

## The Bulletin

Number 7, Friday 28 May, 2021

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### PD events

The 2021 [Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available on the SVRC website. Most professional learning will continue to be online. Events are now on Eventbrite.

Wednesday Aug 10 [Educational Support of students who have low vision](#)

Providing practical strategies that teachers can use in their art classes to promote inclusion and achievement for students who are blind or partially sighted.

Tuesday Oct 19 [Preparing your school for inclusion of a student who uses braille](#)

Providing practical support for school staff preparing to welcome and include a new student who will be learning to read using braille.

Tuesday Nov 23 [EXPO: Assistive Technology for students who are blind or partially sighted](#)

Showcasing & demonstrating assistive technologies that can promote inclusion & achievement for students who are blind or have low vision

## From the Manager

Kim Foley, SVRC

In accordance with new DET COVID-19 guidelines, SVRC will remain closed onsite until after the 7 day lockdown. SVRC staff will continue working from home until next Friday. We will continue to support the vision community via phone or email. The Support Skills Program will be accessed online next week and DOT Power has been postponed to June 15.

Last week on Thursday afternoon, SVRC hosted another Visiting Teacher Community of Practice (VT CoP). The presenters were Monash University Occupational Therapy students Claire Pardo and Natalie Chan, who have created a handbook on Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) for Students with a Vision Impairment. The handbook includes chapters on Accessibility, Anatomy, Relationships, Consent, Sexual Health, Personal Care, Puberty and Helpful Resources. From the feedback poll results below, VTs were very positive about the presentation and the RSE handbook. All RSE resources and handbooks will be available for free on the SVRC website over the next few weeks.

Feedback was gathered both before the presentation, and then after the presentation. The results were as follows:

### Pre presentation

- Over half have encountered RSE programs as a VT
- 74% were either not confident or had average confidence in addressing RSE with VI students
- Over half the participants listed the following gap(s) in their knowledge: Accessibility requirement, Consent, Sexual Health

### Post-presentation

- 100% of respondents thought the RSE handbook would be helpful
- 78% now had average confidence or were confident in now addressing RSE with VI students
- Over half the participants listed the following sections as the most helpful: Accessibility requirement, Anatomy, Relationships, Consent

The next VT CoP will be presented by Di Bennet and Deb Davidson and will be held on Tuesday June 8 from 3.00 pm-4.00 pm. The topic is the importance of typing and keyboard skills.

To our community we hope everyone stays safe and well over the next few weeks.

## Ozzie Dots – Sets 6 and 7 – now available to Victorian VTs

Designed and produced by staff of the Statewide Vision Resource Centre in conjunction with education vision specialist, Dr Gillian Gale, AM, Ozzie Dots supports the teaching and learning of Unified English Braille (UEB) to beginning braille readers.

When Ozzie Dots was launched in 2011, it offered 2-3 books per contraction with structure, vocabulary and concepts aimed at beginning braille readers in their first three years of school.

In 2017, we invited Victorian Visiting Teachers (Vision) to join SVRC staff to participate in an "Ozzie Dots Think Tank". We received thoughtful feedback such as:

- book bags and letter boxes as a helpful transition to the Ozzie Dots books
- illustrated books with zero contractions for pre-schoolers to enjoy with their parents (tactile picture story books)
- the exclusion of so many other contractions which are disconcerting for beginning braille readers – it would be better to keep to the contractions that the students already know
- the jump from Set 1 to 2 and Set 4 to 5 is too great (this VT wrote some "fan fiction" based on the Ozzie Dots books to bridge this gap for her students)
- the numbers in Sets 4 & 5 are too big – keep to 10s and 100s, not 1000s
- activity and revision sheets to go with the books
- make puzzle books, colouring books, activity books as opportunities for independent play
- introduce punctuation and other braille signs earlier
- add books for older readers who may find simple text annoying
- books contain many examples of stereotypical gender roles
- add plays with 2-3 characters
- make available files that can be played on Victor Reader

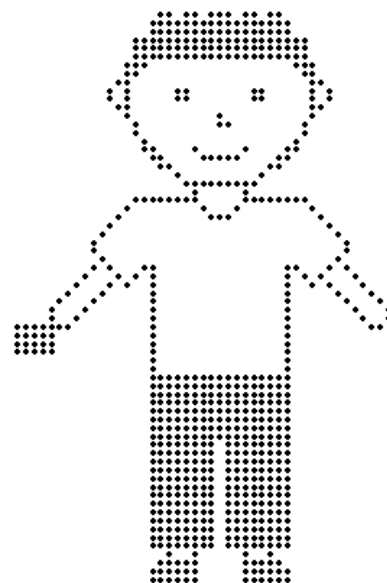
So the staff of the SVRC continue to write, edit, illustrate and proof-read more and more Ozzie Dots books. We hope that we have addressed much of the feedback from our Think Tank. And if we haven't quite managed, we still have ideas and plans!

Our aim for Ozzie Dots 2020 is 10 books (often more) per contraction for Sets 1-10 ... or 550+ books that introduce the first 50 contractions on our list.

**Victorian Visiting Teachers now have had access to the new books in Sets 6 and 7 with Set 8 coming out soon.**

Picture (right) shows a character from "Name tag" (Set 9 book 1). A smiling boy, wearing T-shirt, pants and shoes, has taken off his name tag as he leaves the holiday program at the end of the day.

Below is an example from Ozzie Dots 2020 – there are seven new books featured in Set 6a which introduces the contraction for of. We have kept the books from the earlier edition, so if you had some favourites, you'll still find them there ☺.



Set 6a	Title	Contraction (number)	Theme/topic	Extra contractions	Older reader
Book 1	Bad Aunty Deb	of (9)	Mischief		Yes
Book 2	My plate of fruit	of (24)	Food preference		
Book 3	Fizz! Fizz	of (12)	Science experiment		Yes
Book 4	Half of 2 is 1	of (21)	Fractions, humour		Yes
Book 5	Odd body facts	of (20)	Human body		Yes
Book 6	A comet is made of ...	of (29)	Science, comets	ar, th	Yes
Book 7	Ode to of	of (85)	Word play, humour		Yes
Book 8	Elli and Kim	of (22)	Play, dolls	Yes (8)	
Book 9	Special words	of (19)	Strong wordsigns	Yes (13)	Yes
Book 10	The bike path	of (22)	Park, running late	Yes (22)	

As you can see, these books contain mischief, food, a science experiment, biology, astronomy, humour and more – from the simple story e.g. "My plate of fruit" to mischief and mayhem e.g. "Bad Aunty Deb" there is a greater variety and more choice in each new set.

- If you wish to avoid books with additional, not-as-yet-introduced contractions, then for this set, select books other than 6, 8, 9 and 10.
- If your student is interested in Science, Book 6 "A comet is made of ..." might be for you!
- If your student has a quirky sense of humour, try Book 5 "Odd body facts".
- For older readers, take a look at the column headed "older reader". Some of these books are written exclusively for the older reader (e.g. refugees); some topics will suit younger and older students (e.g. planting vegetables).

In a way, Ozzie Dots is a little like a choose-your-own-adventure for the braille teacher and the beginning braille reader!

And for each beginning braille reader ensure that your braille lessons are fun! So laugh! and enjoy!



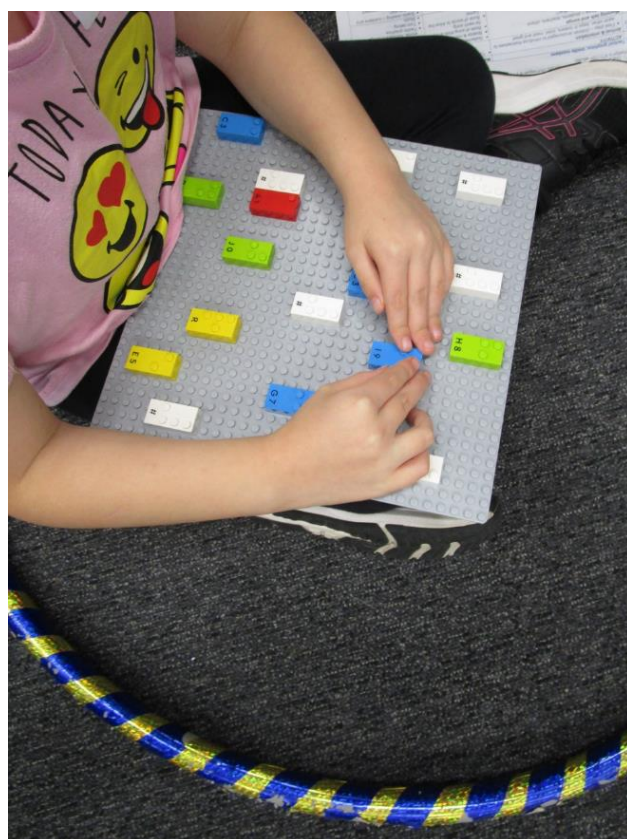
## First Dot Power Day on-site since lockdown!

From: Marion Blaze, SVRC

SVRC was full of fun on May 11 with 10 children and 30+ adults visiting for Dot Power Day. The theme was NUMBERS so we sang 'Alice the Camel' (a well-known counting song) and read the lyrics as our book for the day. We also played bingo and other games with Lego Braille Bricks and even did an 'Alice the Camel' dot-to-dot with Wikki Stix! Di taught the children and their support staff how to count on the 'blind abacus' and every child had the opportunity to sit and read with Jordie or Olivia who are both adults who read braille.

We had so much fun, we are very much looking forward to a slightly different program (still looking at braille numbers) for our older Dot Power children on June 1.

For information about the Dot Power Program, please contact Marion Blaze - [marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au)



## Q&A Emojis

**Question:** The class is using a sheet of emoji-style faces to help identify and name emotions. I am sure there must be official emoji names for these faces. I want to make sure that my braille student and I are using the same language.

**Answer:** The Round Table reference for emojis is the emojiopedia website.

Emojis are presented by category including:

- Smileys and people (see example of a very small section, right)
- Animals and nature
- Food and drink
- Activity
- Travel and places
- Objects
- Symbols
- Flags

### **Smileys & People**




Emojis for smileys, people, families, hand gestures, clothing and accessories.

-  Grinning Face
-  Grinning Face with Big Eyes
-  Grinning Face with Smiling Eyes
-  Beaming Face with Smiling Eyes
-  Grinning Squinting Face
-  Grinning Face with Sweat
-  Rolling on the Floor Laughing
-  Face with Tears of Joy
-  Slightly Smiling Face
-  Upside-Down Face
-  Winking Face
-  Smiling Face with Smiling Eyes


If you click on the links provided, you'll see further information, for example, the grinning face.

### **Grinning Face**

**Emoji Meaning:** A yellow face with simple, open eyes and a broad, open smile, showing upper teeth and tongue on some platforms. Often conveys general pleasure and good cheer or humor.

Not to be confused with  Grinning Face With Big Eyes or  Grinning Face With Smiling Eyes, which have the same smiles but more expressive eye shapes. This emoji has a cat variant,  Grinning Cat Face.

#### **Also known as:**

-  Happy Face
-  Smiley Face
-  Grinning Face

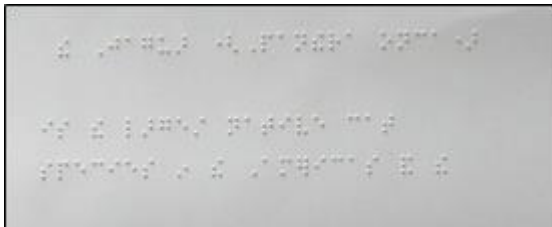
This is followed by variations of the "grinning face" from Apple, Google, Samsung, Microsoft etc

**For an exciting wander through the land of the emoji, visit:** <https://emojiopedia.org>

## ABCBraille – Braille-to-Print and Print-to-Braille Translation

Do you have a sentence or a page of braille that you are having trouble reading? Perhaps it is double-sided braille which is notoriously difficult for sighted folk to read. Check out ABCBraille!

1. Take a photo of the braille – make sure your photo is clear enough to see the braille dots and taken from directly above



2. go to <https://abcbraille.com>
3. upload your photo of the braille using the BROWSE button
4. look at the preview and make sure it is up the right way
5. click the TRANSLATE button
6. read the print translation (UEB) and smile happily to yourself!



It is not perfect as can be seen by the example below:



You'll see that the "for" in braille has been missed in the translation which reads:  
fur. The jaguar is well known  
[for]  
its immense power and agility.

But what a FANTASTIC tool for those who are unfamiliar with the braille code AND are supporting braille readers.

Work on this program is ongoing. Coming soon are:

- music translation
- maths translation
- an app-based system

... so watch this space!

## UEBOnline – Did someone say "help"?



**Source:** Round Table Conference 2021 and UEBOnline website

UEBOnline, administered by NextSense Institute, offers free, online training programs in braille literacy and mathematics using the Unified English Braille (UEB) code. There are currently four modules available:

- UEB Literacy
- UEB Introductory Mathematics
- UEB Advanced Mathematics
- UEB Extension Mathematics – **NEW**

The UEBOnline training programs are suitable for anyone who wants to learn braille. This includes educators, families, allied health professionals, and education administrators and policy makers who promote the use of braille as a medium for information access and communication.

But wait! There is a new section that has been made available recently in case users get into trouble with the online course – it's Video Tutorials!

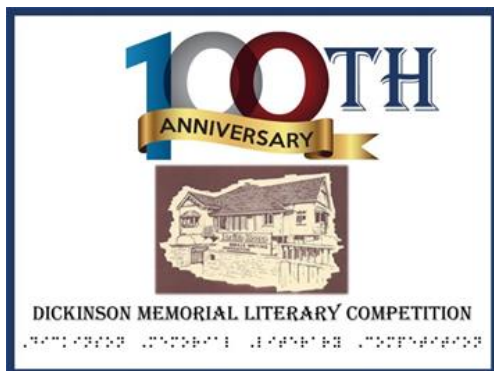
A set of video tutorials for UEBOnline have been produced to assist users to get started and to complete the exercises. Each video has a brief description and an indication of the running time, along with the link. These tutorials are divided into two parts:

1. Topic-based videos which describe how to complete a task within UEBOnline
  - [Video Tutorial 1 - Using the Keyboard](#)
  - [Video Tutorial 2 - The Dashboard](#)
  - [Video Tutorial 3 - Visual and Non-Visual Mode](#)
  - [Video Tutorial 4 - Exercise Completion in Visual Mode](#)
  - [Video Tutorial 5 - Exercise Completion in Non-Visual Mode](#)
  - [Video Tutorial 6 - High Contrast Mode](#)
2. Videos that focus on specific problems that users have encountered whilst learning via UEBOnline
  - [Video 1 - I cannot move onto the next lesson](#)
  - [Video 2 - I can't move past an error but it looks correct](#)
  - [Video 3 - Can I redo a previous lesson?](#)
  - [Video 4 - How do I reset my password?](#)

Visit UEBOnline to access the program, resources and videos: <https://uebonline.org/>



## Dickson Memorial Literary Competition



**Braille House** is proud to announce that the **Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition for 2021** is now open for entries from all Australian residents and the theme for our 100<sup>th</sup> year is **GROWING**.

Spread the word about this opportunity to pen a short story or poem and be in the running to win cash prizes in the Centenary Anniversary year of the Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition which is a National literary competition and is for children and adults who are blind or have low vision.

To enter, please go to <https://www.braillehouse.org.au/dickinson-2021/>

**People who are blind or have low vision have told their stories for 100 years through this unique competition, this year is your turn!**

The Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition is a National competition and is for children and adults who are blind or have low vision. There is also special “People’s Choice” award that will be open to anyone (even if you are sighted) and all entries in this category will be published on the Braille House website and the audience will get to choose the winner.

There are 6 categories for all ages to enter and prize money is awarded in every category: **\$350** first prize per category and **\$150** second prize per category (judge’s decision is final).

### **Prizes awarded in 6 Categories:**

- Adult Poem/Song Lyrics/Limerick
- Adult Article/Opinion e.g.: self-reflection, blog
- Senior Student Creative Category, e.g: story, poem, song lyrics, limerick, blog,
- Junior Student Creative Category, e.g: story, poem, song lyrics, limerick, blog
- People’s Choice Category – Short Story. (All People’s Choice entries will be published online for the public to vote).

Manuscripts must be an unpublished work, not on offer for publication before the announcement of awards and not have been recognised in any other competition.

Entries close Monday August 30, 2021. Entries should be submitted in hard copy Braille, Simbraille or Duxbury-readable file or in a Word document

**Timing of competition:** Entries close Monday August 30, 2021. Winners announced approx. 4 weeks after this and then we publish the winners and runners up in a special commemorative anthology.

This unique competition has a proud history of showcasing the work of blind and low vision writers to a broader audience and has provided a platform for these people to tell their amazing stories.

Entry fee is \$10 per entry.



### **Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition History:**

History: The competition was started in 1921 by the “Queensland Musical, Literary and Self Aid Society for the Blind as an Essay Competition; the subject was “Self Reliance” and first prize in each category was One Guinea.

Both Harold Dickinson and his brother Edwin were members of the QMLSAS and were very involved in the literary and musical world at that time although Harold averred that it was Edwin who was the literary brother. Edwin died in January 1956 but his name continued to be synonymous with the competition.

The Society changed its name in 1966 to Queensland Society of Blind Citizens and in 1986 it acquired royal assent to use the prefix Royal. Then it all became complicated! In 1988, the name of the organisation was shortened to Royal Blind Society of Queensland. In the decade that followed, a number of amalgamations occurred of organisations serving the VI community. The QBIC (Queensland Blind Industrial Centre) had become part of the QFBP (Queensland Foundation for Blind People) (previously Queensland Training and Placement Centre for the Blind in which the Dickinsons – Harold and Mercy – were founders together with Malcolm Bryce and Eric Searle). The QBIC component separated and became Vision Queensland. The QFBP became the Royal Blind Foundation of Queensland and continued so until 2006 when it and Vision Queensland became part of Vision Australia. The competition found its way home to Braille house and we are proud to be continuing this important competition for the 100<sup>th</sup> year in 2021.

We welcome participants in the Centenary Anniversary of The Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition and wish you all good luck and a happy writing experience.

For any questions, please contact me on the details below

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Melbourne Recital Centre in partnership with Vision Australia presents

## Music Production Mentoring

This program provides an opportunity to learn more about Music Production with individual mentors from Melbourne Recital Centre.

With 4 in-person sessions throughout the year, students will have the opportunity to work with Melbourne Recital Centre Sound Engineers to get feedback on music they are already producing, or learn the basics of how to create something from scratch.

These mentoring sessions are designed for high school students who are blind or have low vision, with times tailored to suit the student and Music Production mentor.



For more information or to register your interest in this program, please email [learning@melbournerecital.com.au](mailto:learning@melbournerecital.com.au)

*Melbourne Recital Centre acknowledges the people of the Kulin nation on whose land these workshops are being presented.*

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## And finally ...

A recent tale of the potential pitfalls of emojis and screen readers. We shall call our two characters Steph and Kate. Steph messaged her friend Kate, who is blind, to see if she needed a lift to an event. Kate replied that she wouldn't be coming. Steph messaged back to say that Kate would be missed, and then included an emoji. To Steph's eyes, this emoji was a sad face with a tear coming out of the eye. However, Kate's screenreader read it as 'sad but relieved face'! Thankfully, Kate was fairly sure that wasn't Steph's intention, and they both had a good laugh about it a few days later. I've included the emojis and a large image below, so you can compare them for yourself.



What Steph thought she sent: 😞



What Steph actually sent: 😞