

Number 18, Friday 24, 2023

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PD events

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 Manger

Source: Kim Foley and Jane Barker, SVRC, Management

Last week at the VTS-Community of Practice, Peter Davies, NWVR VTS-Vision presented a wonderful PowerPoint on Space Camp, outlining the fantastic experiences and adventures of the students and chaperones during the two week tour. There are already VTs interested in planning another Space Camp adventure in 2025. Hopefully, more students who are blind or have low vision will have the opportunity to participate in such a fabulous adventure in the future.

On Thursday night, the Space Campers and their families enjoyed an afternoon together at SVRC reminiscing about all the wonderful experiences in LA and at Space Camp. Each student received from SVRC a 3D printed space shuttle mounted on a wooden board with their names in either large print or braille as a memento of their trip. Thank you to Sarah H and Michael for their enthusiasm and innovation in sourcing and creating the 3D models, and Dom and Chloe for their intricate painting.



Ozzie Dots ... An Update

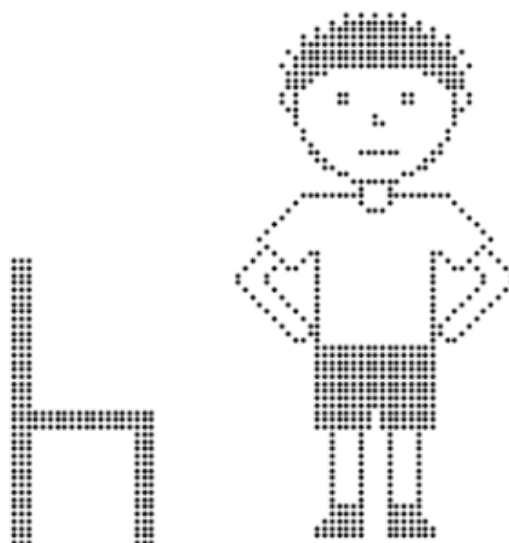
Source: Deb Lewis, SVRC, Transcription

Ozzie Dots Sets 1-10 Supplementary Books (Digraphs and Blends)

We now have 100 books introducing a range of digraphs and blends that are represented by contractions. When proofed and available, this will include books that introduce (listed alphabetically): AR, BB, CC, CH (& child, children, much, such), EA, ED, EN (& enough), ER, FF, GG, GH, IN (within words), ING, ONG, OU (& out) OW, SH (& shall), ST (& still, first, must), TH (& this), and finally WH.

Currently, EN (& enough), GG, IN (within words) and TH (& this) are available. Within a short timeframe, the following will also be available:

- EA
- ER
- OU (& out)



VTs, if you'd like to try them out with your students, we can send out the text files so you can select the 2-3 that would suit your student's interests and reading abilities.

Taryn's illustration (right) is from "Liking" which introduces ING ... Steve does not like to sit still!

Ozzie Dots Word Endings (final-letter group signs)

At the request from a VT, we have started writing some stories to introduce the following endings:

- | | |
|--------|--------|
| • ance | • ness |
| • ence | • ound |
| • ful | • ount |
| • ity | • sion |
| • less | • tion |
| • ment | |

VTs, if you'd like to beta test some of the stories, please be in touch and we'll send you the print or braille files, or hardcopy braille. You can use the material as follows:

- print file – refreshable braille display e.g. Polaris
- braille file – emboss in the school on the school embosser
- hardcopy braille – ready to read

At this stage, the stories are not illustrated.

As you know, we love feedback and comment – please be in touch if you have any thoughts ...

AnimalWatch VI: Building Graphics Literacy

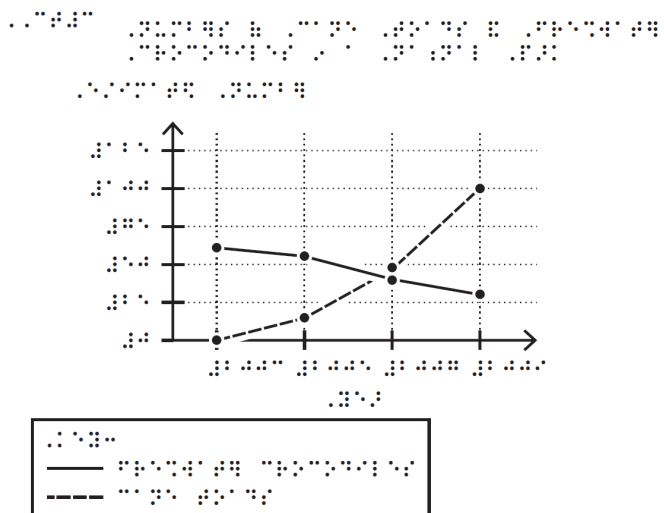
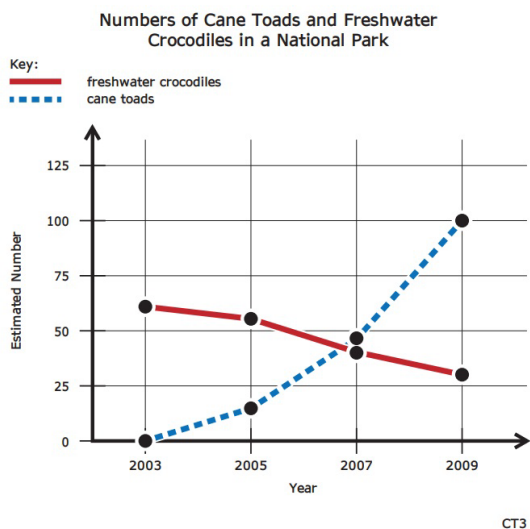
Source: APH and SVRC

AnimalWatch VI: Building Graphics Literacy is an iPad App that aims to support students to develop graphics literacy. There are tactile or large print graphs that accompany the app which provide practice in reading and interpreting lots of different kinds of graphs. These include bar graphs, line graphs, Venn diagrams, Cartesian planes, box plots, maps and data tables. They're all based around information about endangered species, including Australian animals like the Tasmanian devil and the platypus.

Transcription staff at SVRC have adapted the tactile graph that go with the Animal Watch VI App into a format that matches how we do them here in Victoria. This is now available for request via an Alternate Format Request Form as a tactile graphic or in large print. There's also an excellent [Curriculum for Teachers](#) document which provides support in using the app with a student, including answers and follow-up questions.

The AnimalWatch VI: Building Graphics Literacy App is available through Self Service on an iPad on loan from SVRC, or free [through the AppStore](#). It's aimed at students in Year 5 to Year 8. APH has also [produced a video on using the AnimalWatch Suite](#).

Picture shows the same information, one in a large print format and one in a tactile graphic format, for use with the app.



SVRC's 2023 Writing Competition – winners announced at Expo

Source: SVRC, Mario Blaze

All students supported by SVRC were invited to write a piece based on the prompt: Dear Future me ...

We had 23 fantastic literary works from students ranging from years 3 to 8. Students spoke of their goals and dreams, apprehensions and concerns, ambitions and beliefs about the future. Some entries were written on Polaris devices, others on computer or iPad and still others in audio or with photos. Thank you to the judges Jane, Jacky, Olivia and Marion. We couldn't pick an overall winner but everyone's a winner with audio books donated by Bolinda Audio and trophies made by Michael and Sarah at SVRC.

Thank you so much to Bolinda for donating their wonderful audio books to this annual competition!! And thank you to Michael and Sarah for crafting the 3D trophies.



Read & Write and Equatio are free for teachers

Source: Marion Blaze

Read & Write is a literacy support tool that offers help with everyday tasks like reading text out loud, understanding unfamiliar words, researching assignments and proofing written work. To try Read & Write visit the [texthelp website](#).

Equatio is a powerful equation editor that makes it easy to create digital, accessible maths. It saves time, lowers stress and eliminates frustration. It makes maths and science more accessible and engaging for every student. To try Equatio, visit [the website](#) and go to the [products page](#).

Please allow up to 24 hours for your premium access to be activated.

Bringing joy through song – a Christmas concert featuring students supported by SVRC

Source: SVRC

This will be a Christmas concert with the children supported by SVRC. The musical director is Jordie Howell and pianist, Andhika.

When: Thursday 14 December 2023 11.15 am to 12:30pm

Where: At the Victorian Artists Society, Hammond Gallery, 430 Albert St, East Melbourne (Wilson parking 410 Albert St – closest train – Parliament.)

RSVP to Susan Marshall by 11 December on info@blindsports.org.au or 98228876

Goalball Family Day – December 2, 2023

Source: Brooke Carter, President of Victorian Goalball Association Inc

Victorian Goalball Association has an exciting family day coming up in December. Goalball provides opportunities for kids, teens and adults to be active and connected to a community of belonging.

When: Saturday 2nd December, 10:00 am to 12:00 noon

Where: Scotch College, Junior School Gym (Corner of Glenferrie Road & Callantina Road, Hawthorn)

Cost: Free

Fill in a [registration form](#) to register.

Getting there:

Public Transport: Walking distance from Kooyong Station and the route 16 tram from Glenferrie Station stop #

Rideshare and taxi: Best drop off point is down the corner driveway off Glenferrie Road & Callantina Road

Driving: There is parking available on Callantina Road or by Gate 3 off Morrison Street

Save Sight Institute: Youth and Young Adult Mentorship Initiative

Source: The University of Sydney

The Save Sight Institute are asking for input on their upcoming Youth and Young Adult Mentorship Initiative.

This Initiative is a program that aims to support, encourage, and educate youth and young adults with vision conditions, as they navigate through the education system and into the workforce.

This will be done through a safe group setting that will involve discussions, guest speakers, amongst other activities suggested by you – whether you are a person with vision impairment, a parent, or educator, they would love to hear your ideas and feedback on how we can shape this program.

To partake in the survey, visit the [survey response page](#) linked.

SVRC's Access Technology Expo was on November 21, 2023

Source: SVRC

With on-site displays and demonstrations from:

Quantum RLV, Monash Assistive Technology & Society (MATs), Bolinda Audio, Goalball Australia, Visitech Magnifiers, NV Access, Pacific Vision, Humanware and Blind Sport & Recreation Victoria and online presentations from NV Access, Quantum & Sonokids, SVRC was really buzzing!!

SVRC's 2023 Expo was a great success. We estimate that 49 people came in through the day and another 20 were online.

How about this feedback from a VT who was online?!!

"The EXPO was great to attend yesterday, thanks for the work that you do to make it accessible to those outside due to distance and other constraints.

I know this doesn't happen by chance and takes planning and time- thanks again.

I attended from 3 different locations moving between sessions!

A truck stop, my driveway and back inside my office, technology was definitely an enabler yesterday."

Thank you to all presenters and the behind-the-scenes helpers at SVRC.

Guide Dogs YAP Program

Source: Guide Dogs

Classification: Top Secret

Hello Secret Agents,

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to attend and impress at the Y.A.P Agency Gala to celebrate another successful year. A night of stealth, sleuthing and secrecy awaits.

All agents must report to Y.A.P headquarters (2-6 Chandler Highway, Kew VIC 3101) on Thursday 7 December promptly at 17:45. Alternatively, a covert vehicle will be waiting at Fairfield Station at 17:30 to collect any agents who will be arriving via train. New recruits into the service are invited, we will see if they have what it takes to be a Y.A.P agent.

Dinner will be provided, so please let us know if there are any foods you must avoid to remain at optimal levels and be able to perform at your best.

We have also been receiving communications that James Bond may be in attendance, so dress smart agents! You will be sent a secret pass phrase to be able to enter headquarters and your mission specific details will be sent to you via burner phone before the night arrives.

To accept this mission, reply to this classified email at YAP@guidedogsvictoria.com.au by Monday 27 November. This email will self-destruct after this date.

Good luck agents.

Y.A.P Secret Intelligence Agency

If you have any questions about our YAP Program or the end of year event please don't hesitate to contact our Customer Service Team on 1800 804 805

And Finally ...

Did you know that Louis Braille invented the braille language system when he was only 15 years old.