

## ***Academic Skills***

Once the basic skills of reading and spelling are well established they are relatively resistant to the effects of traumatic brain injury. They may occasionally be affected in severe TBI or in other forms of acquired brain injury (e.g. infection, stroke, tumor). We have to carefully examine pre-accident academic history because of a high incidence of pre-existing learning and behaviour problems particularly in children sustaining traumatic brain injury. A problem with academic skills noticed after a brain injury may simply reflect the way things have always been. In younger children (around 8 years or younger) there may have been an unrecognized learning difficulty prior to the injury. Children who sustain a brain injury prior to learning to read and spell are at increased risk of difficulty in acquiring such skills. While the basics of reading and spelling may be relatively resistant to the effects of brain injury, higher level skills such as reading comprehension involving inference and essay writing are more often affected. The basics of maths may be affected similarly to reading and spelling. However, maths involves acquisition of relatively new knowledge, concepts and procedures over an extended period of time compared with reading so the effects may be seen more or less throughout schooling.