

# SEE IT. SAY IT. DO IT

## Action guide to creating confident, successful kids

By CHRIS LEPPEK

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First, there is vision. Then there is sight.

Finally, there is visualization.

They're not at all the same thing, the author of this compelling and useful book tells us right off the bat, yet their confluence and harmony are crucial to our developmental well-being.

Dr. Lynn Hellerstein, a Denver-area optometrist who specializes in vision therapy, makes the point in *See It. Say It. Do It.* that the importance of coordinating visual stim-

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The Parent's & Teacher's Action Guide to Creating Successful Students & Confident Kids

By Dr. Lynn F. Hellerstein  
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uli and the ability to process those stimuli are never more important than when children are learning in school.

Vision — the physical ability of the eye to perceive images — and sight — the ability of the brain to properly process, and perceive, those images — are a vital tandem in learning, Hellerstein argues.

When they work together well, visualization is the result.

Visualization — composed both of physiological eyesight and psychological perception — amounts in many ways to imagination.

The bottom line: the more developed a child's imagination is, and the clearer the imagination is projected, the likelier that student is to be successful at school — and afterward.

Drawing upon her 30-plus years of experience, Hellerstein makes the case that a good many of us don't have very well-developed imaginations. We find it difficult to visualize.

She illustrates with a simple formula: Those with well-honed imaginations tend to love nothing more than reading books. They identify with characters and settings, have no trouble picturing characters, scenes and ideas depicted through text, and often feel "connected" to the story itself.

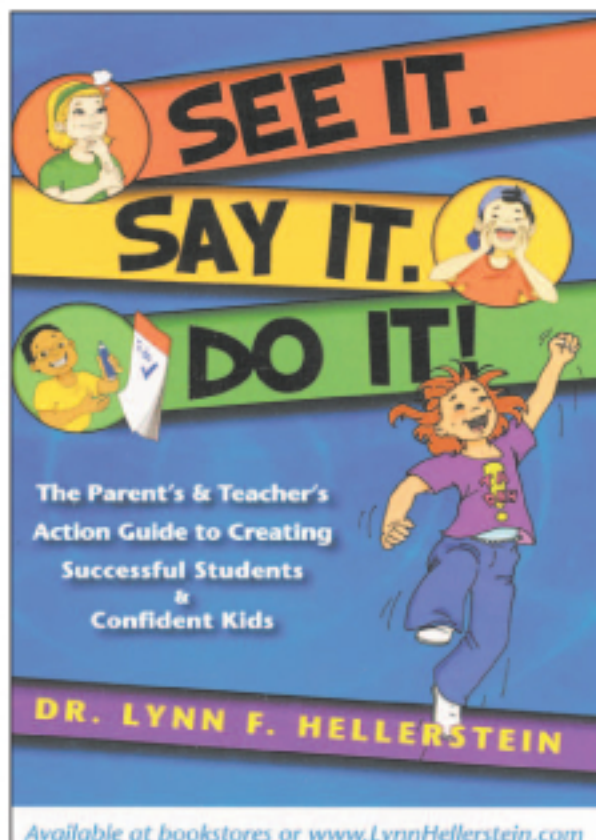
Those with less developed imaginations are uncomfortable with reading. They struggle making sense of words and letters, which frustrates their ability to connect and relate to a text.

They tend to be much more comfortable in the passive role of watching a movie.

The implications, however, are considerably more serious than how we spend our leisure time. Visual-

izers routinely do better at their studies, whether scientific or creative, linear or curvilinear, reading, math or history.

Children who find visualization hard to come by not only have difficulty with scholastic pursuits, but often experience related difficulties: inordinate stress levels, lack of self-esteem and confidence, difficulty with sports and competitive activities, a proclivity to be victimized by bullies.



The saving grace of Hellerstein's clear and straightforward study is her contention that visualization is an eminently learnable trait.

She takes parents and teachers by the hand and walks them through a series of steps: How to test a child's visualization skills and learning styles, how to help children with reading, what kinds of activities will enhance their learning skills.

Learning to visualize, the author writes, is a lot easier than it sounds.

"Picture yourself on your dream vacation," Hellerstein suggests in her introduction.

"Are you lying on a white sandy beach, cruising through the Greek Isles, or sitting in Fenway Park,

watching the Red Sox beat the Yankees?"

"Guess what? You are using your visualization skills!"

There's a lot more to it than



Dr. Lynn Hellerstein

that, of course, but her exercise succeeds in conveying the general idea.

Her book conveys a great deal more of them.

