

special education. Therefore, the child must rely on **braille**, a system that uses raised dots to represent letters and numbers. The child can then read braille with the fingers and can write messages using a braille writer. However, this system is not useful for communicating with others unless others read braille. A more portable system for written communication is the use of a braille slate and stylus or a microcassette tape recorder. A recorder is especially helpful for leaving messages for others and taking notes during classroom lectures. For mathematic calculations, portable calculators with voice synthesizers are available.\*

Books on CDs and tapes are significant sources of reading material in addition to braille books, which are large and cumbersome. The Library of Congress<sup>†</sup> has talking books, and braille books, that are available at many local and state libraries and directly from the Library of Congress. The talking book machine and tape player are provided at no cost to families, and there is no postage fee for returning the materials. Learning Ally (formally known as Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic)<sup>‡</sup> also provides texts and CDs and tapes of books, which are helpful for secondary and college students who are visually impaired. A means of writing is learning to use a home computer with a voice synthesizer that can be adapted to speak each letter or word typed.

Children with partial sight benefit from specialized visual aids that produce a magnified retinal image. The basic methods are accommodative techniques, such as bringing the object closer; devices such as special plus lenses, handheld and stand magnifiers, telescopes, video projection systems, and large print materials. Special equipment is available to enlarge print. Information about services for the partially sighted is available from the National Association for Visually Handicapped and American Foundation for the Blind. Children with diminished vision often prefer to do close work without their glasses and compensate by bringing the object very near to their eyes. This should be allowed. The exception is children with vision in only one eye, who should always wear glasses for protection.

### **Care for the Child During Hospitalization**

Because nurses are more likely to care for children who are hospitalized for procedures that involve temporary loss of vision