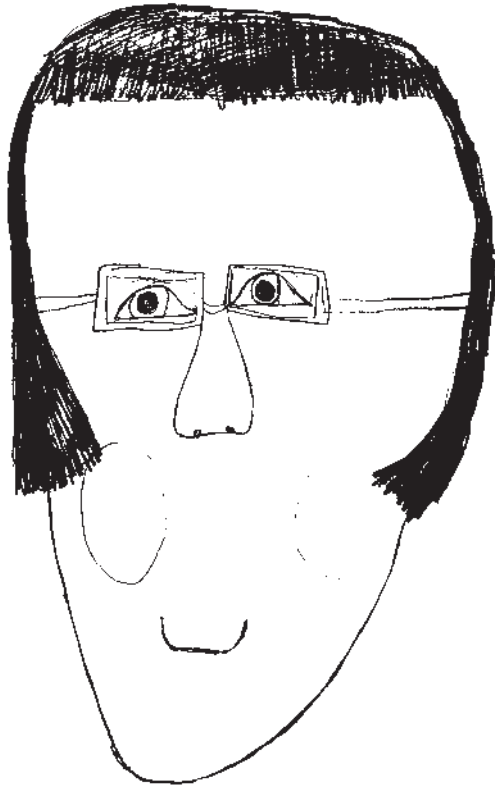


6 Spectacles for those who need them



Many people in the world have refractive errors. This means that their eyes do not see clearly. Many can easily be helped to see clearly if they wear the correct spectacles.



My name is Jamilla. My best friend since I was a child is Simrah. Soon we will be going to university to study to become teachers. I remember when we were about seven years old, Simrah was always failing the tests. She seemed unhappy at school. When she read a book she held it very close to her face, the book almost touching her nose. When there was something to copy from the blackboard, she copied it from my book. One day, some nurses from the eye clinic visited the school. They tested all of our eyes. They told Simrah that she had a problem with her vision and that it could easily be treated with spectacles. She cried. She said "my father will not allow me to wear spectacles, it will bring shame on the family, no one will agree to marry a girl with glasses!". The eye nurse was very kind. She spoke to Simrah's parents. When Simrah had her spectacles, everything improved for her. She started to do well at school and the teacher said kindly "Smart Simrah in her spectacles!" At home she could help her mother with preparing the rice because now she could see if there were any small stones.



Class Discussion

How many children in the class have had their eyes tested?

Are there any children in the class who have headaches, or difficulty seeing the blackboard?

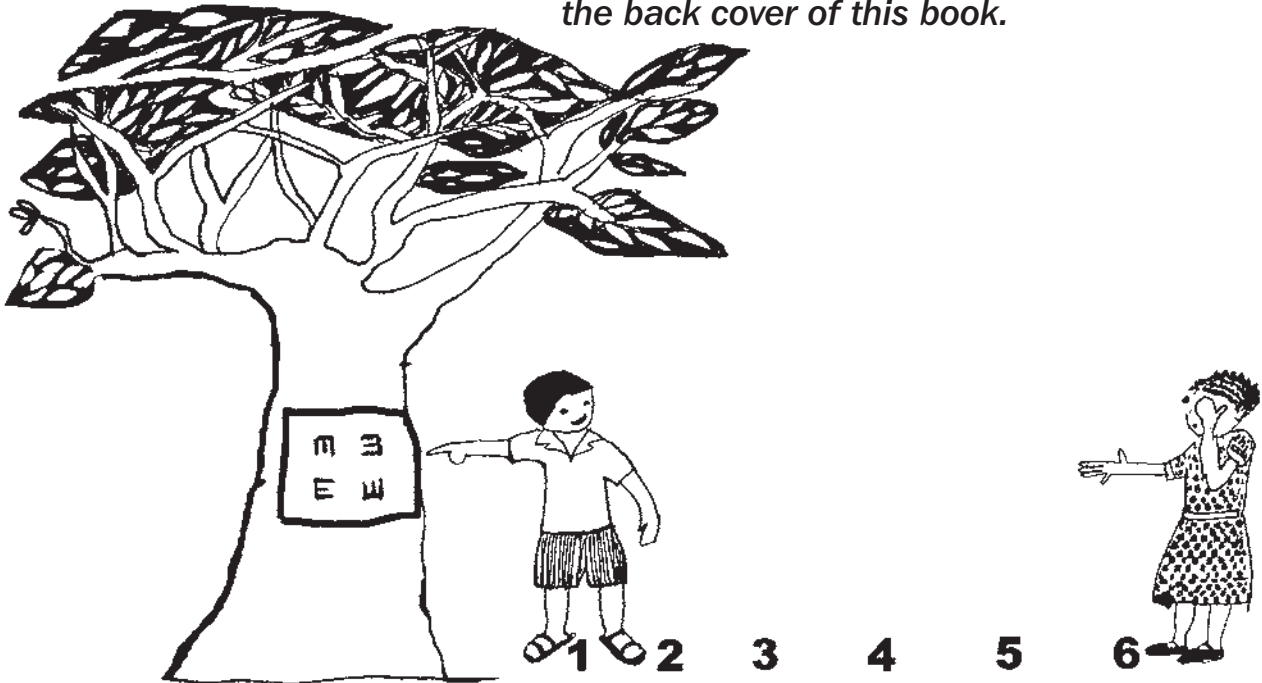
Where can you get spectacles if you need them in this community?



Class Activity

How to test vision

You can find out if someone can see well or not by testing their eyesight. For this activity, use the vision testing E chart on the back cover of this book.



- Attach the card to a wall or a tree.
- Measure the distance. Take six steps from the tree or wall. Mark the spot.
- Ask the person to be tested to stand on the mark and cover the left eye.
- Point to the E. Ask the person to point in the direction of the E. Repeat with the other Es.
- Repeat for the other eye. The person should now cover their right eye.

Write down the names of the children who did not get all the directions of the E right. This means that they do not see well and they need to be checked by an eye nurse or doctor.

Names of children who cannot see the E (i.e. better than 6/12)		
Name	Right eye	Left eye



My father makes shoes. Last year he stopped making and mending shoes because he could not see to thread the needle or do the small stitches. We were unhappy because daddy was not earning enough money to buy the things we needed like school books and clothes. At last his friend Mr Kuma said, "old man, you should go to the eye clinic to get spectacles". My father did not agree. "I am not so old and I have always seen perfectly. Spectacles will only make my eyes weaker", he said. But from that day he started noticing that many people about his age had spectacles. Mr Zuma in the post office. Mrs Kumalo who made clothes. He decided to have his eyes checked at the eye clinic. He returned with a pair of spectacles, looking very proud and happy. We are now happy too.



Home Activity

Survey

Each person in the class should find out from six people at home if they have difficulty seeing.

1 Find out if there are any blind people in your community. Do the counting fingers test.

The counting fingers test to find out if someone is blind

- Stand 3 meters away from the person (about five to ten steps away from the person).
- Hold up two or three of your fingers.
- Ask the person to tell you how many fingers he can see.
- Try again with one or four fingers.
- Write the names of people who cannot count fingers at 3 meters.



People who cannot count fingers at 3 meters

2 Find out if there are any older people who need spectacles for seeing things close-up. Use the chart on the inside of the back cover.

People who cannot see the E close-up while holding the chart at a comfortable distance



Health Messages



- All children should have their eyesight checked.
- Children who hold the book too close to their face, or who need to sit very close to the blackboard, should have their eyes checked immediately.
- As we get older, our eyesight begins to change. It becomes harder to see small things close to us. This problem can easily be helped by wearing spectacles or reading glasses. Adults who are over 40 years should have their eyesight checked.
- Poor eyesight is not an illness.
- Spectacles do not weaken the eyes.
- No one is too young to wear spectacles.
- Do not tease children who wear spectacles.