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Assignment 12

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**Senior Citizens and Usability**

The article gives insights on seniors change with age and it how it affects their ability to use a computer. [1] The first topic that is discusses is how vision is changed with age. It says that vision begins to change in adults in the early 40’s by a decline in the ability to see fine detail, and contrast sensitivity. [1] This refers to the ability to see images overlaid in other images, as well as, the difference in slight shade changes. One thing that did not change over time was the ability to target a location with vision. The article confirmed what we discussed last week, in that it is easier to ready black text on white background.

The next topic was hearing, in that the major issue was the increased need for volume as a person ages. The comfort volume level increases from 57 decibels to 79 decibels. The article also discussed the psychomotor abilities. The main points focused around a reduced ability to handle complex motor tasks. Those include the ability to track a target, do repetitive demands, and make sub movements with a mouse. [1]

The article also gives some suggestions on how to help seniors cope with the changes in their abilities. The first is with creating links. It says to one, make sure they are easy to see with distinct color changes, two, be fairly large (roughly 180 x 22 pixels), and three have a good amount of open space. The other suggestions include building adaptable interfaces, applying universal design principles and adapting to assistive technology. [1] Something to consider is this does require more out of the developer, and may be counterproductive due to an inability to use the technology.