

## The Bulletin

Number 5, Friday 8 April, 2022

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### PD events

The [2022 Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available on the SVRC website. Most PL will continue to be held online, but some are planned to be onsite. Please encourage school staff to [register for PD through our website](#).

**Wednesday May 4** [Teaching and learning with braille music](#)

Providing practical strategies for music teachers to promote inclusion and achievement for students who are blind.

**Wednesday May 11** [Inclusion of students who have vision impairments in art](#)

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

**Tuesday June 7** [Inclusion of students who have vision impairments in PE](#)

Providing ideas and practical strategies to support the inclusion of students who are blind or partially sighted in physical education.

## Message from the Manager

Source: Kim Foley, SVRC

As I reflect on the end of term one, it is incredible to note that this is the first time in over two years that we have completed a full term of staff and students being regularly onsite. All SVRC services have continued to be delivered across the different teams. This is in no small part due to the dedication and hard work of our SVRC leaders and staff each and every day, often under significant staffing challenges. SVRC will be open onsite from 9.00 am-3.00 pm over the school holidays and staff would like to wish you and your families a safe and relaxing Easter break.

Michael Donnelly will teach his last Art lessons at the Support Skills Program today. Marion has written a wonderful tribute to Michael highlighting his wonderful career as a highly experienced educator of students who are blind or have low vision. He will be missed by SVRC staff and students and we wish him a fabulous and well deserved retirement. Ruth Donaldson, who worked with us last year while Michael was on leave, will re-join the Support Skills team as the Art teacher for term 2. We warmly welcome Ruth to the program and will continue Michael's legacy of promoting the importance and enjoyment of The Arts to inspire the next generation of artists.

Last Thursday at the Visiting Teacher Community of Practice, Sarah Hayman presented on 3D printing. 3D printed models can offer students with a vision impairment an opportunity to understand complex concepts in a more meaningful way. Monash University is leading an ARC Linkage Project investigating 3D printing for Touch Readers, with SVRC a partner organisation. The ARC Linkage Project aims to:

- Identify how 3D printing can best be used for touch readers, with a focus on education and Orientation and Mobility
- Build capacity for 3D printing within the accessibility sector

A variety of [guidelines for 3D printing](#) have already been created and are available on the Round Table website. There's a [catalogue of prints](#) on the SVRC website, and anyone can download and print [SVRC designs on Thingiverse](#).

## ANZAC Day Books in Alternative Formats

Source: Transcription, SVRC

With ANZAC Day falling the day before the start of term 2, we thought we'd let you know about the books we have available in alternative format that might be useful teaching resources.

***The Poppy*** by Andrew Plant is an older reader picture fiction book: On Anzac Day, 1918, a desperate night counter-attack in the French village of Villers-Bretonneux became one of Australia's greatest victories. A bond was forged that night between France and Australia that has never been broken. Villers-Bretonneux is "The town that never forgets". What was achieved that terrible night – and what happened after – is a story that, likewise, Australians should never forget. This book is on the Premier's Reading Challenge for years 3-4, 5-6 and 7-8.

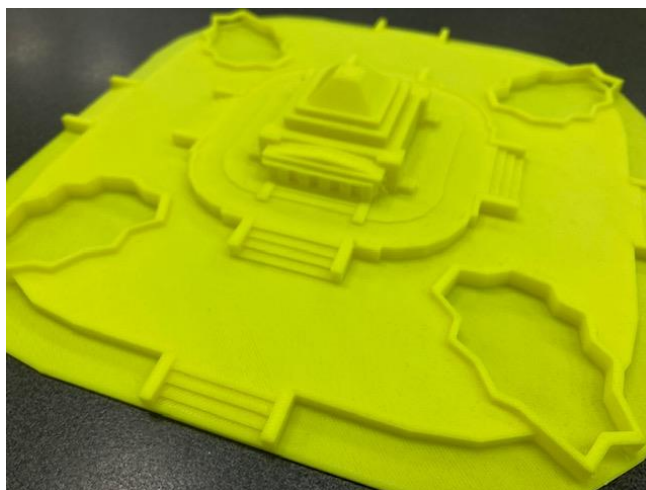
***The Last ANZAC*** by Gordon Winch is another older reader picture fiction book: To James, Alec Campbell was a hero. He was right. The old man, the last living ANZAC, and all of the Australian and New Zealand soldiers who fought at Gallipoli, were heroes – everyone's heroes. Alec, who died in May 2002 at the age of 103, enlisted in 1915 when he was sixteen. He had put his age up to eighteen in order to be accepted by the army and to fight at the front, wherever he was needed. A hero indeed. James was very fortunate to meet Alec and find out about his experiences. He gives us a special view of this humble and remarkable man, the year before Alec Campbell died.

***My Grandad Marches on ANZAC Day*** by Catriona Hoy: I sit on Daddy's shoulders. It's a very long wait. But my grandad will come. My grandad marches on Anzac Day. This is a simple, moving look at Anzac Day through the eyes of a little girl. It explains what happens on the day and its significance in terms that a young child can understand. A gentle story about families and the importance of sharing memories and remembering.

The books above are available to eligible students as scanned pdfs, ePub from the scanned pdf, as a docx file, or as an illustrated braille book.

***A Rose for the ANZAC Boys*** by Jackie French is available as a docx file.

**The Shrine of Remembrance** is available as a 3D print (see below) or as files for printing on your school 3D printer.



## Support Skills students shooting for their goals

Source: Support Skills Program, SVRC

"When students are agents in their learning, that is, when they play an active role in deciding what and how they will learn, they tend to show greater motivation to learn and are more likely to define objectives for their learning. These students are also more likely to have 'learned how to learn' – an invaluable skill that they can and will use throughout their lives."

From [OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030 Framework](#)

To encourage students to have agency over their learning at Support Skills, we made our focus this term, "Goal Setting". Every Friday, we have asked students to think about the sessions that they are involved in during the day, and to set themselves at least one goal that would benefit them in their education and independence.

This has encouraged most of our students to think about their own skill needs and goals. Here are some goals set by Support Skills students this term:

- Not to be too hard on myself
- To get better at fast listening
- To improve reading of the braille alphabet and numbers
- To learn more key commands and improve touch typing
- To be more motivated about school work
- To work on improving speed listening skills
- To work on independence such as getting to class on time

Goals are included in the feedback shared with families and VTs after Support Skills days, so do ask your students how they are going with their own goals.

The Support Skills focus for Term 2 will be "Leisure" and we will be exploring anything from team sports, to reading for leisure. Please contact us if you have leisure activities that benefit your life to share with the students, especially if they are unusual and accessible. We can always have you on Zoom to speak with the students if you can't come along.

## Community of Practice for Visiting Teachers (Vision) - Term 2, 2022

We have three scheduled C of P meetings for Term 2 (3pm on the usual Zoom link) on the following topics:

**Tuesday, May 10** – An insight into two current projects by fourth year Occupational Therapy students (Monash) working at Support Skills. Project one – developing social skills. Project two – developing daily living and self-care skills.

**Thursday, May 26** – Case study discussions. Each region/sector is invited to prepare and share a case study, including questions and challenges to be discussed by the community

**Tuesday, June 14** – Ozzie Dots and early braille development (Deb Lewis and Marion Blaze – postponed from Term 1)

## Michael Donnelly – a career inspiring artistic creativity and inclusion

Source: Marion Blaze, SVRC

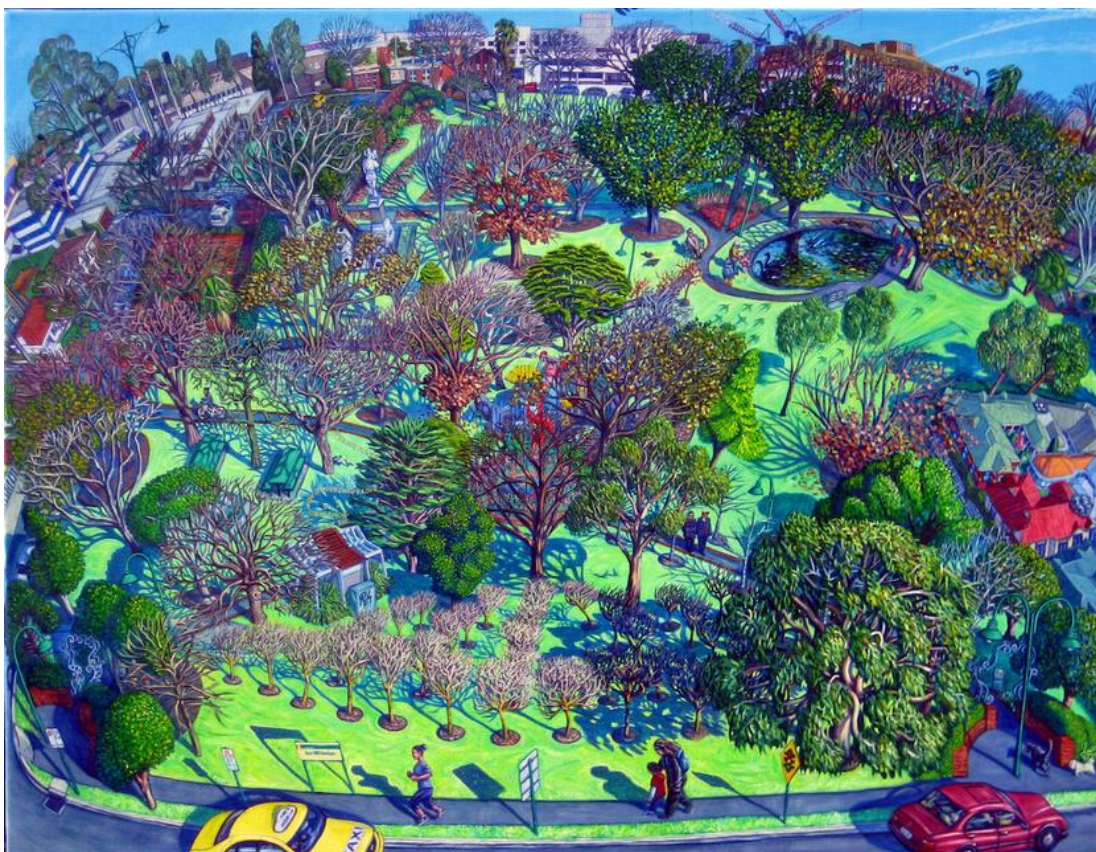
Michael has a career that spans much more than SVRC and VT work.

He and his family moved from Sydney to Melbourne where Michael taught for a while in a Catholic school in Box Hill before starting at the Vision Australia School in Burwood. He was Art teacher there, working three days in the school and two days with the on-site students and the Support Skills Program. He also worked for a time at one of the fashion arts schools in a TAFE.

Friend and colleague Garry Stinchcombe says that Michael is always thinking "outside the square". He organised touch tours and liaised with contacts in galleries and art centres for access to art spaces for students. He promoted art as a means of personal enrichment and an experience for the senses. He even travelled to Europe and the UK to explore how art was being represented for people with vision impairments.

Michael was at Burwood until its closure in 2009, when he moved to being the art teacher on the Support Sills Program at SVRC, and also into the role of Visiting Teacher (Vision) for three days a week, leaving one day for his art studio work.

I had the pleasure of visiting one of Michael's gallery exhibitions. His art is amazing: very beautiful, detailed and some might say quirky (sorry, Michael, I am no art critic, thankfully!).



When Support Skills went online because of the pandemic, we were unable to continue programs for PE and cooking, and I did wonder about art. But Michael's amazing creativity had students collecting items from their home, like clothing or kitchen utensils to make collages, folding origami samurai hats during the Paralympics in Tokyo, or creating "sticky tape sculptures".



His attention and dedication to students is demonstrated by the number of students who were initially uninterested in art because of prior negative experiences or lack of opportunities in schools. One Support Skills art session and they were eager for more. They really valued the opportunity to express themselves and acquire new skills while having fun!

Michael has played a huge role in teaching teachers about inclusion in art. He has always talked to and encouraged teachers and provided amazing strategies and resources.

Michael is retiring but leaving an amazing legacy of tactile and visual resources, recordings of professional learning, tactile guides to city art, all of which will help sustain art and its important role in the wider curriculum for all students who are vision impaired.

Thank you, Michael, for all you have contributed to the creativity and inclusion of our students and the amazing legacy you are leaving for teachers.

## **Careers ideas**

Source: [APM Website](#)

### **Copywriter**

If you enjoy writing and have good language skills, there are many flexible writing jobs. A copywriter is someone who writes for the purposes of marketing. For example, they might write advertisements, blog posts, articles or website content. Copywriters can work for a marketing agency or in a freelance capacity, often from home.

A similar type of role is editing. Editors read texts to spot any mistakes and make improvements. There are many accessible technologies such as screen readers and braille displays that can be used for writing, editing and research purposes.

### **Counsellor**

If you have an interest in helping others, there are many roles in the healthcare and mental health industries, including counselling. Counsellors help people work through personal and emotional problems. This might involve listening to a person and helping them form strategies to cope with or overcome their situation.

As a person who is blind, you may be able to create a safe, non judgemental and accessible space for others to share their thoughts and feelings. Counselling sessions can be done face to face, online or over the phone.

## **Teacher**

People who are legally blind can qualify and work as teachers in primary, secondary and tertiary education. In-person and online tutoring jobs are also a possibility.

There are many ways to make teaching more accessible for a blind person. For example, a blind teacher may take the roll from braille cards and use braille flash cards or posters to present visual information to the class. They may ask students to speak their name when raising their hand and get students to correct each other's homework. A blind teacher may have an assistant or reader to help with tasks such as marking, report writing and supervising tests.

## **Telemarketer or customer support**

Many people who are blind work in phone based jobs such as telemarketing, customer support and market research. These types of jobs can often be done from home or in a call centre. There are many assistive technologies that can help make these jobs more accessible such as braille displays, text to speech software and adapted phones which allow you to call with shortcuts.

## **Kitchen hand**

If you have a passion for food, you might enjoy working in hospitality as a kitchen hand or undergo training to become a chef. Kitchen hands complete tasks such as running an industrial dishwasher, putting dishes away, preparing food and cleaning work areas. In the right environment, many of these routine tasks can be performed using the senses of touch and hearing.

In Australia, there are also a number of chefs who are blind. They rely on memory and non-visual sensory information to prepare dishes. They may also have an assistant who helps them in the kitchen with locating items or operating equipment.

## **Factory worker**

Factory work tends to involve repetitive and routine tasks which may be suitable for people who are blind or visually impaired. For example, attaching labels, sorting and packaging products. Naturally, some factory work involving machines or power tools may be dangerous without vision. Some workplaces may be able to modify their machines to be safe for use by people who are blind.

## Sonification with CosmoBally on Sonoplanet

Source: Phia Damsma, Creative Director Sonokids Australia – Developers of Accessible Educational Software and Apps via [spevi-list@googlegroups.com](mailto:spevi-list@googlegroups.com)

I am excited to announce the release of "**CosmoBally on Sonoplanet**", a free educational game app providing your students the opportunity to explore sonification concepts. **Sonification** is the representation of information and data in non-speech sound (as opposed to visualisation).

### Sonoplanet app

The app includes four gamified sonification concepts, including "Hearing Shapes" and "Sonified Drawing", developed by Sonokids Australia.

It is the latest addition to Sonokids' award winning "Ballyland" suite of educational software and game apps supporting the development of technology skills by students who are blind or have low vision.

The app can be used in the STEAM curriculum and develops a wide range of skills. Get it now!

[Download CosmoBally on Sonoplanet for iOS \(iPad and iPhone\) here.](#)

[Download CosmoBally on Sonoplanet for Android tablets here.](#)

### Sonoplanet Website

For more educational information and to read about the significance of Sonification, please [visit the Sonoplanet website](#). After working with the app please visit the website and take a couple of minutes to complete a [short, anonymous survey](#). Your feedback would help to establish if this app achieved its aims and objectives.

We will present gained insights, with the purpose of improving accessible sonification projects and contributing to enhanced accessibility of information.

### Support

The Sonoplanet app project is supported by South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment (SPEVI Inc.). The project aims to raise awareness about (accessible) sonification and to gain insights into the prerequisite skills and learning progressions of students to effectively learn sonification skills. We hope that early learning of sonification concepts and basic skills can significantly contribute to students' (future) use of this technology and their access to STEAM.

Sonokids would like to sincerely thank SPEVI for their support, as well as the students, parents, teachers, and other professionals who tested the app during its development.

CosmoBally is the astronaut from Ballyland. Sonokids previously released "Ballyland CosmoBally in Space", introducing the planets in the solar system (free from the AppStore)





## 2022 Roundtable Conference – Inclusion and Access to Information in Our Changing World

Source: Marjorie Hawkings, Round Table Administration Officer

Only 6 short weeks until the 2022 Round Table Virtual Annual Conference. Don't wait - Register Now! #roundtable2022. Please spread the word.

Around the conference theme "**Inclusion and Access to Information in Our Changing World**", presenters will explore the ever-expanding opportunities presented to people with print disabilities for information access and creation, communication and learning.

The extensive high quality conference program includes renowned presenters from across the world. The conference will provide you with updates on accessible and inclusive practices and projects, braille education, innovative audio and artificial intelligence applications, and much much more.

The full program is available on our website by following this link: [2022 Round Table Conference](#)

### Dates

- **ABA General Meeting and Workshop** – Saturday, 14 May, 2022
- **Conference Proper** – Monday, 16 May to Tuesday, 17 May 2022.
- **Workshops** – Wednesday, 18 May 2022.
- **Round Table AGM** – Wednesday, 18 May 2022 at 3:30pm AEST.

## "How do you read?" survey

Source: Dr Agata Mrva-Montoya, The University of Sydney

Do you work with children or teens who have difficulty reading standard printed books? We'd love to hear from them! "How Do You Read" surveys seek to find out about reading experiences and barriers to reading for children and teens with a print disability who live in Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand. The information they share will help writers, editors, designers and publishers to publish books that are more accessible.

The survey is available through this link: [bit.ly/HDYR22kt](http://bit.ly/HDYR22kt). The form is accessible with screen readers on both Windows and Mac. It takes around 15 to 25 minutes to complete the form. The survey is available until **30 April 2022**.

To learn more about "How Do You Read" survey, please contact Dr Agata Mrva-Montoya on [agata.mrva-montoya@sydney.edu.au](mailto:agata.mrva-montoya@sydney.edu.au) or +612 9114 1456.

## Vision Australia: Upcoming Workshops for Children and Young People

Source: VA Library

### April

#### Collage workshop

Celebrate Earth Day by joining our online tactile collage workshop with Feelix library. Children are guided through the process of artistic expression through the form of collage, using various materials in an effort to recycle and reuse. This workshop is best for children aged 5-12 who are able to use scissors and glue sticks, and handle small scraps. Places are limited, register now!

**Date:** Wednesday April 20, 6:30pm, [Register here](#)

#### Story writing workshops

We're inviting our young emerging authors, aged 8-12 years, to join an exciting series of writing workshops with some of Australia's best young adult authors. Facilitated by Writer's Victoria, kids will learn about the ingredients you need and the methods you can use to tell fun and engaging stories.

**Day:** April 30, May 7 and 14 (Saturdays), 10:00am, [Register here](#)

### June

#### Online games night for tweens, teens and young people

Join the library for a fun filled and challenging night of UNO. This event has been postponed from Wednesday March 30, 2022. A practice session has been scheduled for Monday May 30. Details will be emailed to registrants in the days prior.

**Date:** Wednesday June 1, 6:00pm, [Register here](#)

#### Learn how to make your own tactile artworks with DIY Puff Paint

During this workshop, we can use everyday ingredients, measure, mix and daub with our very own homemade puff paint. Paint your art, heat it, and feel the results. A short and easy online workshop with amazing results for pre-school aged children, facilitated by Feelix library.

**Date:** Thursday June 9, 10:00am, [Register here](#)

### Contact Vision Australia Library

To find out more about any of these fabulous workshops email the Vision Australia Library at [library@visionaustralia.org](mailto:library@visionaustralia.org) or phone 1300 654 656. For all upcoming events, programs and workshops, visit [library news and events](#)