

JASMINE STEPS

FROM CANE FRAME
TO INDEPENDENCE



Jasmine Steps: From Cane Frame to Independence

Acknowledgments

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Disclaimer

The people in this story are fictitious, but Guide Dogs Singapore (GDS) is real. Information in this publication was prepared with reference to resources from Guide Dogs Singapore. It is not meant to replace direct advice from health or education professionals. Discussing your child's situation with an appropriate eye care specialist, therapist or teacher will give you the best support and guidance to ensure proper management and care.

Follow the story of Jasmine, a brave child with visual impairment caused by Cone-Rod Dystrophy and discover her journey of exploring the world in her own special way. This booklet has activities that help children with visual impairment learn how to move safely and confidently.



Have a peep into how Jasmine grows from using a cane frame to a Kiddie cane, then a long cane, and one day, even a guide dog.

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#1 Meet Jasmine

Jasmine is two years old. She lives in an HDB flat in Singapore with her mum and dad. Every morning, Jasmine wakes up to the sound of birds outside the window and the rumble of buses passing by. Sometimes, her grandmother comes over to spend time with her and sing nursery songs together. Jasmine loves music, soft toys, and short walks downstairs at the playground near her block.



#2 Jasmine's Eye Condition

Jasmine loves bright colours and always carries a soft bunny with floppy ears. She enjoys playing with her toys and looking at picture books. However, sometimes she fumbles when she reaches out to grab things. When she looks at pictures, she often tilts her head and squint her eyes. Her parents notice these small things and are concerned. They bring Jasmine to the hospital. Jasmine holds her mother's hand tightly while her father stands next to her. Dr Lee, an eye doctor, speaks softly and smiles, making Jasmine feel a little braver.



Dr Lee holds a tiny light and asks Jasmine to follow it with her eyes. She tries her best, but some things look too bright, and others look dim. Colours do not look as clear as they used to. Dr Lee explains that Jasmine had cone-rod dystrophy, a condition where the cells inside her eyes will gradually stop working properly. This makes it harder for her to see colours, details, and things in bright light. Her parents are worried, but they hug Jasmine close. Jasmine does not understand what is happening, but she knows everyone is there to take care of her. That is the day her parents learn why her world sometimes look too bright, too dim, or a little fuzzy. Dr Lee encourages them to help Jasmine make full use of her residual vision. Using whatever vision, she still has, will support her in navigating her environment more safely, avoiding obstacles, and staying oriented.

Dr Lee explains that as Jasmine grows, she will work with various professionals such as therapists, orientation and mobility instructors, and educators who will support her journey towards independence.

#3 Love, Courage and Freedom

Jasmine's parents love her so much that they wish they can keep her safe in a bubble. They want to protect her from every danger. But deep inside, they know that holding on too tightly will not help Jasmine grow.



So, with love and courage, they choose a different way. They stay close, always watching, but give Jasmine the freedom to wander and wonder. They let her explore the world with curious eyes, stepping in only when she needs them.

Her parents also search for answers. They read books, asked doctors, and spoke to other families with children like Jasmine. They learn as much as they can, so they could help her in the best way possible.

Most of all, they are there for Jasmine, cheering her on, staying positive, and filling her days with love and hope.

What Is Cone-rod Dystrophy?

Cone-rod dystrophy is a condition that affects the light-sensing cells inside the eye. These cells help us see colours, details, and things in bright or dim places. When they stop working properly, the world can look fuzzy, too bright, or harder to see clearly. Colours may not look as strong, and reading or recognising faces can become difficult. People with cone-rod dystrophy may need to go closer to objects or tilt their heads to see better. They might also find bright sunlight uncomfortable or notice that their eyes get tired easily.

Cone-rod dystrophy can affect children as well as adults. Even though there is no cure yet, doctors, teachers, and families can help by giving the right support, tools, and care. With these, children can still enjoy learning, playing, and exploring the world in their own special way.

#4 Moving Around Safely with a Cane Frame

Jasmine cannot see clearly, especially in bright places or when she needs to look at small details. It is almost as if she has to take six big steps to see what other children can see from far, far away—like 120 steps! Sometimes colours look faded, and sunlight feels too strong. When she moves around, Jasmine uses a cane frame to help her explore safely.

Because of her cone-rod dystrophy, Jasmine sees shapes and colours differently. She cannot recognise many things around her, like the big tree outside her home, her favourite bright red ball, or the colourful flowers by the gate. Since it is hard for her to see clearly, Mommy always holds her hand when they walk, making sure she does not trip over toys or objects around the house, especially when the light is too dim or too bright.

One day, during a session with the Orientation and Mobility (O&M) instructor, Mommy learns something new. The instructor shows her how to make special “simulation glasses” by layering soft plastic wrap over a pair of old glasses. This allows adults to experience Jasmine’s world—fuzzy, bright, and missing many details. When Mommy puts them on, she realises how hard Jasmine must work every day just to see what is around her. She also learns about “count fingers” vision and “hand-movement” vision, which helps her understand Jasmine’s eyesight even better.

After trying the glasses herself, Mommy brings the idea home to help Jasmine learn about her own vision gently and playfully. She holds up her fingers and asks, “Jasmine, how many fingers do you see?” Sometimes Jasmine can count one or two, and when she gets it right, she claps her tiny hands happily. On another day, Mommy adds more layers of cling wrap and waves her hand slowly. Jasmine sees the movement, giggles, and waves her own little hands back. It becomes a fun, safe way for Jasmine to understand her eyes.

Even though seeing clearly can make her tired, Jasmine is very brave. She learns to listen to birds singing, cars passing by, and leaves rustling in the wind. Mommy tells

her it is okay to hold onto her arm or use her cane frame to walk safely. With love, support, and lots of practice, Jasmine continues exploring her world in her own special and wonderful way.



Activity: Safe Steps Walk



Objective

To help a child with vision impairment learn to walk safely by using touch, body awareness, and guidance to recognise slopes, textures, edges, and obstacles.

Materials Needed

- Toys, cushions, or small chairs (as simple obstacles)
- Folded blankets or a low ramp (for gentle upslope and downslope)
- Different textures (carpet square, bubble wrap, soft mat, rough cloth)
- Tape, rope, or a rolled towel (to create tactile edge guides)
- Safe and open indoor space

Instructions for Parents

1. Set Up a Clear and Safe Walking Path

- Arrange toys, cushions, or chairs as obstacles along a simple path.
- Add a gentle upslope and downslope using folded blankets or a low ramp so your child can practise feeling changes in height.

2. Add Textures and Tactile Edge Guides

- Place different textures along the path for your child to feel through their feet. This helps them notice when the surface changes.
- Use a rope, tape, or rolled towel to create a clear tactile edge that your child can follow to stay within the safe path.

3. Guide Your Child with Touch and Voice

- Hold your child's hand and walk slowly along the path together.
- Give clear verbal cues like, "We're going up a slope," "Feel the soft mat," or "There is a cushion on your right."

4. Teach Safe and Tricky Areas

- Explain which areas are safe to step on and which obstacles to walk around.
- Encourage your child to use their hands, feet, and body to sense the space and identify changes.

5. Practise Stopping and Exploring

- Ask your child to stop at chosen spots.
- Let them reach out gently to feel what is around them, such as edges, slopes, or obstacles.

6. Change the Path Occasionally

- Move the textures, slopes, or obstacles slightly each time so your child learns to adapt and use their senses in new situations.

After the Activity

- Ask your child which textures felt soft, rough, or bumpy.
- Talk about which parts felt easy or tricky.
- Praise your child for using their hands, feet, and listening skills.
- Encourage them to share how they followed the edge or noticed a change in slope.

Safety Tips

- Always walk close to your child and offer steady support.
- Keep the upslope and downslope gentle and firm so they do not slip.
- Make sure the path is free of sharp or unsafe objects.
- Keep the floor dry and non-slippery.
- Stop the activity if your child feels unsure, scared, or tired.

#5 Exploring Other Senses: Orientation and Mobility

Despite Jasmine's visual impairment, she has a special way of learning about the world with her other senses! She listens carefully, felt with her hands, and even smells the air around her to understand where she was.

Every day, Jasmine's parents help her learn her home. She can hear the lift ding and know someone is arriving. She can hear her own footsteps echo in the hallway and even tell when her parents are nearby just by the sound of their shoes. These little clues help Jasmine make a mental map in her head like a treasure map of her home, she always knows where she is going.

Jasmine has a cane frame that helps her walk safely. She loves using it to trail along the side of the walls to feel what is ahead and beside her. The cane frame helps her to identify things around her, and this meant that Jasmine does not have to worry about falling or bumping into things.

Occasionally her parents will say, "Step up!" or "Turn left!" and Jasmine will follow, learning to connect words with movements. With each step, she grows braver and more independent. Sometimes Jasmine will follow the sound of her favourite toy's music or her mommy's voice. Sometimes she will sniff the sweet smell of flowers by the window. Every sound, touch, and smell helps her build her own special mental map of the world around her.

Activity: Treasure Trail at Home



Theme

Orientation & Mobility – Using sound, touch, and smell to explore safely

Objective

To help children build confidence in exploring familiar spaces using hearing, touch, and smell while practising safe movement with guidance from parents.

Materials Needed

- Sound clue: bell, musical toy, or keys
- Touch clue: cushion, textured mat, or wooden surface
- Smell clue: flower, orange peel, or garlic
- Small treasure or reward (toy or snack)
- Encourage your child to use a cane frame or Kiddie cane

Instructions for Parents

1. Prepare the space

- Choose a safe area free from sharp edges or clutter.
- Place the sound, touch, and smell clues in separate, reachable spots.
- Hide the final treasure at the last location.

2. Explain the game

- Tell your child they will use their senses to follow clues and find a treasure.
- Encourage careful movement and active listening.

3. Start with sound

- Ring a bell or toy and give short, clear cues (e.g., “Take two steps forward,” “Turn left”).
- Praise your child when they find the sound clue.

4. Move to touch

- Guide your child to trail along walls or furniture to locate a soft or textured item.
- Ask questions like “What does it feel like?” to build awareness.

5. Add smell

- Place a scented item nearby and guide them with hints (e.g., “It smells stronger to your right”).

6. Find the treasure

- Give final orientation cues and celebrate when your child finds the treasure.
- Reinforce their success with positive words and excitement.

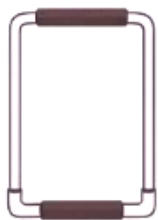
After the Activity

- Ask your child which clue was easiest to find and how they knew where they were.
- Encourage them to guide *you* in the next round to boost confidence.

Safety Tips

- Always supervise your child closely.
- Keep the path clear of hazards.
- Stop the activity if your child feels tired, unsure, or uncomfortable.

Cane Frame



For Parents

The cane frame serves as a helpful tool that assists Jasmine in confidently navigating her surroundings. The cane frame doesn't replace her sense of sight; it acts like an extension of her hand. It allows her to feel textures, obstacles, and changes in her environment through touch. As time goes on, the cane frame helps children become more independent and gets them ready for using future mobility aids.

Story Text to Read Aloud to the Child

When Jasmine is young, she loves exploring the world around her. The echo of her footsteps in the hallway, the cool breeze by the window, and the cane frame detects obstacles and different surfaces on the floor. To her, the cane frame is more than a tool; it is her first step toward discovering things on her own and exploring her surroundings. As she moves, the cane frame helps Jasmine find her way safely. Each time she trails it along a wall or tapped it gently on the ground, she is creating her own little map of the world. Over time, Jasmine becomes comfortable holding the cane frame in front of her body for longer during. It is a small but important skill that helps her get ready for her next big step which is transitioning to a Kiddie cane.



How To Make a Cane Frame

When Jasmine is ready to explore more on her own, her parents want to help her take her first steps toward independence. Together, they decide to build a **PVC cane frame** a simple, child-friendly mobility aid that will allow her to move safely, build confidence, and learn how to use her cane with ease.

This guide will help you do the same for your child. The cane frame will support them as they begin to understand movement, distance, and their surroundings.

*You can get the materials needed from any local hardware shop and request them to cut it to your desired dimensions.

Materials for the cane frame

A: 2 × ½-inch PVC pipes (short pieces. Measure your child's shoulder width and cut the pipes to this length so the cane frame remains a manageable size and isn't too big for your child to handle).

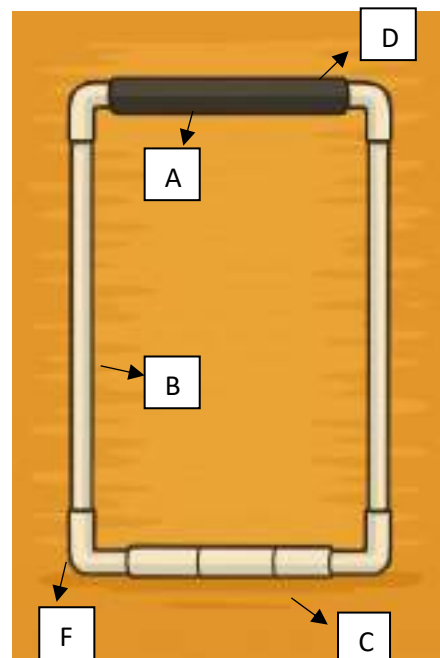
B: 2 × ½-inch PVC pipes (long pieces. Cut these according to your child's height from their shoulder down to the floor. This helps the cane frame match your child's natural posture and makes it safe and comfortable to use).

C: 4 × 1-inch PVC pipes (roller pieces, cut to about 2 inches each).

D: 1 × 1-inch PVC insulation pipe (used as the handle to provide sensory feedback).

F: 4 × ½-inch 90° elbow joints (to connect the short and long PVC pieces).

- PVC glue
- PVC cleaner
- Hacksaw (Required if you are cutting the pipes on your own)
- Colourful Scotch tapes to wrap bottom ends of long sections (optional)



Step 1: Prepare Your Parts:

1. Lay all PVC pieces on the floor.
2. Use the PVC cleaner to wipe the ends of all pipes where they will connect. (This helps the glue stick better.)

Step 2: Build the Top Handle Section: Part A & D

1. Take one short ½-inch PVC pipe (top bar).
2. Slide the black PVC insulation pipe (handle grip) over it until centred.
3. Ensure it fits snugly.

Step 3: Attach the Long Side Pipes: Part B

1. Take the top short pipe (with handle).
2. Connect one long ½-inch pipe to the right side.
3. Connect the other long ½-inch pipe to the left side.
4. Do not glue yet — check alignment first.

Step 4: Install the Bottom Rollers: Part C

1. Take the bottom short ½-inch pipe.
2. Slide all four 1-inch roller pieces onto it. Ensure they move freely — these act as the rollers for smooth movement.

Step 5: Complete the Rectangle Frame: Part C

1. Connect the long side pipes to the bottom short pipe with rollers.
2. Make sure the entire frame forms a rectangular shape (like the image).
3. The rollers should sit along the bottom so they can rotate easily.

Step 6: Final Adjustments Before Gluing

1. Lay the frame flat on the floor.
2. Ensure all sides are straight and evenly aligned.
3. Check that rollers spin freely and are not blocked by the corners.

Step 7: Glue the Frame

1. Once aligned, disconnect each joint one at a time.
2. Apply a small amount of PVC glue inside the connector.
3. Reconnect the pipe firmly and hold for 5–10 seconds.
4. Repeat for all four corners.

Step 8: Let It Dry

1. Leave the cane frame untouched for at least 1 hour.
2. Full drying/curing takes 24 hours.
3. Avoid using it until completely set.

Activity: Decorate your Cane Frame



Theme: Personalized Sensory Grip (Making the cane frame unique and easier to hold).

Objective: To customize the cane's handle area, improving non-slip grip and creating a unique tactile identifier for the child.

Materials Needed

Material to Decorate the Cane Frame

- Colourful Thick ribbons, or durable yarn.

Securing Tools (Adult Use Only)

- Scissors
- Strong glue (super glue or hot glue)



Instructions for Parents/Caregivers

1. Preparing the start

- Securely tape or glue the beginning of the wrapping material just below the existing cane handle.

2. Guide the wrapping

- Let the child choose the colour and guide them to tightly wrap the material down the shaft, slightly overlapping each layer.

3. Guide the wrapping

- When the design is complete, cut the material and use the strong glue to tightly secure the end of the wrap to prevent it from unravelling during use.

4. Safety check

- Ensure the grip material is non-toxic and fully dry before the child handles the cane frame.

5. Additional

- Use stickers to decorate the cane frame.



#6 How Jasmine uses her Cane Frame at Home

Jasmine loves helping at home in small ways, just like other toddlers. In the evenings, she helps her mummy wipe the dining table with a small cloth. When she walks from her room to the kitchen, she uses her little cane frame to guide herself. She taps gently to check if anything is in front of her. Her mum stays close and reminds her to walk slowly and listen for sounds like footsteps or chairs moving.

When it's time to set the table, Jasmine helps by putting one plate or one spoon on the table. She feels for the edge, so she knows where to place it. Sometimes she misses a spoon on the floor, and her mommy tells her where it is to help her out. Everyone at home keeps the floor clear of slippers and toys so Jasmine can move safely.

Jasmine also likes to keep her play area tidy. Her books, soft toys, and crayons stay in the same place so she can find them easily. If her things get messy, it becomes harder for her to look for them, so mummy helps her tidy up before bedtime.

On weekends, Jasmine enjoys listening to music. Sometimes, she helps mommy make simple snacks. She like learn about different food by touching and smelling them. Helping out makes Jasmine feel happy and proud.



#7 How Jasmine Uses her Cane Frame at School

Jasmine learns best through touch, sound, and simple, clear cues. Her teachers and classmates use short directions like “this way,” “on your left,” or “one small step forward,” which help her feel safe and included.



She also receives support from Ms Eva an Orientation & Mobility (O&M) instructor from Guide Dogs Singapore. Ms Eva checks in regularly to see how Jasmine is progressing, making sure her materials have good contrast, big shapes, and bold outlines so they are easier for Jasmine to see. She guides Jasmine in practising safe movement with her cane frame in places like the corridor, play corner, and walkway to the outdoor area. During class activities, Jasmine is placed close her classmates so she can hear voices clearly and stay connected. When it is time for playtime or a simple physical education session, Jasmine uses her cane frame to move safely between spaces, and everyone helps keep the pathways clear so she wouldn't trip over toys or bags.

Her cane frame stays right beside her mat or small chair, ready whenever she needs to move to another part of the classroom. It helps her sense walls, furniture, and open spaces. Even at just three years old, Jasmine is becoming more confident moving around her school with gentle support a little reminder of how much children can grow when everyone works together.

#8 How Jasmine Uses her Cane Frame at Playground

After school, Jasmine loves going to the playground near her block with her mommy and her friends. She brings her little cane frame along, and mommy helps her hold it while they walk. At the playground, Jasmine uses her cane frame to feel where things are like the slide, the swing, the climbing frame. Her friends help too, “The swing is here, Jasmine!”

When she is ready to play, mommy helps her hold the cane frame and puts it safely at the side. Her friend, Aina stands next to Jasmine and helps her walk a few small steps to the swing. “Almost there, okay, you’re here,” Aina says while holding the swing still. Jasmine reaches out with both hands, finds the seat, and gives a big happy smile when she starts to swing. The wind tickles her face and she giggles.

Sometimes other little kids look at her cane frame because they have never seen it before. Jasmine is still small, so she just holds onto mommy. Mommy will explain softly, “This helps Jasmine walk safely.” Sometimes the kids touch it and go, “Oh that is so cool!”.



With a bit of help, her cane frame, and her friends by her side, Jasmine can explore the playground and have fun just like everyone else.

Activity: Inclusive Marco Polo



Theme

Using sound clues and safe movement to support social play

Disclaimer

Adjust the activity according to your child's vision condition.

Objective

To help children play safely with peers by using sound cues, listening skills, and simple mobility strategies.

This version allows a child with visual impairment to join in confidently.

Modifications for Children with Visual Disabilities

- The child with the disability does NOT wear a blindfold.
- They use their cane frame to move safely while playing.
 - Other players must reply clearly so the child can follow the voice.

Materials Needed

- Blindfold for other players
- A safe, open space (indoors or outdoors)
- The child's cane frame
- Clear boundaries for the play area

Instructions for Parents

1. Set up the play area

- Remove obstacles like chairs, toys, slippers, or bags.
- Mark a clear, safe space for the children to play.

2. Choose the seeker

The seeker counts to 10 while the players spread out.

- If the child with the disability becomes the seeker, they do NOT wear the blindfold — they hold their cane frame instead.

3. Start the Marco Polo game

- The seeker calls out “Marco!”
- All players reply “Polo!” clearly and loudly.
- The seeker follows the voices.

If the child with the disability is the seeker:

- They tap their cane frame gently to check the path.
- They walk slowly toward the voices.
- Players answer in clear tones and stay within reachable distance.

4. Continue the game

- When a player is tagged, they become the new seeker.
- If the child with the disability becomes seeker again, they continue using their cane frame and do not use a blindfold.

After the Activity

- Ask: “Was it easy to follow the sound?”
- Ask: “What helped you find your friends?”
- Encourage children to think of clues that make the game easier and more fun.

Safety Tips

- Keep the play area open and clutter-free.
- Do not allow running if the child is using a cane frame.
- Players should not hide silently they must reply loudly to keep the game safe.
- End the game if the child becomes tired or overwhelmed.

General Tips for Parents and Teachers Supporting a Child With Visual Impairment

For Parents	For Teachers
1. Encourage independence early. Let your child explore their surroundings safely to build confidence and orientation skills. 2. Use consistent organization. Keep household items, school supplies, and personal belongings in predictable places to reduce frustration. 3. Promote communication. Talk through daily activities and surroundings so your child can build spatial awareness and vocabulary. 4. Celebrate milestones. Whether it's mastering a new route or learning to use a guide dog, recognize progress to keep motivation high. 5. Encourage social interaction. Help your child build friendships and participate in group activities.	Use multi-sensory teaching methods. Combine verbal explanations, tactile materials, and auditory aids to enhance understanding. Provide materials in suitable formats. Large print, braille, or digital text (with screen reader compatibility) can make a difference. Allow extra time. Visual tasks, note-taking, or orientation around new spaces may take longer. Encourage peer support. Pair the student with understanding classmates for group work and transitions. Communicate regularly with parents. Share progress, challenges, and strategies to keep consistency between home and school.

Activity: House Renovation Mastery





Theme

Introducing spatial concepts in familiar environment

Disclaimer

Provide adequate supervision accordingly

Objective

This activity trains the child to be familiar with the mental map of their house and practice following directions.

Parent

1. **Picks** 5-8 household items.
2. **Decides** the new location for each item (e.g. parent's bedroom or child's bedroom).
3. **Gives descriptive directions and encouragement feedback** to the child while the child is moving the item.

Examples of Descriptive Directions

- "Make two steps straight ahead toward the wall. Then, turn your body 90 degrees to the right."
- "The pillow is now directly to your right. Reach out, pick it up, and move it until you feel the edge of the wooden box, before setting the pillow on top of the box."

Examples of Encouragement Feedback

- "That was nice! You navigated that corner without any help. Your mental map is becoming very accurate!"
- "I heard you pause right before the bookshelf. That means you were really listening to the instructions and using your sense of space. Great effort!"

Child

1. **Listens** to the instructions.
2. **Picks up** the correct item.
3. **Moves and places** the item to the new spot.

Braille Fun Facts

1. Braille was invented by a teenager.

Louis Braille created the system when he was just 15 years old, after becoming blind from an accident in childhood.

2. It's not a language, it's a code.

Braille simply represents letters, numbers, and symbols. You can write English, Malay, Chinese, or even maths and music using Braille.

3. It's based on 6 dots for a reason.

The 6-dot cell fits perfectly under a fingertip, allowing people to read quickly with just one swipe of the finger.

4. There's even Braille for emojis (unofficial but real).

Some modern groups have created Braille patterns to represent popular emojis like 😊 👍 🔥 .

5. You can find Braille everywhere in Singapore.

Lift buttons, MRT station signs, public toilets, and even on some pill box, all designed to improve accessibility.

Railing at the entrance of a MRT station



Lift buttons



Alphabets

a	b	c	d	e	f	g
h	i	j	k	l	m	n
o	p	q	r	s	t	u
v	w	x	y	z		
Capital	.	,	?	!		

Numbers

0	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	#	

#9 Tap Tap with Kiddie Cane

Orientation & Mobility plays a vital role in Jasmine's journey to independence, as she gets older and starts exploring places outside of home. That is when an Orientation & Mobility specialist from Guide Dogs Singapore, Ms Eva teacher her to use a Kiddie cane. Transitioning from the cane frame to the Kiddie cane can seem daunting, but Jasmine is able to do it with lots of practice.



Jasmine holds her kiddie cane tightly as she steps onto the playground. She cannot see everything around her, but her cane helps her feel the world in a special way. Tap-tap, it touches the ground and guides her past bumpy steps and around twisty corners. With every tap, Jasmine grows braver, discovering where the swing begins, where the sandbox ends, and where her friends are waiting. Her kiddie cane is not just a tool, it is her trusty explorer stick, helping her adventure with confidence and joy.

#10 Growing Confidence with Technology

Jasmine is growing up in a world where technology can help her in many exciting ways. As she gets older, mobile applications will help her see more clearly, move around safely, and understand the world around her. Every child with low vision is different, so the tools Jasmine uses are chosen carefully to match her needs at each stage.

At home, Jasmine's parents use simple tools on their phones to support her early learning. Features like Zoom, Magnifier, and Speak Screen let Jasmine hear descriptions of pictures or listen to short stories out loud. High-contrast mode and larger text make images easier for her to see. As Jasmine grows more confident, she will learn to use these features on her own, helping her read, explore, and play independently.



There is also a technology called Generative Artificial Intelligence, or Generative AI. This is like having a little helper that can “think” and “recognize” things, almost like a person does. Generative AI can describe pictures, read text, tell colours apart, and help children with low vision understand what they are looking at. As Jasmine grows, she will use newer Generative AI tools that can describe images in detail, recognize objects, and read printed text in real time. It can help her understand worksheets, identify food

on her plate, or even describe the clothes she wants to wear. These tools act like an extra pair of eyes, helping her explore safely and independently.

When Jasmine is a little older, she will try mobile applications designed especially for people with low vision. One helpful app is Seeing AI (Seeing Artificial Intelligence). It can read labels, describe objects, identify colours, and even explain what is happening in a photo. If Jasmine is unsure about something, she can point her phone at it, and the app will tell her right away.

Another app she will use is Be My Eyes, where trained volunteers guide her through a video call. They can help her check bus numbers, read signs, or make sense of her surroundings. These tools help Jasmine solve little problems on her own without always needing someone nearby.

Even with all these digital helpers, Jasmine still learns to explore with her own body. Her cane frame lets her feel what is in front of her and move around safely. As she grows, she will transition to a Kiddie cane and then a long cane. She can even pair her cane with digital tools, so she can listen, identify, and explore at the same time.

Jasmine's parents make sure she has lots of chances to try things for herself so she can build confidence. Technology does not replace her abilities; it adds to them. With her phone's accessibility features, mobile applications like Seeing AI and Be My Eyes, AI description tools, and her cane, Jasmine will have many ways to explore the world safely and independently as she grows.

Trivia Questions

Ask your child (or partner, or class!) after reading this section:

1. What accessibility feature on the smartphone will make the words bigger on the screen?

Answer: Increase Text Size (also called Larger Text) or Display Zoom.

2. Which mobile application can describe objects and read text for you?

Answer: Seeing AI.

3. Which mobile application allows volunteers help you through a video call?

Answer: Be My Eyes.

4. What tool helps Jasmine move safely around the house?

Answer: Her Cane Frame.

Technology Resources

Information is accurate as of December 2025.

App / Tool	What It Helps With	How Jasmine Might Use It	QR
Google Lookout	Reads text, identifies objects, describes scenes	Helps her understand worksheets, food packaging, or recognise items at home	 This app is not available on Apple.
Seeing AI	Object description, text reading, people recognition	Quick scanning of books or labels; identifying items in class	 
Be My Eyes	Volunteers provide live visual assistance	When she needs help identifying something urgently (e.g., colours, items, directions)	 
ChatGPT	Reads text, explains concepts, helps with homework, describes images (when supported)	Getting simple explanations, having stories read to her, asking questions about worksheets	 
Google Gemini	Text reading, answering questions, describing scenes, everyday explanations	Understanding objects, reading short text aloud, asking simple "What is this?" questions	 
Talking Tom	Sound feedback, interactive voice responses, fun play for young children	Practising vocal responses, exploring cause-and-effect, enjoying character sounds	 

#11 Exploring the World with the Long Cane

Every morning, Jasmine listens to the birds singing and the soft rustle of leaves outside her window. She cannot see these things, but she can hear them clearly. Today is a big day for her. Now that she is older and already confident with her kiddie frame, she is ready to begin learning how to use a long cane.



Her instructor, Ms Eva, gently placed the cane into her hands.

“This is your long cane,” she said warmly.

“It will help you find your way, stay safe, and understand what is around you.”

Jasmine holds the cane tightly. It feels smooth and light, almost like a small friend she can bring anywhere. Then the lesson begins.

“Try sweeping it from side to side,” Ms Eva guides her.

Jasmine moves the cane in front of her. *Swish, tap, swish, tap.*

Every sound teaches her something new. When the cane taps a flat surface, she knows the path is clear. When it hit a bump or step, she pauses and moves carefully. As she practises, Jasmine realises how the cane helps her see through touch and sound. When the cane touches a wall, she knows to turn. When it brushes against grass, she knows she is at the edge of the walkway. Sometimes the cane gets stuck in cracks or bounces back and surprises her, making her laugh. But she likes how easy it is to use and carry. Ms Eva reassures her, “Your cane is strong, and if it ever breaks, it’s easy to replace.” By the end of the lesson, Jasmine feels braver with every tap. She hugs her cane gently.

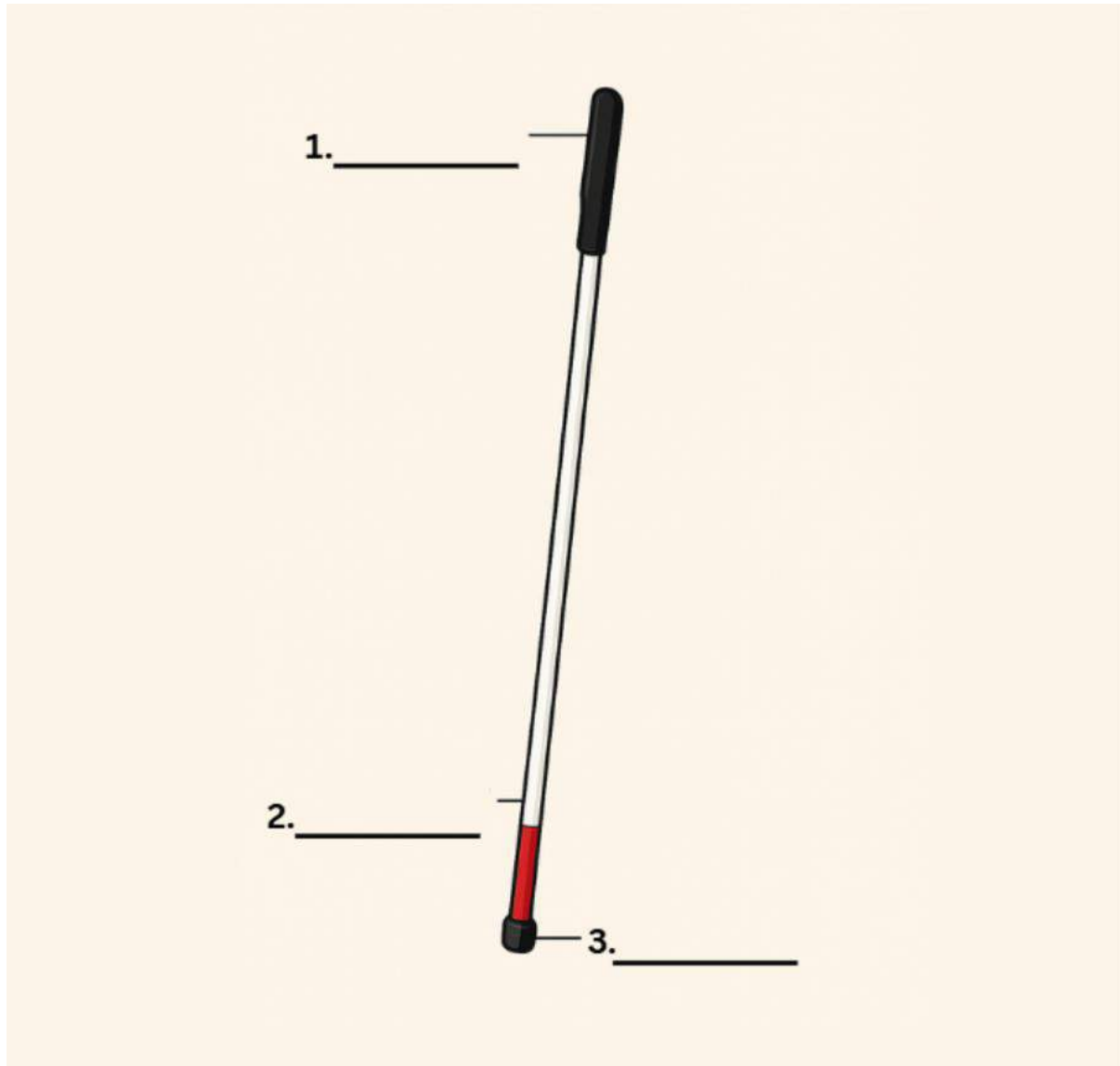
“Thank you for helping me,” she whispers. She realises her cane is not just a stick. It was her trusted friend.

Trivia: Do You Know?

1. Why are most long canes always the colour white?

Answer: To let everyone know the person using it is visually impaired.

2. Name the parts of the cane shown in the image below.



Answer: 1. Cane grip, 2. Cane shaft/body, 3. Cane tip

3. How does the cane help the user travel safely?

Answer: The cane helps the user detect obstacles (e.g. steps, drains etc.) in their routes.

4. Name the technique used by slightly individuals to help people with visual impairment navigate safely.

Answer: Human guide technique.

5. Besides "long cane," what is a very common name for this helpful stick?

Answer: White Cane (or Mobility Cane).

#12 A New Trusty Friend: Max, the Guide Dog

One sunny morning, Jasmine stands outside the training centre, excited and nervous. Today, she is going to meet Max, her first guide dog. She has used her long cane for many years, but now she wants to try something new.

When the trainer brings Max over, Jasmine feels his soft fur and gentle tail wag.

"This is Max," said the trainer. "He will help you walk safely and avoid obstacles."

Jasmine smiles and whispers, "Hi, Max."

She holds the harness handle.

"Forward, Max," she says.

Max walks smoothly, guiding her around a bench and stopping carefully at the curb.

Jasmine feels safe and steady, as if Max already understands her.



Every day, Jasmine learns new commands like "Left" and "Stop." Max listens well and helps her move gracefully through crowds. With Max beside her, she feels more confident and less alone.

But she also learns that having a guide dog is a big responsibility. She has to feed Max, brush him, and take him out every day. Max is well-trained, but sometimes he gets distracted or tired. Some people try to pet him even when he is working, and a few shops do not understand that guide dogs are allowed inside.

Her friend Sophie has told her, "It's wonderful, but not always easy. Guide dogs need daily care and good training."

Still, Jasmine loves having Max. He keeps her safe, comfort her when she is scared, and makes her smile with his warm, loyal presence.

One evening, Max rests his head on Jasmine's lap.

"Thank you, Max," she whispers. "With you, I feel brave."

Max is not just a helper; he is her trusted friend for every journey ahead.

Jasmine feels a new kind of freedom. Strangers no longer see her as someone struggling to find her way, they see a woman moving forward with purpose, guided by her loyal companion.

Trivia: Do You Know?

1. If a Guide Dog sees a car coming, and its owner tells it to cross the street, what will the dog often do?

Answer: The dog will refuse or stop, because he/she knows the action is unsafe.

2. What is the most important rule when you see a working Guide Dog in its harness?

Answer: Do not pet, call, or distract the dog.

3. When a Guide Dog is leading a person, what does its harness tell the dog's owner?

Answer: The owner can feel the dog gently guiding them around obstacles through the harness handle and stopping when it's not safe to go on.

4. What colour is the special harness or vest that shows a dog is trained to help a blind person?

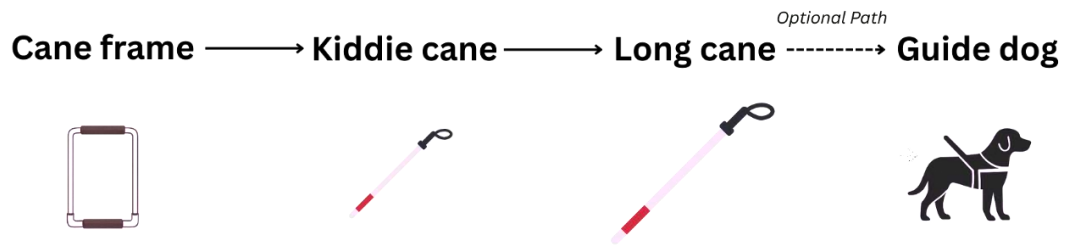
Answer: Usually white, yellow, or bright reflective colours.

5. How many hands does a visually impaired person usually use to hold the harness handle while the dog is guiding them?

Answer: One hand.

Closing

The journey from using a cane frame to working with a guide dog is a gradual process that helps a person grow more confident in moving around on their own. A cane frame is usually the first tool that gives a child support and balance when learning to walk safely. As they improve, they may move on to a kiddie cane and then a long cane, which helps them sense obstacles and understand their surroundings better. Most people stop at the long cane, but some may choose to continue and train with a guide dog. A guide dog is specially trained to help its user travel safely, avoid obstacles, and feel more independent. This final step is optional, but it can be a helpful choice for those who feel ready for it.



“We hope this book helps with your journey to independence;
You do not need perfect sight to explore the world only courage,
curiosity, and support.”

The text in this booklet is set in Atkinson Hyperlegible, a typeface designed to be highly readable for people with partial visual impairment. Its characters are crafted to be as distinct as possible, making the words easier to see.

Some parts of the written content were crafted using generative AI.

All images in this booklet were generated using AI, and as a result, some visual details may not be fully accurate.

This booklet is made possible with the support from Guide Dogs Singapore and Republic Polytechnic.