

## **You have now been screened for Irlen Syndrome.**

### **Yes, you do have Irlen Syndrome. Now what?**

1. Try to protect your overlays from getting scratched by keeping them in a folder or binder so they don't slide around. To clean them just use a soft cloth and water, with no harsh cleaners. Replacements are available for purchase on Irlen.com. FYI: Plastic lens cleaner like that used on computer screens or from Irlen.com put a protective layer on the overlays.
2. Learn more about Irlen Syndrome. Go to [irlen.com](http://irlen.com) to find out more. You can also look for the books *Reading by the Colors* by Helen Irlen and *The Light Barrier* by Rhonda Stone. Yellen and Associates has information on their site about Irlen Syndrome and the Yellen-Schweller Effect at [www.yellenandassociates.com](http://www.yellenandassociates.com), then under Services Menu > Irlen Diagnostics.
3. Use the overlays in your classes and on tests. The State of California recognizes Irlen overlays as a Class C accommodation and if you use them in class you may automatically use them on any test that originates in California - classroom tests, California High School Exit Exam, and the STAR testing. Special permission is needed for use on national tests such as SAT, ACT, or AP tests.
4. Realize that at first other people may be curious about what your overlays are and why you use them. Keep using them and it won't take long for it to become commonplace. They'll ignore it or they'll ask where they can get overlays of their own. Be courageous! Don't let other people's uninformed reactions stop you from doing something that will help you be a more effective student.
5. The overlays make the original paper seem even brighter in contrast when you lift them up. If you need to read and write on the same paper, copy the handout onto a color of paper close to your overlay color. Ask if the teacher can copy your handouts on your best color. If they know well in advance, it should be fairly easy for them to accommodate.
6. Check out office supply stores and ask for legal pads, 3X5 cards, and any other school supplies in your optimum color. Hole-punch the legal pad sheets and use them as loose-leaf paper.
7. To make computer work easier, change the color of your computer background - especially in your word processing program. Here is how: On your computer desktop right-click. The bottom choice that comes up should be "Properties", ⇒ Click on Appearance ⇒ then, Advanced ⇒ Click on the area that says "Window Text" ⇒ There will be some boxes on the show the current color of the desktop and the font color - usually white and default black. Click on the box beside the word "Desktop". ⇒ If the appropriate color is shown click on it. If you don't see your best color, click on "other" ⇒ that will take you to a window where you have more colors to choose from. You can use your curser on the rainbow box and on the intensity slide to the right to pick exactly the right color and shade. ⇒ then click "Add to custom colors" ⇒ Click the box that now contains your chosen color. Click okay, then okay again, ⇒ then "apply". Now when you pull up your word processing program it should be in

the new color. You can do the same for the font. You can make it lighter or darker. It can be white on black or pink on green if you wish.

8. If possible, sit near a window in classes to get natural light.
9. Ask your teachers if they are willing to turn off some of the fluorescent lights in the room.
10. Wear a hat or visor to block light from above. If you paint the underside of the beak with dull black craft paint it will reflect even less light.
11. Buy more of the overlays and cut them to the size of the novel or texts you are reading so that you will have several to use with different textbooks. You can order them from the [irlen.com](http://irlen.com) website. If you use more than one, you can tape them together around the edges so they don't rub against each other and get scratched as quickly.
12. If the overlays help, you may want to go to the next step, which is to get the filters or colored lenses. For this you are on your own. Here is what you do:
  - You need to have had a check-up with an optometrist within a year of the Irlen test to make sure that you have a current prescription. You may have a focus issue for which you need glasses as well as the perception problem for which you need the color. (I'm old and I really do need bifocals) You need to buy a pair of glasses with tintable CR39 plastic lenses. (Check with the Diagnostician to make sure of the type of lenses.) If you don't need an actual prescription ask them to put in plain uncurved tintable lenses. DO NOT get your lenses tinted the exact color of the overlays. DO NOT get transitions lenses.
  - Contact either Dr. Andrew Yellen at [Yellen and Associates](http://Yellen and Associates) in Northridge - [docyellen@yellenandaccociates.com](mailto:docyellen@yellenandaccociates.com) (818) 360-3078 ext. 103 OR the Irlen Institute in Long Beach (562)496-2550 for an appointment with a Diagnostician to determine the precise color for the lenses. The overlays come in only 10 colors but the filters can be tinted an almost infinite number of shades.
  - Let them know that you have been screened and have your overlays and ask for the specific instructions on the kind of glasses to get.
  - Be sure to bring the blue IRPS form that describes your responses to the screening - The one I was writing on during the testing.
  - The Diagnostician will use similar methods to determine what color to tint the glasses. The glasses will be sent to the Irlen Institute in Long Beach to be tinted, and then they will be mailed back to you.

If you have any other questions, please contact Mrs. Huffaker at Valencia High. Remember this is not yet a district program. This is a community service provided by Mrs. Huffaker. If additional family members or friends are interested in testing, please have them contact Mrs. Huffaker.

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