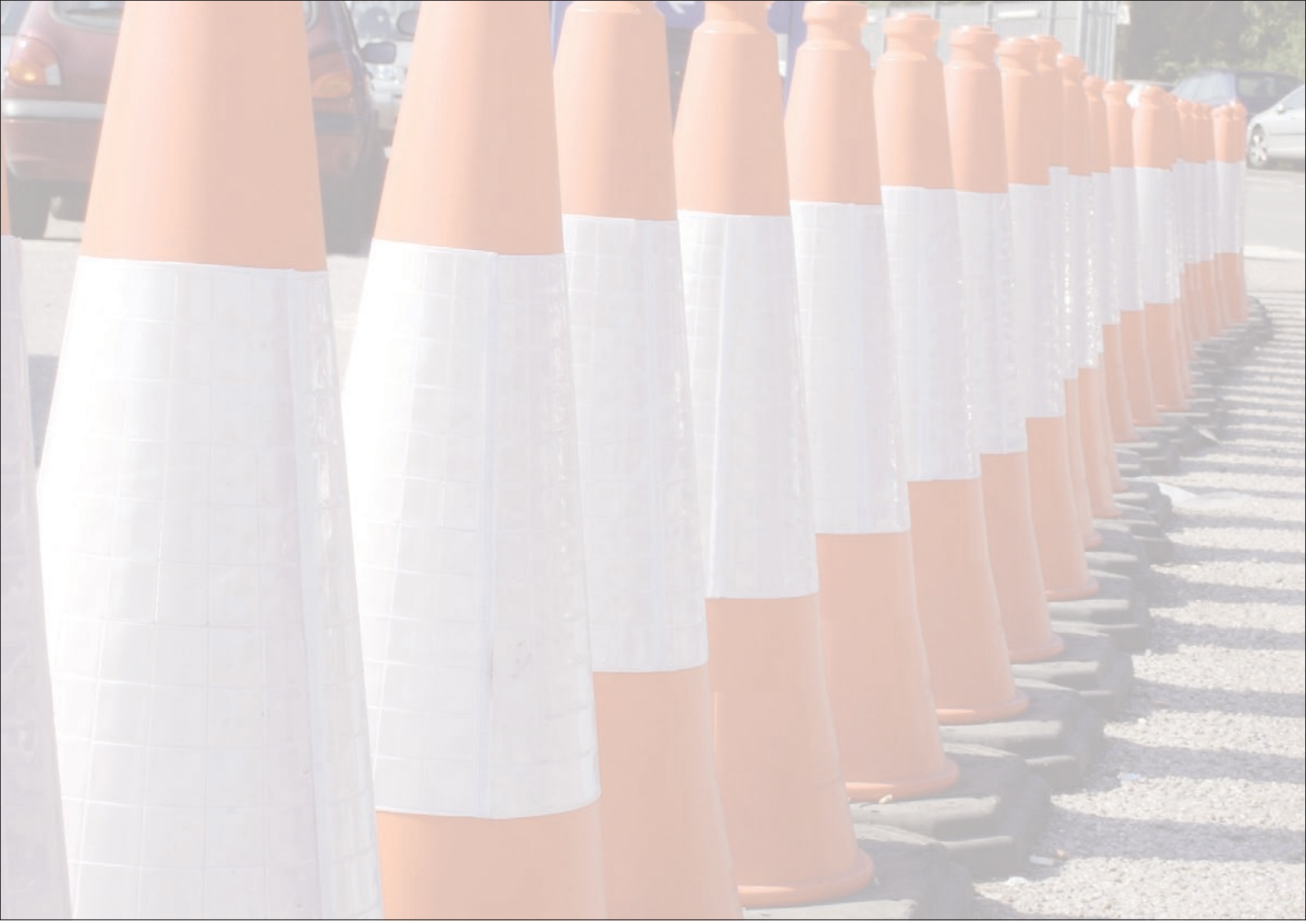
Safety colour

Resene
the paint the professionals use

Notes



Notes

Safety colour

Warm colours advance and appear closer than they are, while cool colours recede and appear further away. Brighter colours also appear closer as they stand out against other duller colours. To keep people safe, colours such as bright orange and bright red are used as safety colours.

Notes

At home and on your way to school you can see a lot of safety colours – bright red stop signs, red and orange labels on appliances containing warning information, orange cones at roadworks, red sirens on police cars, red fire engines and so on.

At night-time safety colours tend to be coloured lights in red and white as they stand out best against the black darkness. At night cars drive around with white headlights on but they have red hazard lights that they can turn on in an emergency to warn of danger.

Notes

These colours are chosen for safety colours as they stand out and are easy for people to see.

Cyclists and joggers often choose to wear bright red, orange and yellow to help car drivers see them, especially early in the morning and late in the afternoon when the light is poor.

Notes

Humans have used this idea themselves with bright colours used to highlight things.

For example a red stop sign stands out more than if it were just white.

The orange vests the roadworkers wear help to make them visible and keep them safe.

The highlighters used to mark important notes on a page help find the right information quickly later.

Notes

When stores have sales they often use red in their posters and advertisements to get attention.

Many fast food restaurants are also painted red so that they stand out when you are driving past them.

Notes

Colours are often used to identify specific objects, such as the colour coated wires used by electricians, with each colour having its own meaning so that electricians can tell which wire is which.

Notes

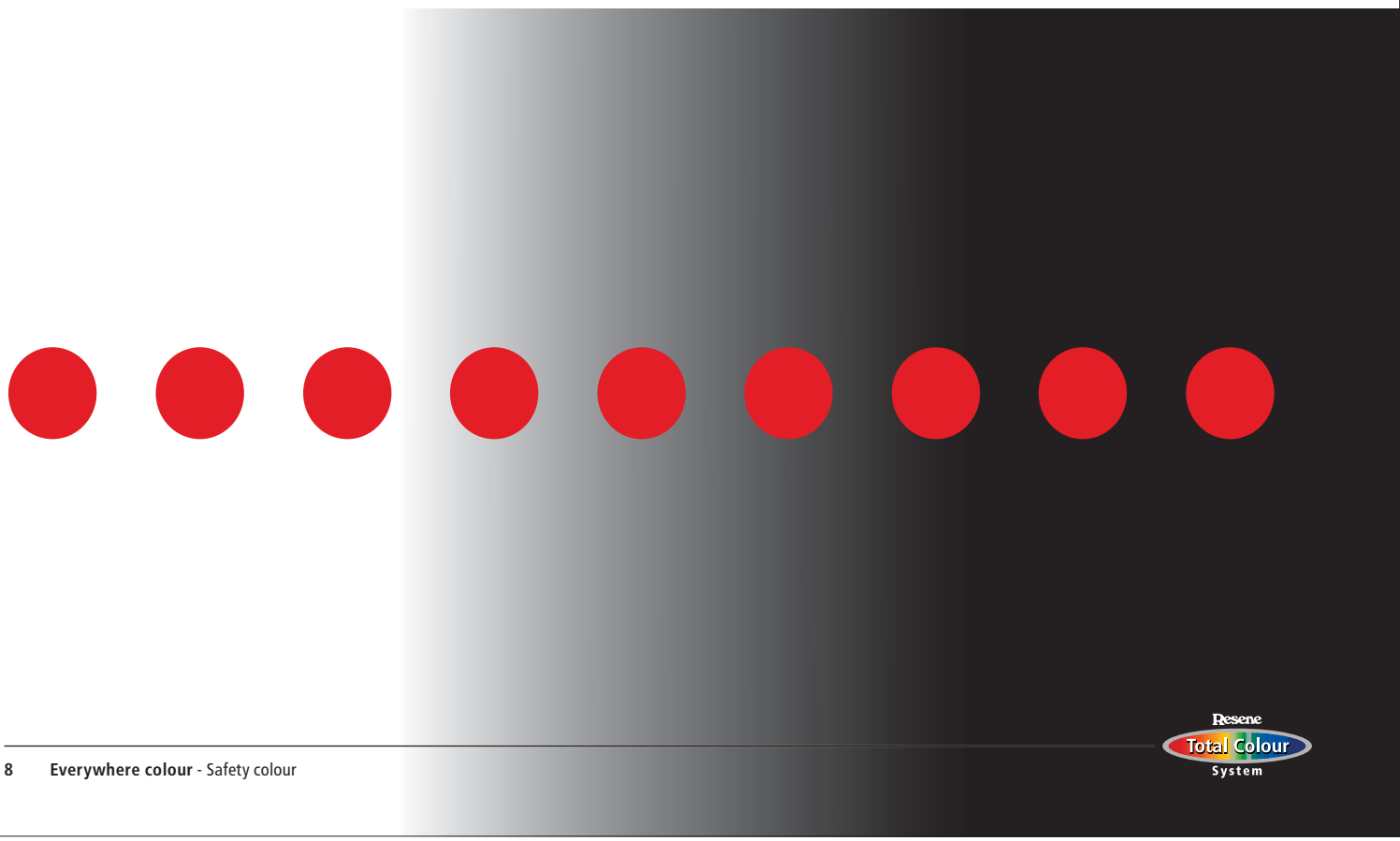
Try this!

You can test for yourself which colours stand out most when it is dark.

- Cut out 10 pieces of colour from a magazine or picture and paste or tape each one onto an iceblock stick.
- Cut one end off a shoe box.
- At the far end of the shoebox cut a small slit big enough to insert an iceblock stick with colour.
- Then shine a torch into the end you have cut off.
- One by one insert the iceblock sticks with the colour on them.
- Record which colours are the easiest to see.

Notes

You will normally find bright colours that are very different in colour to black will be the easiest to see. As colours get closer and closer to black they will be harder to see.



Notes

Try this!

Which car colour is easiest to see?

What if it is raining?

What if it is snowing

What if it is nearly nightime and the sun has almost gone?

Notes

Try it yourself...

1. Some colours stand out much more than other colours. To test this get eight different colour felt pens and write your name on a separate piece of paper in each colour – make sure it is the same size on each piece.

2. Attach one to a fence or similar and walk away from it. Then stop, turn around and start walking towards it. Stop when you can read the name clearly.

3. Measure the distance from where you are standing to the page and record the distance.

4. Then repeat steps 2 and 3 with another colour.

5. Try this exercise again using the number 2 on different coloured background colours. Which backgrounds make the number harder and easier to read?

Resene Total Colour System

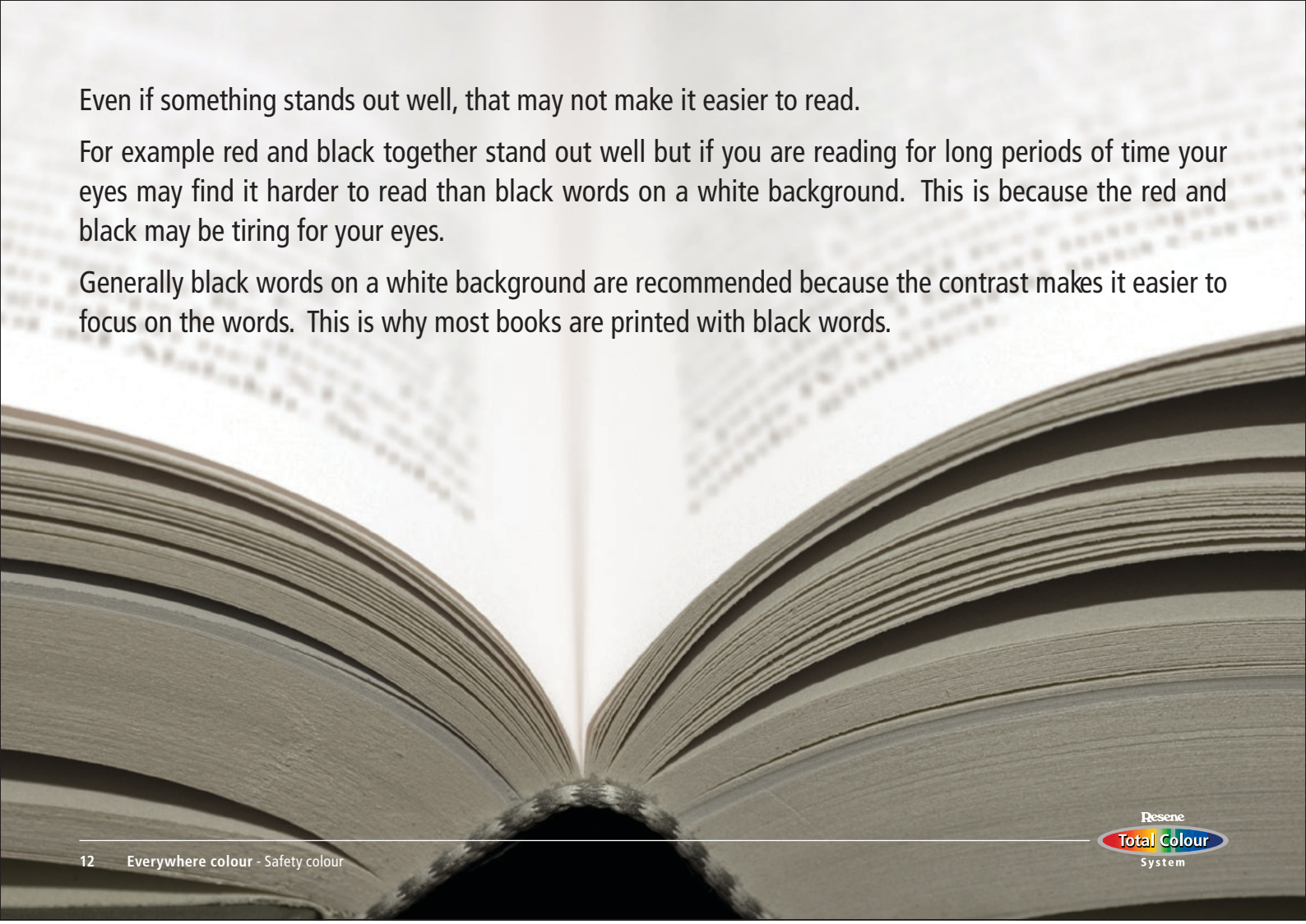
Notes

Notes

Even if something stands out well, that may not make it easier to read.

For example red and black together stand out well but if you are reading for long periods of time your eyes may find it harder to read than black words on a white background. This is because the red and black may be tiring for your eyes.

Generally black words on a white background are recommended because the contrast makes it easier to focus on the words. This is why most books are printed with black words.



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Notes

Try this!

THIS IS ALSO WHY...

You often see CAPITALS used in headings but not in the main story of the book. This is because capitals are very good at catching our attention but are very hard to read if there are too many together.

Most people will find Sentence 1 much easier to read.

1. Try this test on a few friends or adults.

2. Record which one they found easiest to read.

Resene Total Colour System

Notes

Try this!

For example try reading the following:

Sentence 1:
Writing in different colours and different styles can make the words easier or harder to read so it is very important to ensure that the colours and style used can be easily read.

SENTENCE 2:
WRITING IN DIFFERENT *COLOURS AND DIFFERENT STYLES* CAN MAKE THE WORDS **EASIER** OR HARDER TO READ SO **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT** TO ENSURE THAT THE *COLOURS* AND STYLE USED CAN BE **EASILY** READ.

Notes

Learn more about colour with the Resene Everywhere colour series. Modules include:

Changing colour
Colour wheels
Colour and nature
Colour in art
Colour of light
Decorating colour
Dissolving colour
Dotted colour
Everywhere colour
Eyes and rainbows
Filtering colour
Illusion and tricks with colour
Making colour - Dye
Mixing colour
Reflecting colour
Safety colour
Seeing colour - Animals
Seeing colour - Humans

In Australia:
PO Box 785, Ashmore City, Queensland 4214
Call 1800 738 383, visit www.resene.com.au
or email us at advice@resene.com.au

Resene
the paint the professionals use

Colours printed as close as printing process allows.

In New Zealand:
PO Box 38242, Wellington Mail Centre, Lower Hutt 5045
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