

Number 8, Friday 9 June, 2023

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PD events

The [2023 Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available for download on our website. See below for links to the events in Term 2 2023.

Tuesday June 13 [Inclusion of students who have vision impairments in PE](#)

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

On Demand PL

All of our professional learning workshops are now available on demand where participants can access all the videos and resources at a time that suits them. You can find links through the [On Demand page](#), under Professional Learning, on our website.

Message from the Manager

Source: Kim Foley and Jane Barker, Managers, SVRC

Winter has arrived and our national floral emblem is beginning to bloom. Not sure that what I am seeing on my walks on Wurundjeri country is our glorious Golden Wattle, but wattle it is, and it puts a skip in my step.

Australian Story 'Blind Leading the Blind'

If you missed the recent ABC Australian Story, it is worth following up as it tells the story of NVDA founders Mick Curran and Jamie Teh. This dynamic pair created NVDA screen-reading software when they were fresh out of university for people who are blind. They wanted to create a free screen reading software for braille users' and went on to start the NV Access company. Seventeen years later, it's now used by 275,000 people in 175 countries and has been translated into 50 languages.

You can watch them on [ABC iview](#) and on the [Australian Story Youtube channel](#). The ABC also wrote a corresponding [article](#) with a preview of the show.

Biggest Morning Tea

On Wednesday, SVRC staff were invited to the annual Biggest Morning Tea to raise money for the Cancer Council. Tie Dye was the theme so there was a best dressed prize, tea tasting competition, guess the celebrity wearing tie-dye outfits and throw the tea bag competition. Lots of fun was had by all while raising money for such a worthy cause. SVRC staff hope to raise over \$500 this year.



Space Camp

This week we received some fabulous news that all five students received a scholarships from SCIVIS. Four students received the Lighthouse Vision Scholarships and one student received Northrup Grumman scholarships. These scholarships support the student's airfares and Space Camp costs. We are thrilled that the additional funding will assist families in making Space Camp more affordable. Thank you to Hilary, Peter, Ann, Jeni, and Marion for supporting the students with their scholarship applications.

PE PL Reminder

Source: SVRC

'Inclusion of students who have vision impairments in PE' is occurring this coming Tuesday June 13, 2023.

Please note; this professional learning day is happening at Statewide Vision Resource Centre and will be recorded so it can be accessed online after June 13.

We all know students with vision impairments who don't want to participate in sport at school. Students with vision impairments are at risk of becoming inactive adults.

Emily White, renowned Educator of students with vision impairments and PE teacher, will take participants through adaptations, specialised sports, techniques and strategies to include your students who are blind or have low vision in PE. You'll also have a fun-filled day of activities!

Please register through [SVRC's Eventbrite page](#). Registrations close Monday, 12 June.

The day will be from 9am to 3.45pm and costs \$55. VTs and family members of our students can register free. Just ask Marion for the code at marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au.

Support Skills students will soon be gardening!



Source: SVRC

Thanks to a generous Victorian Schools Gardening Program grant, SVRC's Support Skills students will soon be adding gardening skills to their programs. SVRC is to be the recipient of a 'VegTrug' package. It's a raised garden bed with side table, shade covers and trellis frames. Students will be able to get up close to plant and maintain seedlings. Thank you to Takasho for sponsoring (and delivering and installing) this wonderful grant package.

Did you know, that SVRC has a Tandem Bike that families can borrow?

Source: SVRC

SVRC has an adult-sized tandem bike available for borrowing by families or schools for a term at a time. It measures 2.2 metres in length and 1.1 metres in height. We require borrowers to pick up and return, so you'll need a large vehicle!! Visiting Teachers can make a request through SVRC's Tracking System or families can contact Marion Blaze at marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au.



New to the SVRC Alternative Format Library

Source: SVRC, Transcription

The following books are now available in electronic text. Check the [SVRC alternative format catalogue](#) and [download a request form](#) from the SVRC website.

The Whispers by Greg Howard

Review adapted from: [Kirkus](#).

Eleven-year-old Riley's mother has been missing for four months. Riley's father, older brother, and grandparents don't talk about Mama's absence, which doesn't help matters. Riley has begun wetting the bed, which he calls his "condition," but there's this "other condition" that he fears may be the reason his mother left or was taken: Riley wants to kiss boys ...

Riley's exploration of his identity as a gay preteen in the rural Southern USA and the slow reveal of what actually happened to Mama leads to a satisfying and touching conclusion.

Age 10+

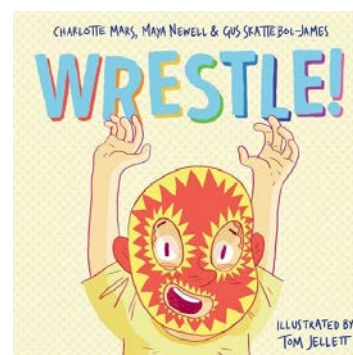


Wrestle by Maya Newell, Charlotte Mars, and Gus Skattebol-James

Review adapted from: [Just Write For Kids](#).

In this book, we meet the gorgeous Gus, who is preparing to march at mardi gras with his mums and his sister, Rory. Gus loves going to mardi gras, and he has fun picking his own costume. This year – because of his obsession with wrestling – he wants to go as one of his wrestler heroes. His mums are not sure what to make of this. Gus comes up with an idea to show his mums that wrestling is not what they think it is, and that the art and theatre of it can absolutely have its place at the mardi gras.

Picture story book

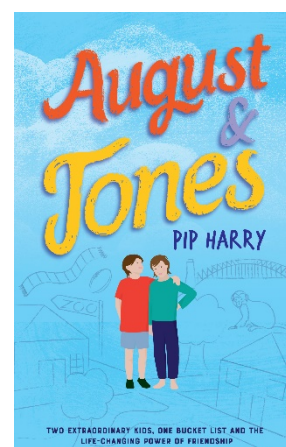


August & Jones by Pip Harry

Review adapted from: [Readings](#).

This beautiful story is about a friendship between two kids with opposite personalities who hit it off. Jones is sporty, outdoor-loving and gutsy. Her family has relocated from the freedom of a farm to a poky little city apartment. August is shy, bookish and fumbling around in a junior footy team coached by his sporty dad. Then Jones' childhood cancer returns in her remaining eye and the two friends realise they need a bucket list. Pip Harry balances the reality of illness and the joys and travails of being a child with a deft hand. She never overplays the emotional drama of illness and family rifts, but offsets them with the power of friendship, love and strength of character.

Ages 9+



Options for Reading Music with Low Vision

Source: SVRC, Veroniiiica and Kevin Blazé

There are lots of resources out there to help students with low vision access music. Here are a few we've found recently.

Ideas from Veronica with Four Eyes

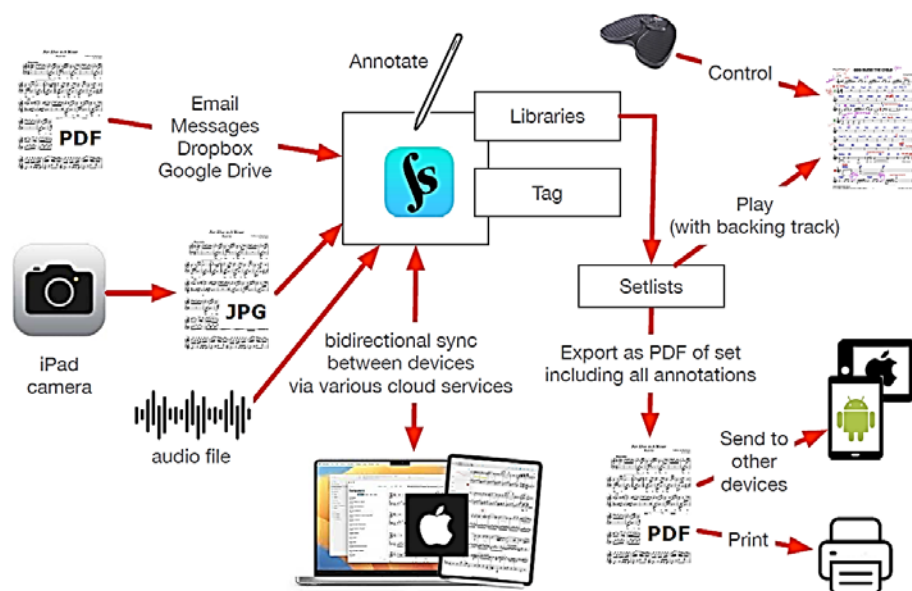
Veronica with Four Eyes (Veroniiiica) is a website with heaps of great resources about assistive technology. Veronica is also a musician who has Low Vision and has written an article with a lot of suggestions for reading music on an iPad, including getting high quality scans of music, adding a folder on Apple Books to organise the music and using display accommodations. You can read the full article at [Tips for Reading Music on an iPad with Low Vision](#)

Music Notation Software

Transcribe print music into music notation software, then adjust to your preferences. There is a guide on how to do this in MuseScore software on our website. MuseScore is free software and allows you to 'scale up' music to make it larger. You can find the guide in the Misc Tech Guides sections of the [Technology Support page](#) of our website.

ForScore App

Use the ForScore App with the Reflow feature. Reflow takes the lines of music on a page and turns them into one long line. You can then use a keyboard or a Bluetooth foot pedal to move through the now enlarged music. SVRC recently purchased some licenses for the ForScore app so it is available to request through our tracking system. We have recently published a video tutorial on how to use the Reflow feature on the [SVRC Youtube Channel](#). The below flowchart was created by Kevin Blazé to demonstrate a workflow when using the ForScore App.



NV Access Job Opportunity

Source: NV Access

NV Access are looking to hire a software engineer, and would be very interested in considering a suitable blind or vision impaired candidate in the first instance.

If you'd like more info about the job itself, visit the [NV Access](#) website or contact Quentin Christensen at quentin@nvaccess.org.

National NAIDOC Week 2-9 July 2023

Source: [NAIDOC](#)

National NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia in the first week of July each year (Sunday to Sunday), to celebrate and recognise the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

NAIDOC Week is an opportunity for all Australians to learn about First Nations cultures and histories and participate in celebrations of the oldest, continuous living cultures on earth. You can support and get to know your local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities through activities and events held across the country.

If your school requires materials in alternative formats to support NAIDOC week activities, please be in touch.

Also, check out the [SVRC Alternative Format Library Catalogue](#) where books by and/or about First Australians are identified in the far-right column and available by [request](#).

Example of books in the SVRC alternative format library include:

- 1 2 3 Geckos by Siena Mayutu Wurmarri Stubbs
- Born to Run: My Story by Kathy Freeman
- Crow Country by Kate Constable
- Desert Child by Pat Lowe
- Koori Princess by Anita Heiss
- The Bat and the Crocodile by Jack Dolumyu
- The Boy from the Mish by Gary Lonesborough
- The Burnt Stick by Anthony Hill
- The First Scientists by Corey Tutt
- ... and many more!

NEW Queensland online toolkit on vision impairment education

Source: Statewide Vision Impairment Services Queensland

The Department of Education Queensland is excited to share a newly developed online resource; Blindness and vision impairment toolkit.

The online toolkit supports, specifically, students who are blind/have low vision.

The toolkit consists of three modules:

1. Understanding blindness and vision impairment (BVI)

This module defines what blindness and vision impairment is, factors influencing visual acuity, and the impact of blindness and vision impairment.

2. Supporting students

This module begins with a focus on Department of Education QLD policies and procedures regarding disability but continues with helpful information for any educators, families or allied health professionals. It emphasises the importance of knowing the learner, provides guidance on the teaching and learning process and making adjustments for students who are blind or vision impaired, as well as how to implement assistive technology for educational adjustments. It also outlines school-based strategies to support student access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities (including incursions and excursions).

3. Eye conditions

This module outlines key vision conditions in more detail and the specifics regarding each condition. Each eye condition describes the attributes associated with it, and the implications for students and the school. This section also outlines reasonable adjustments for schools to implement and how to cater for students with each specific eye condition. A downloadable PDF has been developed for each available eye condition to access "on the go".

The Blindness and vision impairment toolkit is available to anyone at any time. Please feel free to share it amongst your networks and within your organisation.

To access the toolkit go to the [open EQUELLA](#) website.

Please note: to access the webpage, please select the "View resource" link at the top of the page under the title, "Blindness and vision impairment toolkit".

We are currently developing phase 2 of the toolkit which will have additional information in module 2 as well as many more eye conditions in the third module. Please keep visiting this toolkit to view the new and updated content as it is made available.

This toolkit has been developed collaboratively with the Department of Education Queensland's [Statewide Vision Impairment Services](#) (SVIS) team.

For more information, please contact SVIS via email (3140_SVIS@eq.edu.au)

Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition 2023

Source: Kay Kieu, Braille House

The theme for 2023 is KINDNESS

What does KINDNESS mean to you?

Spread the word about this opportunity for blind people to pen a short story or poem and be in the running to win cash prizes in this year's competition.

There are 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. (The judge's decision is final.)

Entries close Friday 15 September, 2023 at 4.00pm. Entries should be submitted in hard copy Braille, Simbraille, a Duxbury-readable file or Word document file.

6 Categories of Entry:

1. Adult: Short Story
2. Adult: Poem/Song Lyrics/Limerick
3. Adult: Article/Opinion e.g.: self-reflection, blog
4. Senior Student: Creative Category, e.g.: story, poem, song lyrics, limerick, blog
5. Junior Student: Creative Category, e.g.: story, poem, song lyrics, limerick, blog
6. People's Choice Category – Short Story. All entries in this category will be published for the public to vote on.

The "People's Choice" award is open to anyone (even if you are sighted). All entries in this category will be published on the Braille House website and the audience will get to choose the winner.

More information can be found on the [Braille house website](#).

Monash Sensory Science Exhibition – Autoimmunity

Source: Monash Sensory Science

Monash University invites members of the blind, low vision and diverse needs communities to our Sensory Science Exhibition & Discovery Day at Monash University. Enhance your life through discovery. Learn about autoimmune disease pathology from leading scientists in the field through accessible multi sensory and universally accessible exhibits, including displays by Monash Assistive Technologies & Society (MATS). Topics include: celiac disease, type 1 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus and inflammatory bowel disease.

There will be a special keynote presentation by Professor Nicole La Gruta from Monash Biomedicine Discovery Institute, where she will delve into Autoimmunity, as well as the opportunity to participate in interactive breakout sessions designed to further explore specific autoimmune diseases. Morning tea and lunch will be provided.

This is a free event.

SAVE THE DATE – more information to follow

When Friday 30 June, 2023 8.45am - 2.00pm

Where G54 Learning and Teaching Building, 19 Ancora Imparo Way, Monash University, Clayton
Enquire: MonashSensoryScience@monash.edu. For more information visit the [Sensory Science website](#).

Resources for Students with CVI

Source: [CVI Book Nook](#)

The CVI Book Nook could be a useful source of resources for your students/children with CVI.

The materials on this site were created for students who have Visual Impairments and Cortical Visual Impairments. They are intended to be downloaded and used by parents, caregivers and teachers working with students who have Visual Impairments and CVI.

The files are uploaded as PowerPoints so they can be downloaded and adapted as needed. You are able to change the background colour ... perhaps your student is fine with white, or maybe they like another colour background. Change the font type, size or colour. Change the image to a photo of a familiar object. There is no "one size fits all" when it comes to creating books for students who have CVI. Think of these books as a "starter kit," meant to be adapted and changed to meet your student's needs.

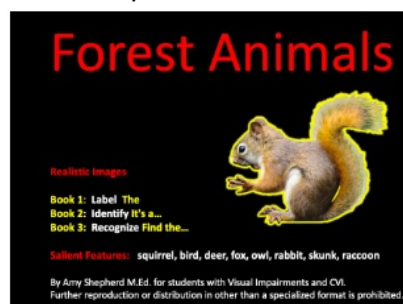
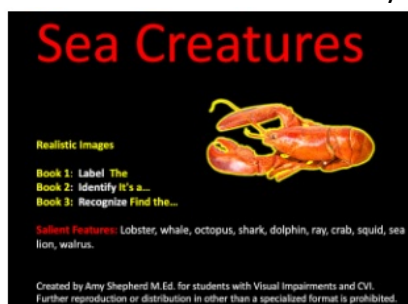
Main topics include:

- ABCs and 123s
- Colours
- Animals
- Seasons
- Concepts
- Adventures
- Routines

Within each of these categories, there are multiple PowerPoints, for example, "Animals" features:

- Farm Animals
- Zoo Animals
- Sea Creatures
- Dinosaurs
- Forest Animals

[Download is free](#) and it is easy to adapt the PowerPoints to suit your student/child.



VT wanted at Chairo Christian School Pakenham

Chairo Christian School in Pakenham is looking for a Visiting Teacher for Vision to support a lovely Grade 3 student with low vision. Fortnightly or monthly visits are preferred. Don't hesitate to get in touch with Anna Maramba, Learning Support Coordinator at acosio-maramba@chairo.vic.edu.au

Vitae Veritas Audio Described Shows and Events in Melbourne June 2023

Source: Vitae Veritas

Between Two Sites audio described art exhibition - accessible online and at Burrinja Cultural Centre, Upwey

Presented by Bogong Centre for Sound Culture curators Madelynne Cornish and Sarah Lynch have been committed to ensuring the exhibition is accessible to our blind and low vision community, and through audio, transcripts, tactile invitations, QR codes and large print formats. Come and visit the [between two sites website](#) or gallery to experience the exhibition responding to the impact of human activity on habitats in the Yarra Ranges and Alpine Shire showcased in the range of site-specific photographic, sculptural, film and sound artworks of Victorian and international artists Shannon Collis, Madelynne Cornish, Lesley Duxbury, Sarah Edwards, Amias Hanley, Sarah Lynch & Anne McCallum.

Exhibition runs from 27 May to 1 July.

'Masterclass' at the Malthouse as part of RISING – audio described theatre

Friday 16 June, 6.30pm in the Merlyn Theatre at the Malthouse 115 Sturt St, Southbank. 60 minutes duration, no interval. Tickets \$53 – \$59.

Comedian-choreographer Adrienne Truscott and Dublin-based performance makers Brokentalkers have tickled Edinburgh Fringe, and the world, with Masterclass. Now it's slinging its rifle, polishing its loafers and heading for RISING. The show begins as a playful parody of the tweed-clad cult of male genius. Then things take a turn for the meta in the second act when the satire zooms in on "half-baked male allyship". All-round good guy Fieldlim Cannon plays a blazer-clad talk show host interviewing a Hemingway-esque writer (Truscott) who's espousing a masterclass on playwriting. It's a savage, big-wigged comedy that scuffs the varnish of privilege and power.

[Masterclass bookings and info.](#)

'Hide the Dog' at the Playhouse, Arts Centre Melbourne as part of RISING – audio described family-friendly theatre

Saturday 17 June, 1pm at the Playhouse, Arts Centre Melbourne, 100 St. Kilda Road, Melbourne. 64 minutes duration, no interval. Tickets \$40.

Friends must outwit Māori gods, Palawa spirits and hunters to save the world's last Tasmanian Tiger. After meeting a lovable thylacine called Tigs, two best friends Niarra and Te Umuroa wrangle a vessel and set sail to save their new friend from hunters. They face god-sized singing, dancing and wisecracking dangers along the way.

Written by Tasmanian playwright Nathan Maynard (Trawlwoolway pakana) and Aotearoa writer Jamie McCaskill (Māori), Hide the Dog is a richly realised tale bursting with nimble puppetry and colourful costumes that takes us on the friends' adventure via stunning scenic projections. West Australian director Isaac Drandic (Noongar) steers the ship in a true trans-Tasman First Nations collaboration – the first created for children. It celebrates the power of friendship, the profound connections between cultures and shares a boatload of all-ages fun on the journey. [Hide the Dog info and bookings.](#)

'Oh Deer!' by Aphids, audio described theatre with tactile tour at The Capitol RMIT as part of RISING

Saturday 17 June, 8pm, with tactile tour starting at 7pm at The Capitol RMIT, 121 Swanston Street, Melbourne. 60 minutes duration, no interval. Tickets \$44-\$49.

A wide-eyed fawn alone in the forest. A circus elephant who learns to fly using his ears. A powerful ice princess whose parents are lost at sea.

Movie theatres, books and comics are full of little lost orphans who depend on themselves, pluck up the courage for adventure and make a few wisecracking friends along the way.

An orphaned character is the classic shortcut to depicting self-sufficiency, hijinks or the bumpy road to vengeance.

Of course, in reality, not everyone gets a happy ending. And the years don't play as montages. But, for one hour, experimental art collective APHIDS make a lively new space with adults who've lost a parent to share some perfectly pleasant pathos.

Everyday people drape themselves in outfits akin to orphan drag. Once in character they test the fiction, form temporary bonds, act out, and become their own protagonists.

Grilling pop culture, one tissue at a time. [Oh Deer info and bookings.](#)

'The Dan Daw Show' dance production with preshow access at the Meat Market as part of RISING

Sunday 18 June, 6pm, with preshow access starting 5pm at the Meat Market 3 Blackwood St, North Melbourne. 90 minutes duration, no interval. Tickets \$44-\$49.

After having spent a lifetime being an inspiration to others, queer disabled performance-maker Dan Daw is finally seizing the moment to inspire himself.

Taking ownership of the beautiful mess that encompasses all that he is, Dan lets go of who he once was to make room for who he wants to be. He's joined in an intimate evening of play by performer and collaborator Christopher Owen (Joe Moran, Scottish Dance Theatre) where Dan takes back the power by being dominated on his own terms.

Nominated for the 2021 National Dance Awards, and directed by Mark Maughan (The Claim, Petrification), The Dan Daw Show is a peep into the shiny and sweaty push pull of living with shame while bursting with pride. It's a show about care, intimacy and resilience, about letting go and reclaiming yourself. [The Dan Daw Show info and bookings.](#)

Stay tuned to Fayen d'Evie and their new work as part of Melbourne Fringe Festival 2023

Chunky Move and Melbourne Fringe are thrilled to announce the selection of Fayen d'Evie as the recipient of our Radical Access Commission.

This \$40,000 commission is for an experienced dance or movement artist who identifies as Deaf or Disabled to create a brand-new work that responds to the creative provocation of 'Radical Access' and is a force for increased accessibility in the arts sector.

On top of the \$40k, [Fayen](#) will also get studio space at Chunky Move, production, marketing and producing support, dedicated access funds and artistic mentorship and guidance from Artistic Director of Restless Dance Theatre, Michelle Ryan and Chunky Move Artistic Director, Antony Hamilton.

Dolphin Computer Access Assistive Technology

Source: Jane Brassington, Dolphin Computer Access

Dolphin assistive tech recently reached out to SVRC and invited us to take advantage of some of their free professional training resources. These are available for teachers and support staff working with children who have vision impairments.

They're working with [Vision Australia](#) to introduce the SuperNova software range, specifically designed to support vision impaired children and young people throughout their education. For more information, or to register your interest for future training webinars, contact accesstechnologyconsulting@visionaustralia.org

SuperNova Teaching Resources

As well as regular zoom and text reading features, [SuperNova](#) Magnifier and Speech software can be installed on a standard Windows Surface Pro tablet to use the rear camera as a scanner. It's a more reliable and cost-effective alternative to the Mercury 13 devices and can be used with Microsoft Office applications.

Alternatively, install SuperNova on a regular Windows laptop and use with a USB document camera or distance camera so students can make notes at the same time as viewing classroom resources. No distance camera? Use the free [Whiteboard Wizard](#) to view Smartboard presentations directly on the student's laptop.

[SuperNova](#) comes in 3 editions: Magnifier, Magnifier & Speech and Magnifier & Screen Reader. For students whose sight may change over the course of their studies, we recommend SuperNova Magnifier & Screen Reader. They can start with magnification only and increase the level of speech as needed.

If you're new to SuperNova, we have a range of resources to inform, support and train school staff, so it's easier for you to support your students. Some of these resources include: [SuperNova Free Trial](#), [Whiteboard Wizard](#), and [SPEVI Presentation](#).

[GuideConnect](#) is a self-contained, talking application designed for students with additional needs who might find traditional screen readers and iPads too complex. Use GuideConnect to send emails, browse the web and write documents quickly and effectively from a Windows computer.

For more information, please drop me a line at jane.brassington@yourdolphin.com directly or reach out to [our local distributors in Australia](#).

And Finally ...

Although the function of tears is to keep eyes clean, scientists don't understand why we cry when we are upset.