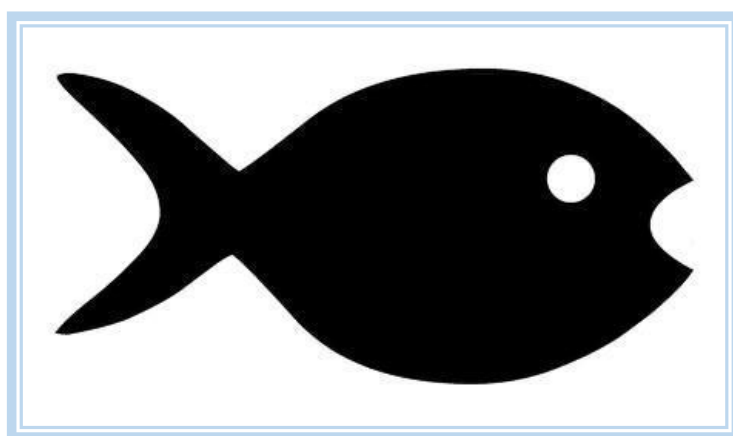


# **Ozzie Dots 2022**

## **Teacher Resource**

**TEACHING CONTRACTED BRAILLE  
AND TACTUAL GRAPHICACY TO  
BEGINNING BRAILLE READERS**



**by Deb Lewis  
with Gillian Gale AM  
and staff of the Statewide Vision Resource Centre**

## Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and thank the many people, named and unnamed, who have contributed and assisted in the creation of Ozzie Dots since it was first conceived in 2008.

Consultation with and input from the teaching staff of the Statewide Vision Resource Centre and the local visiting/itinerant teachers guided the conceptual and ongoing development of this work.

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Thank you one and all!

Debra Lewis & Gillian Gale  
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## A note about this edition of Ozzie Dots

This third edition of the Ozzie Dots Teacher Resource was finalised in October 2022. The current Ozzie Dots braille and print files can be identified by the text "2020" which appears on the front cover of the braille books and in the heading of the print copy. Earlier editions of the files are undated.

If you have purchased an early edition of Ozzie Dots and are yet to receive your copy of the updated braille and print files, please contact the [Statewide Vision Resource Centre](#). There is no additional charge for the updated files.

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# 1

## Introduction



## Introduction

For the student who is blind, braille is the primary literacy medium. It is generally accepted that in order to be able to attend to the volume of work at school, the successful student will need to be a competent reader and writer of contracted braille.

**Uncontracted braille** matches print letter-for-letter

**Contracted braille** uses specialised braille abbreviations in addition to the same letters, punctuation and numbers as uncontracted braille

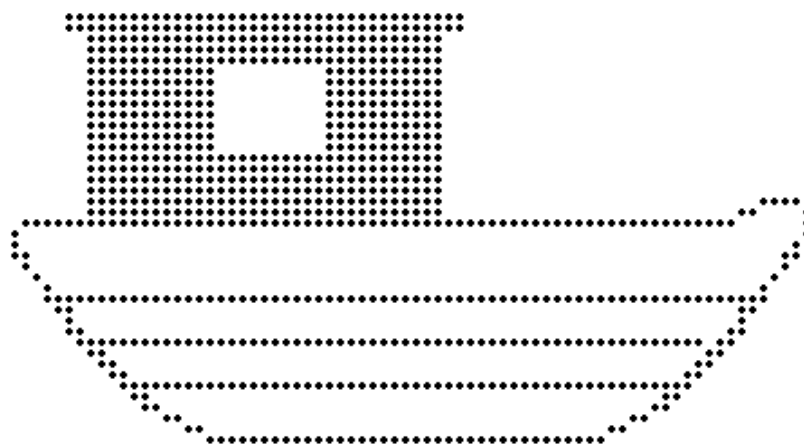
Ozzie Dots introduces contracted braille in a sequential manner to students who have mastered the braille alphabet. It is intended as a self-contained resource to be used by specialist teachers (e.g. visiting/itinerant teachers), teachers, teacher aides and parents/carers – hereafter referred to as the “braille teacher” – to provide a systematic introduction of contracted braille to beginning braille readers.

**Ozzie Dots** is a structured set of books designed to assist in the teaching of contracted braille (Unified English Braille).

Ozzie Dots is not intended as a reading scheme, but as an adjunct to the class reading program for touch readers who use braille.

The language and stories were initially designed for younger readers; this new edition offers a wider range of books introducing each contraction. Many of the stories are suitable for primary- and secondary-aged readers; some stories have been written with the older student in mind.

*Some day* (Set 7c book 8), for example, describes a father’s plans to escape with his son from a war-torn town to a safe country like Australia.





The Ozzie Dots books are illustrated with tactual pictures offering students the opportunity to develop the skills of tactual graphicacy.

**Tactual graphicacy** is the ability to use the sense of touch to interpret and understand two-dimensional representations such as illustrations, symbols and diagrams.

Further, the topics of the stories and the format of the text and illustrations offer opportunities for concept development.

**Concept development** is essentially the understanding of oneself in the world and is developed through daily experience-based learning, and/or direct teaching.

The Ozzie Dots stories are fun and light-hearted and are intended to maintain students' interest and motivation.

The print and braille files provided with Ozzie Dots can easily be edited and therefore tailored for the individual, and/or to reflect regional differences in vocabulary etc.

Ozzie Dots is intended as a self-contained teaching resource. To fully support the student, the braille teacher must be familiar with the braille code – please refer to the braille authority in your country or region.





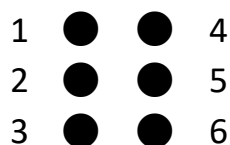
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## About Braille

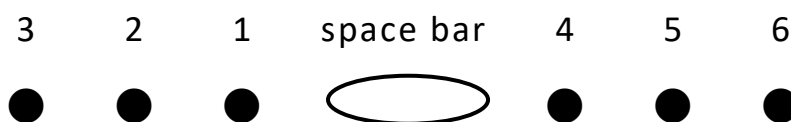


## The Braille Code

Braille is a system of raised dots which, when arranged in particular combinations, can represent letters, words, numbers ... in fact anything that can appear in print. The basis of braille is the “braille cell”. The braille cell is made up of two vertical columns of three dots. For convenience each dot is numbered from 1 to 6 as follows:



Each number shown in the braille cell above corresponds with a key on the braille writer:



### The Braille Alphabet

a	b	c	D	e	f	g	h	i	j
⠁	⠃	⠉	⠔	⠑	⠋	⠗	⠈	⠊	⠛
k	l	m	N	o	p	q	r	s	t
⠅	⠍	⠎	⠘	⠕	⠏	⠑	⠗	⠎	⠞
u	v	w	X	y	z	capital	full stop		
⠥	⠦	⠵	⠨	⠶	⠵	⠠	⠠		

### Braille Numbers


1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
⠠⠠	⠠⠠	⠠⠠	⠠⠠	⠠⠠	⠠⠠	⠠⠠	⠠⠠	⠠⠠	⠠⠠

### Examples of Words and Numbers

cat	Jane	4	536
⠠⠉⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	⠠⠠	⠠⠠⠠⠠

## About Uncontracted Braille

Uncontracted braille matches print letter-for-letter, for example:

*A big idea .*  

 The image shows the Braille representation of the sentence "A big idea ." in uncontracted form. Each letter is represented by a unique Braille cell, demonstrating a one-to-one correspondence with the printed text. The letters are: A (dots 1, 2, 3, 4), b (dots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5), i (dots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), g (dots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), i (dots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), d (dots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), e (dots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), a (dots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), and a period (dots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).

### Uncontracted braille:

- provides letter-for-letter correspondence between braille and print
- is a “stepping stone” to contracted braille, promoting early success when reading and writing
- requires knowledge of less rules, therefore reduces the complexity of reading and writing for the beginning braille reader
- promotes letter/sound associations supporting students’ learning of correct spelling
- is easier for sighted peers, parents/carers, siblings, teachers and teacher aides to learn, enabling everyone to participate in supporting the student’s developing literacy
- supports early success with creative writing and may discourage the stilted writing sometimes seen from early braille writers who may be over-reliant on the simple wordsigns (e.g. can, do, like)
- facilitates easier production of braille materials, particularly “school-made” resources for classroom use
- facilitates an easier transition from print to braille for students with deteriorating vision
- may assist those with learning difficulties or additional disabilities

### Note:

- more than half of the most frequently used English words have contractions
- for efficient braille reading, contracted braille should be introduced as early as is practicable



## Summary of Unified English Braille Literary Code

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	K	L	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	T	u	v	w	x	y	z
⠁	⠃	⠉	⠙	⠑	⠋	⠗	⠈	⠊	⠛	⠅	⠗	⠍	⠎	⠝	⠏	⠑	⠞	⠟	⠤	⠥	⠦	⠷	⠸	⠹	⠺

about	ab	ea	⠑⠁	name	⠎⠁⠎⠑	through	⠞⠗⠗⠗⠗
above	abv	ed	⠑⠙	necessary	nec	thyselF	⠞⠗⠗⠗⠑⠋
according	ac	either	Ei	neither	nei	Time	⠞⠊⠎⠑
across	acr	en	⠑⠎	ness	⠎⠑⠎	Tion	⠞⠊⠝
after	af	ence	⠑⠎⠙	not	⠎⠔	today	⠞⠔⠙
afternoon	afn	enough	⠑⠎⠔	of	⠔	together	⠞⠗⠗
afterward	afw	er	⠑⠞	one	⠔⠑	tomorrow	⠞⠔⠎
again	ag	ever	⠑⠙⠞	oneself	ONEf	tonight	⠞⠎
against	agST	every	⠑⠙⠙	ong	⠔⠗	under	⠞⠥⠎
almost	alm	father	⠑⠞⠞	ou	⠔	upon	⠞⠥⠎
already	alr	ff	⠑⠞	ought	⠔⠗	Us	⠞
also	al	first	fST	ound	⠔⠗	Very	⠞
although	alTH	for	⠑⠞	ount	⠔⠗	Was	⠞
altogether	alt	friend	Fr	ourselves	OUrvs	were	⠞
always	alw	from	⠑⠞	out	⠔	Wh	⠞
ance	⠔⠎	ful	⠑⠞⠞	ow	⠔	where	⠞⠗
and	⠔⠎	gg	⠑⠞	paid	pd	which	⠞
ar	⠔	gh	⠑⠞	part	⠔⠞	whose	⠞⠗
as	⠔	go	⠑⠞	people	⠔	Will	⠞
bb	⠔⠔	good	Gd	perceive	pERcv	With	⠞
be	⠔	great	Grt	perceiving	pERCvg	word	⠞⠗
because	BEc	had	⠑⠞⠙	perhaps	pERh	work	⠞⠗
before	BEf	have	⠑⠞	question	⠔⠗	world	⠞⠗
behind	BEh	here	⠑⠞	quick	qk	would	⠞⠗
below	BEl	herself	hERf	quite	⠔	You	⠞
beneath	BEEn	him	Hm	rather	⠞	young	⠞⠗
beside	BEs	himself	Hmf	receive	rcv	your	⠙⠞
between	BEt	his	⠑⠞	receiving	rcvg	yourself	⠙⠞⠑
beyond	BEy	immediate	Imm	rejoice	rjc	yourselves	⠙⠞⠙⠎
blind	bl	in	⠑⠞	rejoicing	rjcg	<b>Selected punctuation/symbols</b>	
braille	bri	ing	⠑⠞	right	⠞⠗	at @	⠞⠗
but	⠔	into	⠑⠞⠔⠔	said	sd	apostrophe	⠞
can	⠞	it	X	sh	⠞	bold (word)	⠞⠗
cannot	⠞⠔	its	Xs	shall	⠞	bold (passage)	⠞⠗⠗⠗⠗
cc	⠞	itself	Xf	should	SHd	bullet	⠞⠗
ch	⠞	ity	⠞⠗	sion	⠞⠗	capital indicator	⠞
character	⠞⠞	just	⠑⠞	so	⠞	capital (word)	⠞⠗
child	⠞	know	⠞⠗	some	⠞⠗	colon	⠞
children	CHn	knowledge	⠞	spirit	⠞⠗	comma	⠞
con	⠞	less	⠞⠗	st	⠞	dollar	⠞⠗
conceive	CONcv	letter	Lr	still	⠞	exclamation	⠞
conceiving	CONcvg	like	⠑⠞	such	sCH	full stop	⠞
could	cd	little	Ll	th	⠞	grade 1 indicator	⠞
day	⠞⠗	lord	⠞⠗	that	⠞	hyphen	⠞
deceive	dcv	many	⠞⠗	the	⠞	italics (word)	⠞⠗
deceiving	dcvg	ment	⠞⠗	their	⠞⠗	italics (passage)	⠞⠗⠗⠗⠗
declare	dcl	more	⠑⠞	themselves	THEmvs	numeric indicator	⠞
declaring	dclg	mother	⠞⠗	there	⠞⠗	percent	⠞⠗
dis	⠞	much	mCH	these	⠞⠗	question mark	⠞
do	⠞	must	mST	this	⠞	quotes	⠞⠗⠗
		myself	Myf	those	⠞⠗	semi colon	⠞

## How to Read Braille

It is important for the reader to be in a comfortable position in relation to the page of braille. A chair and table of a suitable height for the individual is important. Arms and hands should be in a relaxed position with the reader directly facing the lines of braille. Braille which is off-centre in relation to the reader may be perceived incorrectly.

English braille is always read from left to right. This technique should be established as early as possible.

To perceive the braille dots, the fingers must be moving. A stationary finger cannot read braille. Smooth, gentle finger movements where the pads of the fingers move over each line of braille allows the shapes of the braille to be recognised by touch.

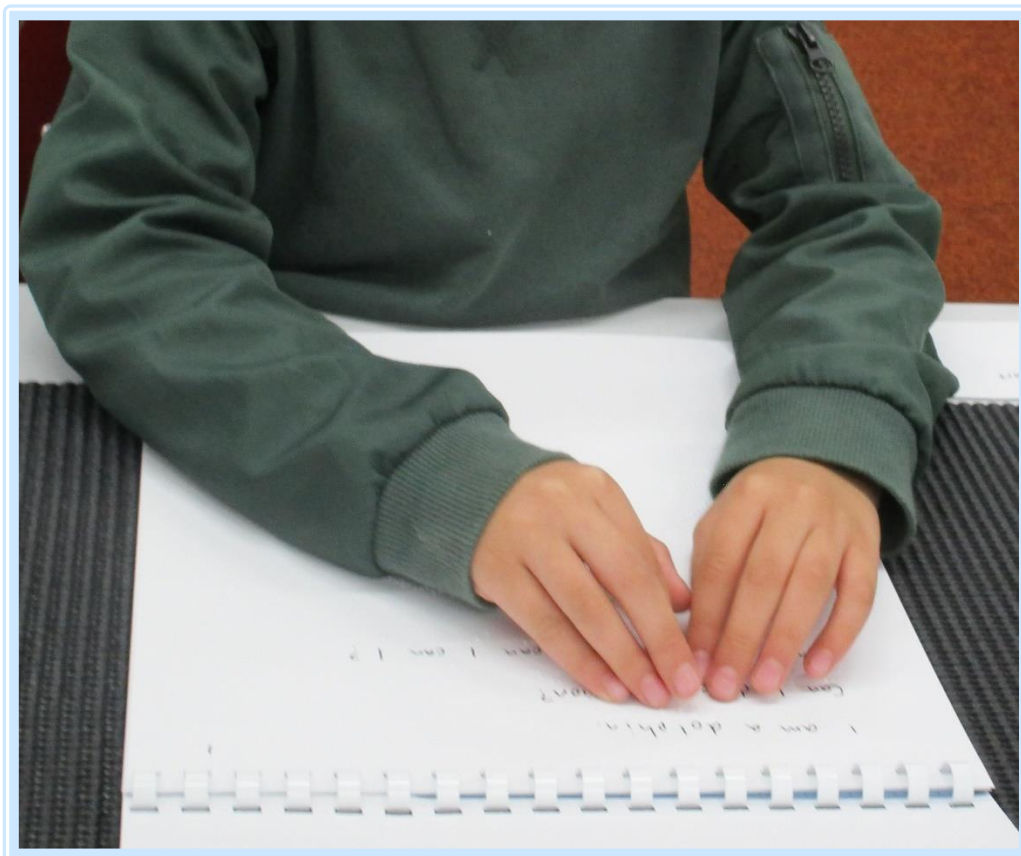
The most efficient braille readers tend to use two hands and many fingers. Often the fingers of the right hand are the “reading fingers” while the fingers of the left hand are “checking fingers”. This technique ensures that fingers do not travel backwards over the braille to re-read a word or phrase. “Back-tracking” over the braille (fingers moving from right to left) may cause the braille to be perceived back-to-front. Braille reversals may cause reading errors, as many braille letters or contractions are the mirror image of another letter or contraction. Rubbing at individual braille cells, also known as “scrubbing”, is also not recommended.

Always encourage braille readers to use both hands, many fingers, a gentle and smooth motion in a left-to-right direction.



# 3

## Aims of Ozzie Dots





## Aims of Ozzie Dots

### Ozzie Dots aims to:

1. support the teaching and learning of fully contracted braille
2. support the teaching and learning of tactual graphicacy
3. provide opportunities for concept development
4. offer exposure to non-text sources of information
5. encourage reading through the provision of engaging stories
6. offer early success through predictability, repetition and simplicity
7. provide an opportunity for students to build a personal library
8. provide an electronic resource of complete, self-contained, editable print and braille files



## 1. Supporting the teaching and learning of fully contracted braille

Learning to read is arguably the most complex task that a child will undertake at school. Reading involves:

- identifying letters and combinations of letters
- matching letters and combinations of letters to sounds and blending the sounds together
- recognising whole words
- using context and clues provided, for example, by the illustrations
- comprehending and connecting ideas

The braille code adds an additional layer of complexity to the reading process:

- the 6 dots of the braille cell can be arranged in 63 different ways
- many dot combinations are similar to, or the reverse of, another e.g.
  - the capital “a” and “st” contraction are very similar in shape
  - the letter “v” and the numeric indicator are reversals:

capital “a”



“st” contraction



letter “v”



numeric indicator



- efficient hand movements are required
- beginning braille readers have generally had less exposure to braille than their sighted peers’ exposure to print

The aim for the braille student is to achieve mastery of contracted braille as quickly as is practicable.

The Ozzie Dots books are sequential, encouraging students to become increasingly familiar and confident with contracted braille.

For each of the first 50 contractions (Sets 1-10), Ozzie Dots offers 10 or more books, ensuring plenty of practise and variety. Students do not need to read all the books; the braille teacher can tailor the Ozzie Dots program to suit the individual selecting the number, content and style of stories to maintain interest and enthusiasm.

For further information, please see the “Using Ozzie Dots” section.

## 2. Supporting the teaching and learning of tactual graphicacy

The ability to gather information from books does not only rely on the ability to read the text. Student learning materials provided to sighted students are likely to contain a wide array of illustrations, diagrams, symbols, charts, graphs, maps, photographs etc. The page of a secondary school textbook can be a busy collection of boxes, colours and graphics as well as text. The example below from a Year 9 history text book includes a photograph, a map with a key, a table, breakout boxes, a reference to a workbook and a link to an online source.

**Source 2** Alexander Graham Bell was the first to patent a workable telephone. In this photograph, he is making the first call from New York to Chicago in 1876.



**Did you know?**  
By 1900 the United States had overtaken Britain as the world's leading industrial power. By this time the industrial output of the US was almost seven times what it had been in 1870. Large American corporations such as General Electric, Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller were by then among the most prosperous in the world.

**Activities**  **Student workbook 2.8**

**EXPLANATION AND COMMUNICATION**

- 1 In what ways was Britain the dominant industrial power in the world in 1850?
- 2 Outline the main features of the spread of the Industrial Revolution into Europe.
- 3 **Source 3** shows a basic German iron boundary in 1856. What factors enabled Germany to rapidly expand its iron and steel production in the second half of the nineteenth century?
- 4 Give two examples of innovations contributing to industrialisation that were pioneered in the US.

**ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES**

- 5 Examine **Source 1**. Why would the construction of a building like the Crystal Palace have been impossible a century earlier?
- 6 How did a building like this help Britain to achieve its main purpose in hosting the Great Exhibition?

**HISTORICAL QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH**

- 7 Using internet sources, research one French or German innovation that contributed to the progress of industrialisation in that country and was taken up by other countries.

**Napoleonic Wars** a series of wars between the French Empire, led by Napoleon Bonaparte, and a number of other European nations between 1803 and 1815.

**The Great Exhibition**  
In 1851 the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations was held in Hyde Park, London. While it was intended as a celebration of technology and industrial design from all over the world, it also had the aim of demonstrating British industrial power. It was held in a temporary steel and glass building known as the Crystal Palace, which was itself designed to show off British architectural engineering. The quality and quantity of British innovation on show was a clear indication that at that time Britain was indeed the 'workshop of the world'.

**Source 3** The Crystal Palace was designed to show off British engineering during the Great Exhibition of 1851, as shown in this 1854 artwork.



**Journeys World History Alive Industrial Revolution pp. 150-1**

### 2.10 Trade, empire and shipping

Britain was able to take greatest advantage of its Industrial Revolution because of its extensive trade networks. This enabled it to import large quantities of raw materials from around the world, process these in its factories and export the finished products to worldwide markets.

**A trading nation**  
Long before the Industrial Revolution, Britain had built up trade networks throughout the world. British naval power began to grow during the second half of the sixteenth century, encouraging the establishment of colonies in North America and the West Indies. In the seventeenth century British trade with Asia expanded, with the East India Company establishing trading posts in India. British trading interests were keen to remove competition from other countries, such as France. Victory in the Seven Years' War (1756-63) allowed Britain to take over many French colonies in North America, India and the Caribbean.

**Colonies and empire**  
As the first country to experience industrialisation, Britain was able to use its industrial strength to build an empire. Raw materials would be imported by ship and processed in British factories, and then the finished products exported, often to the same colonies that had provided the raw materials. By 1800, Britain had the beginnings of a worldwide empire, which provided valuable sources of raw materials to feed industrial growth. As we have seen, the cotton industry was a major source of industrial growth, but British industry was soon able to process raw materials imported from almost every continent. In order to protect its trading routes, Britain also established the most powerful navy in the world, along with a very prosperous shipbuilding industry.

**Source 2** Main sources of raw materials from different parts of the British Empire.

British colony	Raw materials provided
Canada	Furs, timber, fish
Jamaica	Sugar, coffee
British Guiana	Sugar, tobacco
Gambia	Cocoa
Bermuda	Salt, whale oil, baleen
India	Cotton, tea, timber, sugar
Penang and Malacca	Spices, timber
Ceylon (now Sri Lanka)	Tea, timber, cocoa
New South Wales	Wool, oil, bakers, wool

**Source 1** The British Empire in 1800



**Chapter 2: The Industrial Revolution (1750-1914): (I) Technology and progress 55**

**56 History Alive 9 for the Australian Curriculum**

Source: Darlington, R., et al. (2012). *History Alive 9 for the Australian curriculum*, Milton: John Wiley & Sons, pp 55-56.

When a touch-reader explores a tactual illustration, information is gathered in a linear manner, before the graphic can be understood as a whole. Learning to interpret tactual graphics is a skill that takes time and practice, so early introduction to tactual illustrations is important. For this reason there is an illustration on almost every page in the Ozzie Dots books.

Children need early experience of tactually exploring simple real items and comparing them with the tactual representation. They need the opportunity to build a mental library that can be applied to increasingly complicated diagrams.

Tactual graphicacy is based on the early development of the sense of touch. Children who are blind should be encouraged to explore their world with their hands and to continue to build on their ability to understand their world through touch. Children who are blind need to develop not only sensitivity, but also strength and dexterity. They should be encouraged to explore whole objects rather than just a part. They need to use their hands and fingers to gain as much information about the item as possible – features such as the shape, size, weight, texture and temperature. Checking detail, similarity and difference between items encourages sensitivity in tactual discrimination and supports future success.

### **Principles applied in the development of tactual graphics in Ozzie Dots:**

- the graphics are simple and clear
- the graphics offer consistency
- the graphics may also offer slight variations encouraging comparison and attention to detail
- the graphics convey the “essence” of the subject in the text
- the focus of each graphic is its tactual decipherability and not necessarily that it pleases the eye
- the graphics relate closely to the story
- the graphic is generally referred to in text on the same page
- the graphics add humour
- the graphics support concept development
- the graphics tend to increase in complexity
- the graphics offer a variety of non-text sources of information e.g. maps, graphs
- the graphics offer opportunities for discussion and learning

Students report that they find the tactual illustrations in Ozzie Dots enjoyable and motivating.



### 3. Providing opportunities for concept development

Concept development is important for children who are blind; concepts may need to be taught in a systematic manner. A child's understanding progresses from the concrete object to its function and then to an abstraction or concept. Some concepts are:

- object characteristics (size, shape, sound, colour, texture, purpose etc)
- directionality (left, right, top, bottom, up, down, front, back, in front of, behind etc)
- time
- space
- actions/movements
- the environment
- symbols
- feelings (anger, nervousness etc)

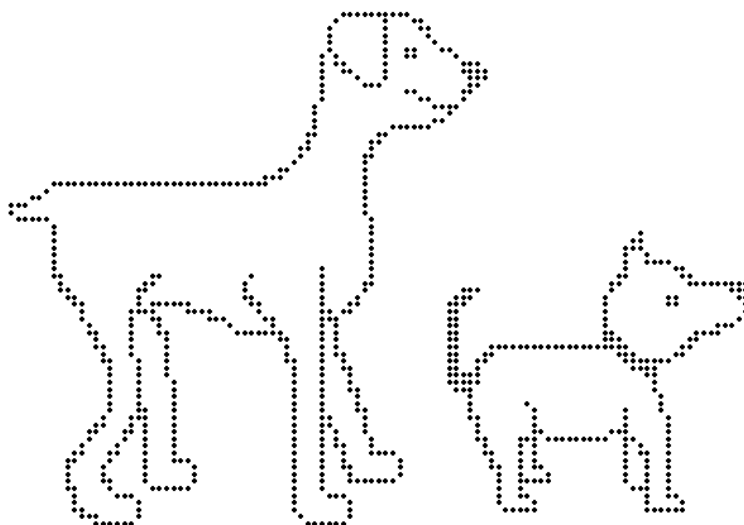
The Ozzie Dots books offer opportunities for exploration of concepts and therefore for learning. For example:

- **Concept: a cat has four legs:** in some illustrations in the Ozzie Dots books, a cat is shown with four legs, three legs, two legs and in some cases no legs. This can lead to a discussion of what can be seen and what might be hidden from view etc.

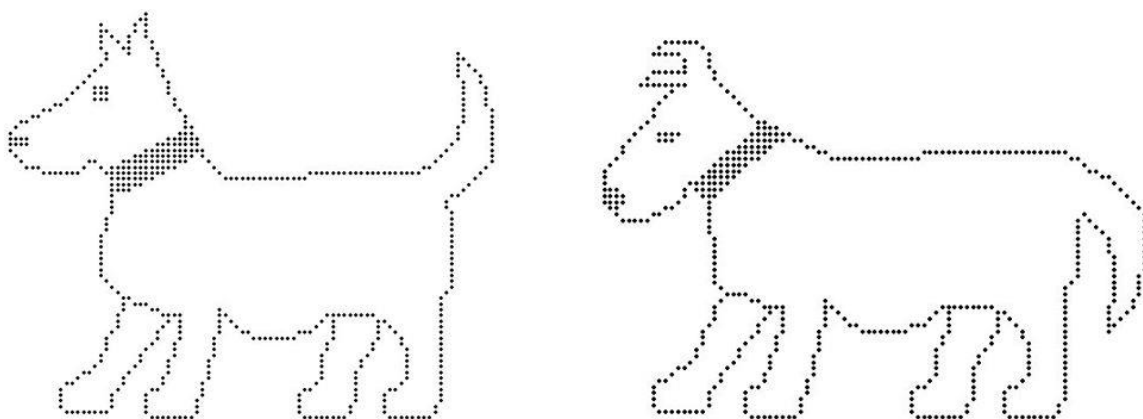




- **Concept: not all dogs look the same:** compare and contrast pictures of Slob with other dogs in the Ozzie Dots books.



- **Concept: body language:** explore illustrations of Slob the dog to see what can be learned about body language – when Slob is happy, his tail and ears are up; when Slob is in disgrace, his head, tail and ears are down.



- **Concept: a map or a plan is a representation from above and on a smaller scale:** make a plan of somewhere familiar to the student, such as their bedroom.
- **Concept: a symbol is a representation:** happiness can be denoted by a “smiley face”.

To assist the braille teacher, many of books have an introduction in the print copy which provides background to the story, suggestions for prior discussion, related activities, ways to personalise the story or ways to make the most of the theme or topic of the book. Here are some examples:

**Set 3a book 2 very**

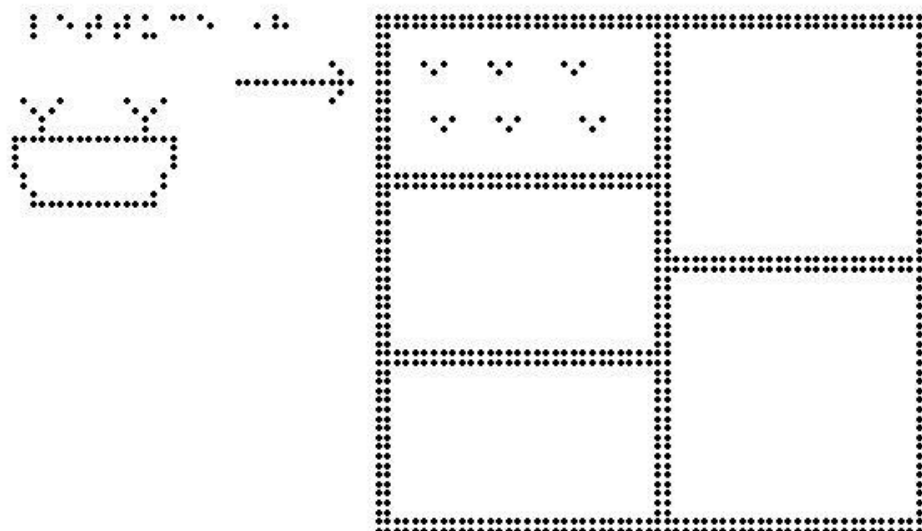
A book such as this offers teacher and student the opportunity to think about classes of objects that can be small, medium-sized and huge, like track, road and freeway. Can you think of more examples?

**Set 5b book 8 more**

Here is a much longer story with a “doggy” theme to challenge your beginning braille reader! This book offers the opportunity to discuss the different breeds of dog – their different size and shape, doggie-personality etc.

**Set 7a book 5 here**

A book such as this invites teacher and student to explore “in front of” and “behind” sunshine and shadows, as well as the notion of plans and the “aerial view”.





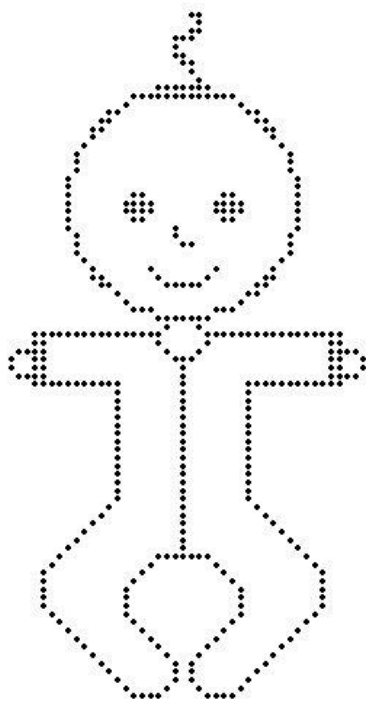


## 5. Encouraging reading through the provision of engaging stories

Each story has been written for Ozzie Dots with the beginning braille reader in mind. Many have an Australian flavour and feature Aussie Rules football, a barbecue or making a chocolate cake. Many of the books have a quirky ending and feature amusing characters and events.

Hopefully, young readers will identify with members of the Ozzie Dots family – the serious big brother, Tim, or the lively younger sister, Jo. What mischief will Slob the dog get up to next? What can baby Lily do at the football that even Tim cannot do? And what will happen when Annabel the cat jumps on the bench with Ozzie the fish?

Stories about the Ozzie Dots family are interspersed with narratives, procedures, non-fiction stories or fun rhymes and word-play nonsense. Our plan is to provide a range of material that keeps each reader coming back for more!



## 6. Offering early success through predictability, repetition and simplicity

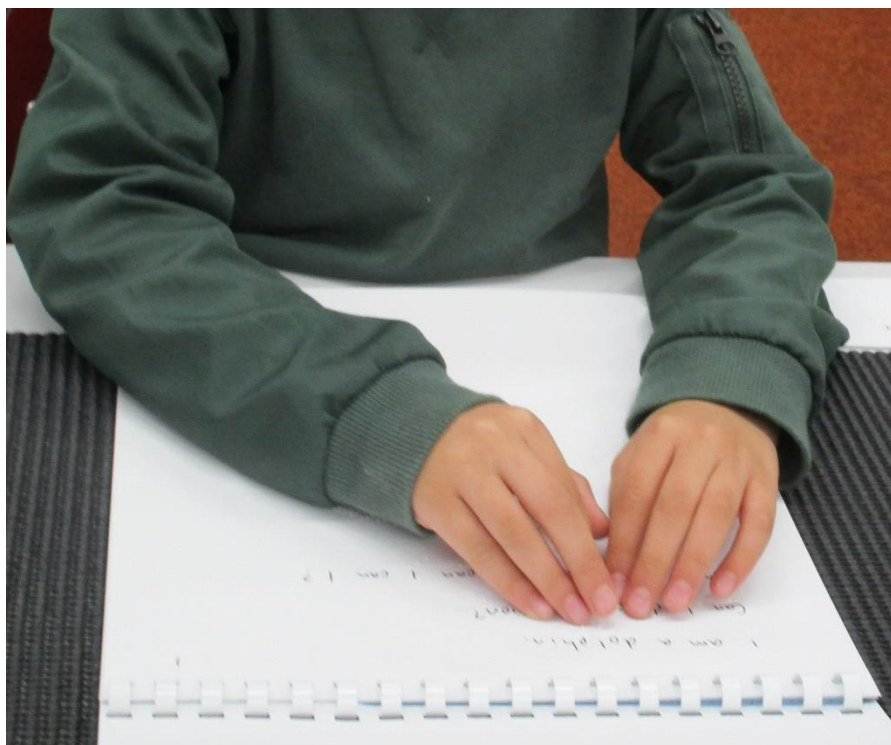
Many children love the exhilaration of conquering something they thought that they could not do. Others need gentle encouragement and reassurance before attempting something new. The variety offered within Ozzie Dots is intended to support each beginning braille reader to achieve early and ongoing success.

Touch readers do not have the range of contextual clues that are available to their sighted peers, to help predict the meaning of the text. They cannot glance to the end of the sentence in search of a familiar word, look to and from illustrations without losing their place, scan visually backwards and forwards looking for meaning, compare one word quickly with another.

“Scrubbing” (repetitive movement of fingers up/down, and backwards/forwards over the braille) flattens the braille and back-tracking over the braille can lead to “reading reversals”. Scrubbing and braille back-tracking should be discouraged in favour of a smooth left-to-right movement.

Light, flowing fingers read braille best. The predictable text provided in Ozzie Dots promotes a light, flowing action over the words.

Reading cues and clues appear throughout the Ozzie Dots books – the title, textual simplicity, illustrations, repetition and rhyme – and these cues and clues allow the child to predict the words they are about to read. When their prediction is right, celebrate! The child is on their way to discovering the joy of reading!



## 7. Providing an opportunity for students to build a personal library

Blindness is a very low incidence disability. Perhaps 0.01% of school-aged students in developed countries are blind. The range and availability of braille books is very much more limited than the print equivalent.

Most braille books are produced in schools or by transcription services for a particular child at a particular time. The books may not then be available for the student to keep. It may be difficult or expensive to purchase braille books; books on loan will need to be returned at some point in time. This means that students generally have little opportunity to build a personal library of books that they can return to and browse at their leisure.

The Ozzie Dots books are not reproduced from other copyrighted sources and therefore their use may not be constrained in the same way by copyright laws. A new copy can be embossed for each reader and the books can be retained by the student. This means that all beginning braille readers can receive new Ozzie Dots books with crisp new braille dots, not flattened braille that may have been “scrubbed” by previous readers.

Students can build a personal library of Ozzie Dots books which they can return to again and again to re-read the text and explore the illustrations as they like.



## 8. Providing an electronic resource of complete, self-contained, editable print and braille files

The illustrations (tactual graphics) in the Ozzie Dots books are computer-generated using the PictureBraille program. Each illustration is then embedded in a Duxbury file, along with the text. The electronic braille files (.DXB files) with the embedded graphics and can be embossed using a braille embosser with graphics capability and the Duxbury Braille Translation Program. This presentation allows easy editing and/or reproduction of each book as required.

The Ozzie Dots program provides flexibility for transcribers and braille teachers. The files can be edited in Duxbury, meaning that books can be personalised for each reader. The illustrations will remain embedded in the file through the translate-to-print and translate-to-braille process.

### Trouble shooting:

If you have the Duxbury Braille Translation program and a braille embosser with graphics capability, but are having difficulties embossing the books, please contact your local supplier. In Australia, contact Nigel Herring of Pentronics: [service@pentronics.com.au](mailto:service@pentronics.com.au)

The print copy of each book with additional information about the braille book is provided as a .docx file. The print copy of each book can be printed and attached to the braille copy for use by the braille teacher and/or others who are supporting the learning process.

Braille books should be bound or stapled. The first page is designed to be the front cover with the next page, the beginning of the story, being numbered page 1.

A card or plastic back cover can be added to the back of each book.

# 4

## Using Ozzie Dots

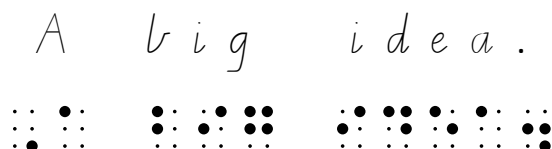




## Ozzie Dots: Quick Start for the Braille Teacher

### Preparation

1. Ensure that the print copy is available with the braille book, and that the braille book is bound or stapled. If the braille is “overwritten” (handwriting), the print should appear **above** the braille as in the example below:



2. Read the notes relating to the story, if available, to determine the concept(s) being introduced, the background to the story, additional resources required and/or prior learning or discussion that could take place.

### With the student

3. Discuss the “braille focus” or contraction(s) being introduced.
4. Read the title and discuss what the book might be about, encouraging the child to predict the vocabulary that may be encountered.
5. Discuss the content of the story and the illustrations that may be found.
6. [Optional] Read the story aloud to the child.
7. Listen to the student reading the story and exploring the illustrations. Provide support and commentary as required.
8. Use the text and illustrations as an opportunity for teaching the specific braille contraction(s), tactual graphicacy and for incidental learning.
9. Encourage re-reading and review.
10. Allow the child to take the book home and encourage re-reading and further examination of the text and pictures.





## Ozzie Dots: What's included?

### Sets 1-10: Contractions or the "focus word"

Ozzie Dots offers a sequential introduction to contracted braille for beginning braille readers.

Ozzie Dots assumes knowledge of the braille alphabet as well as numbers, the capital indicator and the full stop.

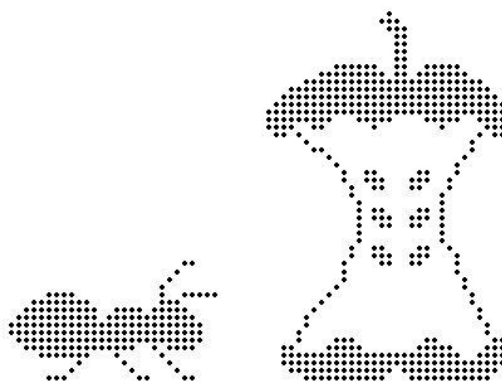
To facilitate efficient acquisition of contracted braille, the order of introduction of contractions offers:

- early introduction of frequently used English words e.g.
  - "hm" (him)
  - "sd" (said)
  - "t" (that)
- early introduction of words that are easy to read and write in braille e.g.
  - "ll" (little)
  - "dot 5 t" (time)

Sets 1 to 10 offer 10 or more books per "braille focus" (contraction). The contractions are presented sequentially so that most books only contain contractions that have been previously introduced as follows:

- in Set 1a, the only word that is contracted is "like"
- in Set 1b, the only words that are contracted are "like" and "can"
- in Set 1c, the only words that are contracted are "like", "can" and "it"
- and so on

Some of the books include additional contractions. These books are suitable for the more confident reader, or as a challenge to extend the avid reader.



The following contractions are presented Sets 1-10 of Ozzie Dots:

- **all the alphabetic wordsigns** (green): but, can, do, every, from, go, have, just, knowledge, like, more, not, people, quite, rather, so, that, us, very, will, it, you, as
- **strong wordsigns** (yellow): and, for, of, the, with
- **some shortforms**, selected from lists of commonly-used words for beginning readers and writers (blue): about, after, again, always, could, friend, good, great, him, little, said, would, your
- **some dot 5 words**, selected from word-lists (orange): day, father, here, mother, name, one, some, time, work
- **one lower groupsign** (pink): in (standing alone)

Set	a	b	c	d	e
1	like	can	it	the	go
2	do	you	will	not	little
3	very	good	have	but	for
4	that	so	with	him	from
5	and	more	every	people	said
6	of	some	great	father mother	us
7	here	friend	day	in (standing alone)	as
8	could	would	time	work	one
9	just	name	after	again	your
10	about	always	quite	rather	knowledge

Wherever possible and particularly in Sets 1 to 10, the “braille focus” will be found at the beginning, in the middle and the end of a sentence. This facilitates the student’s experience with the contraction:

- in isolation
- with the capital indicator
- beside punctuation

The Ozzie Dots books start very simply. The first book contains 25 words. By Set 8, when 35 contractions have been introduced, there are up to 250 words per book.

Except in the very early books, there is a minimum of 10 (and often over 20) occurrences of each “braille focus” per book.

Ozzie Dots books can easily be edited using the Duxbury Braille Translation program, allowing customisation and personalisation of the stories for each student. For example, books can be edited to change the name and/or gender of characters, the make-up of the family and so on.

### Sets 1-10: Punctuation and Other Braille Indicators

A range of punctuation and other braille indicators are introduced sequentially in the Ozzie Dots stories. The braille for newly-introduced symbols is included in the print copy.

Many of the symbols and formatting indicators appear in the list below.

& ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dot 4 dots 1,2,3,4,6) e.g. O&M ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠

' apostrophe ⠠⠠⠠ (dot 3)

● bullet ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dots 4,5,6 dots 2,5,6)

capital indicator ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dot 6)

¢ (cent) ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dot 4 dots 1,4)

: colon ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dots 2,5)

, comma ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dot 2)

– dash ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dot 6 dots 3,6)

÷ divided by ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dot 5 dots 3,4)

\$ dollar ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dot 4 dots 2,3,4)

... ellipses ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dots 2,5,6 dots 2,5,6 dots 2,5,6)

= equals ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dot 5 dots 2,3,4,5)

! exclamation mark ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dot 3)

/ forward slash ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dots 4,5,6 dots 3,4)

fraction line (simple) ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dots 3,4)

e.g. ½ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (dots 3,4,5,6 dot 1 dots 3,4 dots 1,2)





## Sets 1-10: The Print Copy

A print copy is available for every book (see example below) and includes the text of the story along with additional information to support teaching and learning:

- introductory note to assist the braille teacher to make the most of each book
- page-by-page transcript of the text of each book with:
  - the new “braille focus” contraction(s) in bold text
  - previously introduced “braille focus” contraction(s) in underlined text
- a list of the contractions that are included in each book, including the number of occurrences of each
- whether the contraction can be found at the beginning, middle or end of a sentence and/or within a word
- where a word or words appear as part of the illustration, these can be found indented beneath the text of the print page
- a list of punctuation and other braille signs that appear in the book, often with the accompanying braille

**Set 1b book 7 can**

This is a perfect opportunity to explore real fruits. Hold the whole fruit and sniff it. Cut it up and touch, taste and smell it. See if the outside texture and colour is the same or different to the inside. Talk about the shape and size of the various fruits and how each is represented in the illustration. Have a look at the coins and notes on the front page and then real coins and notes. Using the size, shape and the presence or absence of ridges around the edges, you can identify each coin. Most of the notes have a tactile mark to help identify them tactually. There is also a 7mm size difference between each note – have a look!

I **can** buy  
20 10 5

1. I <u>like</u> apples. I <b>can</b> buy an apple. I <b>can</b> .	5. I <u>like</u> mangoes. I <b>can</b> buy a mango. I <b>can</b> .
2. I <u>like</u> bananas. I <b>can</b> buy a banana. I <b>can</b> .	6. I <u>like</u> cookies. I <b>can</b> buy cookies. I <b>can</b> .
3. I <u>like</u> grapes. I <b>can</b> buy grapes. I <b>can</b> .	7. I <u>like</u> cakes. I <b>can</b> buy a cake. I <b>can</b> .
4. I <u>like</u> oranges. I <b>can</b> buy an orange. I <b>can</b> .	8. I <b>can</b> buy lollies. I <b>can</b> . I <u>like</u> lollies. I <u>like</u> lollies a lot.

**Braille Information**

The focus word **can** occurs 17 times in the middle and at the end of sentences. Below is a list of contractions that appear in this book.

Set	a	b			
1	like 9	can 17			

**Punctuation used:** full stop  
**Other braille signs:** capital indicator, numeric indicator

Topics and themes in the Ozzie Dots books are many and varied and include:

- adventures
- animals
- beach
- braille music
- bullying
- careers
- cooking
- environmental issues
- families
- famous people who are blind
- football
- friendship
- goalball
- guessing games
- graphs
- maths
- pets
- puzzles
- seasons
- school
- science (see diagram of neuron with “cell body” and “axon” labelled below)
- sport and the Paralympics
- zoo
- and much more





## Sets 1-10: List of Titles

A searchable table of titles is also available. The table lists the title and the theme/topic to assist in the selection of books that match the interests of the student.

The “braille focus” column indicates how many times the new contraction appears in each book.

Additional columns include whether the story features:

- the Ozzie Dots family
- rhyme and rhythm
- non-fiction topics
- an “alert” regarding language or possible cultural concerns (books that contain “potty humour” or themes that may not be relevant to some families e.g. fairies, Christmas, etc)
- contractions that have not yet been introduced (e.g. from Set 1a, book 10 contains “GG” and book 11 contains “AR” and “ER” – these books can be avoided or the additional contractions can be pre-taught)
- content that was written with the older braille reader in mind – many of these books are also suitable for the younger reader

Ozzie Dots books Sets 1-10

Number	Title	Braille focus (number in book)	Theme/Topic	Ozzie Dots family	Rhyme	Non-fiction	Alert *	Extra contractions	Also for older reader
1a book 1	I like my pets	like (46)	Animals, pets						
1a book 2	I like Slob. I like Annabel.	like (38)	Dog, cat	Yes					
1a book 3	I like fruit	like (32)	Fruit						
1a book 4	I like to bake	like (28)	Cooking, food						
1a book 5	I like pizza	like (8)	Food, making choices						Yes
1a book 6	I like grass	like (10)	Animals, food			Yes			Yes
1a book 7	I like to draw	like (9)	Children's drawings		Yes				
1a book 8	I like to skate	like (19)	Activities, outside						Yes
1a book 9	I like to make a mess	like (25)	House work, cleaning		Yes				Yes
1a book 10	Jo says	like (6)	Activities, body movement	Yes				gg	
1a book 11	Annabel my cat	like (8)	Animals, cat	Yes	Yes			ar,er	
1b book 1	I am Slob	can (25)	Animals, dog	Yes					
1b book 2	I am Ozzie	can (22)	Animals, fish	Yes			Yes		
1b book 3	My dog can run	can (8)	Animals, dog						
1b book 4	I can too	can (16)	Activities, mostly outdoors						
1b book 5	Can I eat a pea?	can (19)	Activities				Yes		
1b book 6	I can eat a lot	can (17)	Food, animals			Yes			Yes
1b book 7	I can buy	can (17)	Activities, fruit						
1b book 8	Wildlife zoo	can (14)	Animals, zoo				Yes		
1b book 9	I like to eat	can (10)	Humour						Yes
1b book 10	Lily is a baby	can (16)	Activities, baby	Yes	Yes		Yes		
1b book 11	My Pop can hop	can (16)	Activities, body movement		Yes				
1b book 12	I can burp	can (8)	Animals, food chain			Yes	Yes		Yes
1b book 13	What can baby Lily do?	can (9)	Family, baby	Yes	Yes		Yes	do,that,wh	
1b book 14	Tim asks Jo	can (12)	Activities, animals	Yes				Yes (4)	
1b book 15	I like school	can (22)	Activities, school					Yes (5)	

## Sets 1-10: Assessment and Review (Optional)

Several books are provided for use upon completion of Set 10. Each book features some or all of the contractions presented in Sets 1 to 10. They may be used as an assessment tool, or to review the contractions that have been introduced in Sets 1 to 10.

## Sets 11-20

**At the time of writing, the books in Sets 11 to 20 are under review, and are not available, except by prior arrangement.**

The books in Sets 11 to 20 offer more complexity and the number of words increases to a maximum of 500 per book. Most books introduce more than one contraction or braille focus, and two books are provided for each.

As with Sets 1 to 10, contractions are introduced sequentially, for example:

- “be” is introduced before “between” and “beyond”
- “st” is introduced before “first” and “must”

The contractions are presented so that by the end of Set 20, nearly all contractions in the Unified English Braille code have been introduced.

The following contractions are not presented in Ozzie Dots books:

- conceive, conceiving
- deceive, deceiving
- lord
- oneself
- perceive, perceiving
- spirit
- thyself
- upon

## Using Ozzie Dots with Students

### Approaching the task of learning to read

Each student comes to the task of reading with a unique skill set and motivation. So, too, each braille teacher possesses unique skills and philosophies.

One student may learn contractions swiftly and with apparent ease – this student may not need to read more than one or two Ozzie Dots books for each contraction or at each level. This student may thrive on the exhilaration provided by this early success.

Another student may progress slowly and methodically – this student may or may not need extra practice at each level in order to achieve success.

Ozzie Dots offers flexibility allowing the braille teacher to individualise the program to meet the needs of their student.

The aim is to move the student through the Ozzie Dots books, thereby achieving mastery of contracted braille, as quickly as practicable.

### Young learners

By the time a student who is blind reaches pre-school or school, they may be able to locate the braille on the page, “track” along a line of braille, or perhaps they are beginning to identify a few braille letters, or even words ...

With appropriate support, students who are blind can successfully participate in class activities and learn to read and write – using braille – alongside their sighted peers.

Braille and tactual books and worksheets can be prepared in advance at the school or by a transcription service such as the Statewide Vision Resource Centre (Victoria, Australia) enabling the student who is blind to be included and to participate in class activities.



If the pre-school or school-aged student has no experience with braille, a pre-braille program will be required, prior to the introduction of Ozzie Dots.

The *Mangold Basic Braille Program* is a valuable resource, introducing tactile tracking, scanning, same and different, and the identification and naming of tactile shapes, letters, numbers etc.

The SVRC's *Alphabet Books* are written using words without contractions and are therefore provided in letter-for-letter braille. Parents/carers may enjoy the shared reading experience with their child who is blind. Later, as their braille reading skills progress, the child may also enjoy reading these books.

### **The older learner**

You may be teaching a student to read braille in upper primary or secondary school. Perhaps there has been a deterioration in the student's vision or perhaps braille is seen as a valuable addition to the student's "toolkit" of skills.

The older braille learner may already be literate in the print medium and may readily apply their skills to reading tactually. For other students, maintaining motivation may be a challenge. Teach with immediate and ongoing success in mind. Consider setting challenges, building in rewards or applying other teaching strategies to inspire enthusiasm and commitment.

It is important to begin with many of the pre-braille skills that are introduced to the younger reader, and which will support early success in braille reading, such as:

- tracking along lines of braille, in a left to right direction, using both hands and many fingers
- identifying "like" and "unlike" braille symbols
- identifying and naming the letters of the alphabet and the numbers 0 to 9
- decoding simple words ...

SVRC's *Letters and Words* is a resource that can be used to introduce braille letters and their wordsigns. Tricia d'Apice's *I do like it* is another valuable resource.

Introduce Ozzie Dots books written with the older reader in mind.

Regardless of age, the aim is to move through the Ozzie Dots books as quickly as the student is able.

### Pre-requisite skills

Ozzie Dots assumes that the student has a knowledge of the following braille symbols, which are used from the very first book:

- letters of the alphabet
- capital sign
- full stop
- numbers (page numbers)

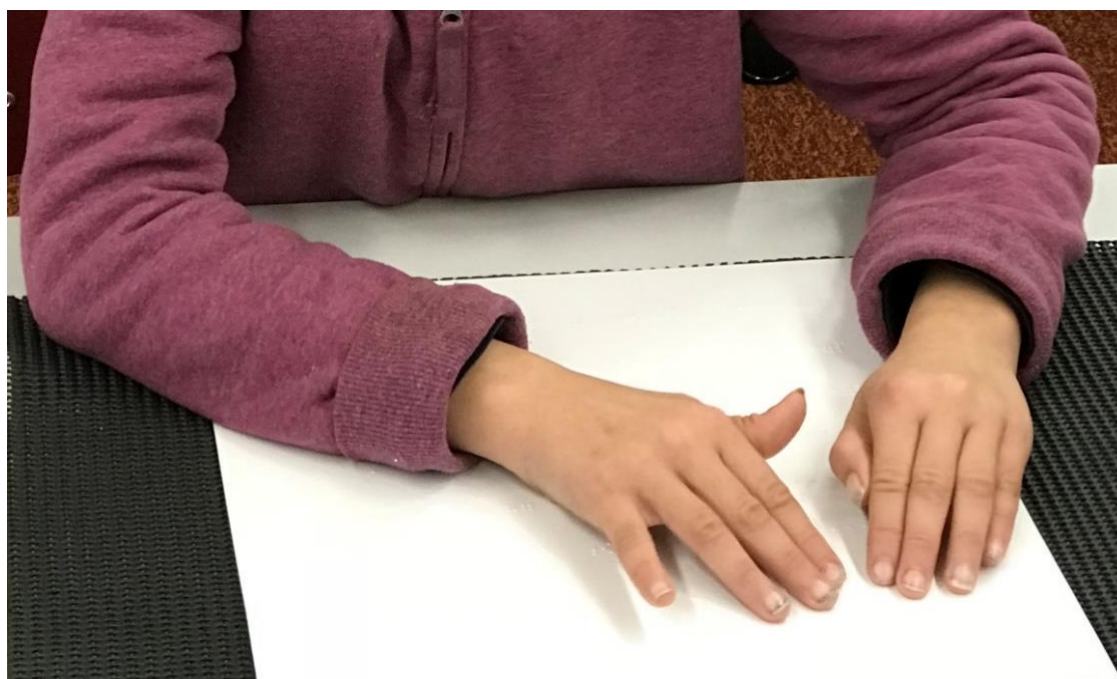
### Read and select books

It is recommended that the braille teacher read through the text of each book at each level to familiarise themselves with the options available – the print copy of each book is provided for this purpose.

The braille teacher should select the book or books at each level that are most suitable for their student in terms of content, structure and length.

Not all of the books will appeal to every child. Some stories contain schoolyard humour and other topics that may not be appropriate for individual students or their families (e.g. Christmas, football).

The braille teacher should ensure that they are familiar with the illustrations and the opportunities to introduce and teach tactual graphicacy or concept development prior to working with the student. Preparation of additional teaching and learning materials can occur at this stage.



## The “braille focus”

Before offering a book to a student, lead a discussion about the contraction(s) being introduced:

- What is the “braille focus”?
- What is the meaning of the “braille focus”?
- How is the “braille focus” written?
- How is the “braille focus” spelled?
- Think of sentences that use the “braille focus”
- And so on ...

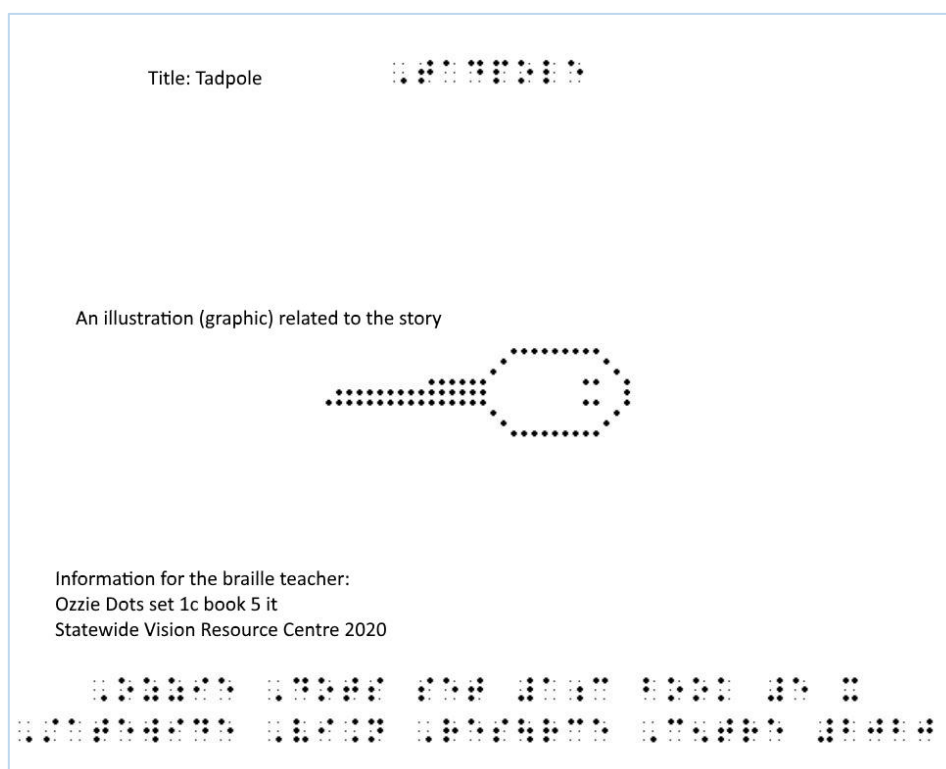
The braille teacher and student might prefer not to use the expression “braille focus” – they might prefer to think up their own way to describe contracted braille – e.g. “quick braille”, “smartie braille”, “braille shortcuts” ...

Be creative, have fun and involve the student in thinking up their special way to describe contractions!

## Exploring the front cover

The front cover of each book has a consistent layout which includes:

- book title at the top of the page
- illustration in the middle of the page
- information for teachers at the bottom of the page



Ensure that the braille book is positioned in front of the student and that it will not slip on the desk or table – a non-slip mat may assist. Encourage the student to explore the entire front cover in a systematic and methodical manner to gain an overview of the page.

Avoid taking the child's hand and physically guiding it around the page as this can interfere with the child's perception of the information available. For best effect, tactual exploration must be undertaken by the student independently.

To guide the student to a particular location or element on the page:

- use verbal prompts such as up/down, left/right, top/bottom
- place your finger at a location on the page and ask the student to find your finger
- gently guide the student by their elbow

Each student will develop their own approach to this initial scan of the page – some will require prompting to be systematic in their search for information and some will do this intuitively. Whatever the method that the student develops, encourage a tactual scan of each page prior to reading.

If the beginning braille reader needs assistance to develop a scanning strategy, encourage the initial exploration to be with both hands spread flat on the page and fingers outspread. Begin at the bottom of the page and explore in an upwards and outwards direction. Check for page numbers in the top corners. Bring the index fingers together at the top of the page and then continue to explore the centre of the page in a downwards direction.

This will give the student information about the layout and content of the page:

- Does the page contain text and if so, how much?
- Is there a page number?
- Is there a centred heading?
- Does the page contain an illustration?

### **Front cover: Title**

Assist the student to read the title and lead a discussion about the story:

- Does the title contain the “braille focus”?
- What does the title suggest about the story?
- Encourage the student to use context and prediction – prompt the student with leading questions and use these prompts to introduce the words that the student might encounter when reading the story.



### Front cover: Illustration

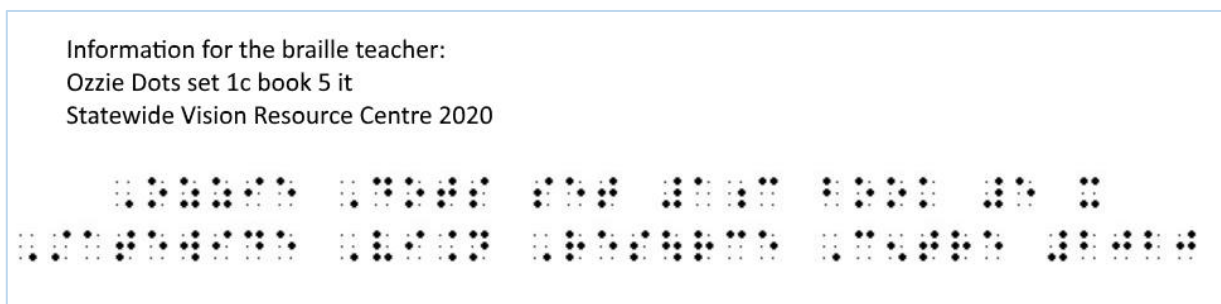
When introducing a tactual illustration to a student, do not assume that the braille reader will be able to make any sense of the lines, curves and textures without assistance. Interpreting a tactual graphic should not be a guessing game. The child will enjoy greater success and sense of mastery if they are cued into the graphic prior to encountering it.

Orient the student to the illustration by offering verbal cues, for example, “Is Ozzie the fish in his fish bowl?” Then the student can more easily locate the bowl and Ozzie, and then begin to search for more information contained within the graphic, for example, whether Ozzie is happy or sad, and what else can be found in the fish bowl etc.

### Front cover: Information for teachers

There is publishing information at the bottom of the front cover of each of the Ozzie Dots books – explain this to the student and encourage them to “gloss over” this information which is intended for the braille teacher and not the student, as a sighted student does with publishing details and other information found in smaller print at the front and/or back of the book.

Note: the current edition of the Ozzie Dots books are labelled "2020" (bottom right). Previous editions are undated.



## Pages of the book

Early success may be achieved for some students if the braille teacher reads the story to the student while the student follows along with their fingers, or just listens. Other students may relish the challenge of reading the story themselves.

Personalise the approach for the individual student. Encourage as much fun and delight in reading as possible. Early success and the development of a love of reading are very important at this stage.

Turn to page 1 of the story and again, encourage the student to explore the page with both hands flat and fingers spread, then:

- discuss what the student finds
- go to the top right of the page and locate and read the page number
- look at the illustration
- read the text

Continue reading the book and once complete, use your imagination to encourage further exploration of the text and illustrations, then make the most of opportunities for concept development, for example:

- encourage retelling of the story
- see if the student can locate a particular page, sentence or illustration by flicking through the book
- on each page, count the occurrences of the “braille focus”
- locate the “braille focus” at the beginning, in the middle and the end of sentences and discuss its relationship with punctuation and capitalisation
- collect items (real, if possible) relevant to the story and use these to “act out” the story or to review the illustrations
- explore 3D-printed objects as a transition between the real object and the 2D representation
- look at the pictures of the characters in the story and discuss their similarities and differences
- discuss differences in body language and facial expressions and how this can be interpreted and understood
- have the student imitate the characters’ faces and body language and discuss how this might feel for the character
- discuss how sighted people are able to obtain information via facial expressions and body language – eye contact and open body language with the head up are important skills to develop
- discuss particular illustrations that the student may have seen in other contexts, such as a graph or tally in Maths
- if there is no picture, discuss why this might be true

- if a dog or cat is shown with less than four legs, encourage discussion
- discuss size and perspective
- expand on the concepts introduced
- think up a new ending
- pace out a distance
- make a plan or model
- illustrate the story using a drawing kit or collage
- and more



### Re-reading

Children learn to read by reading, so encourage as many opportunities for re-reading as possible – and ensure that the experience is enjoyable. Have the student:

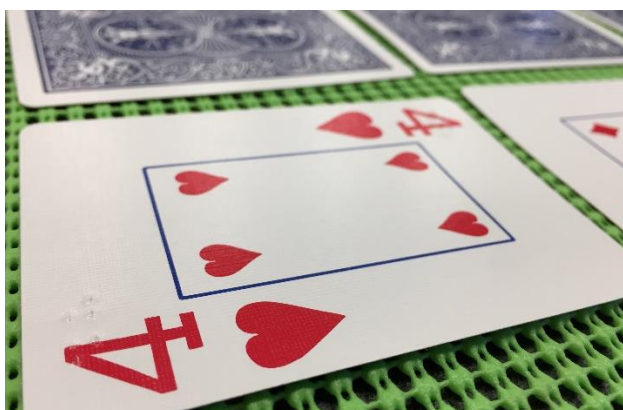
- read along while you read with expression
- read along while you read quickly (encouraging the student to follow quickly and with a light touch)
- read in their best voice or a funny voice
- read to the class teacher or principal
- read to the class
- read to a family member
- take the book to bed to further explore the text and pictures
- add the book to their personal library to read again at a later date

## Games

Make up games featuring a particular “braille focus” and build on these games with each new “braille focus” e.g. “Memory”, “Go Fish”, “The Fishing Game”

### How to play “Memory”

- Mix up the cards and lay them in rows face down on a non-slip surface. Start with as few as 6 cards in a 2 x 3 grid.
- The first player turns over any two cards (one at a time) and announces the braille contractions. If the cards are a pair, the player keeps them and turns over another two cards.
- If the cards don’t match, the student has the opportunity to touch the cards to identify their location before the cards are turned back over.
- The next player takes a turn.
- Players try to remember the position of each card so they can find and accumulate pairs.
- At the end of the game, the player with the most pairs wins.



### How to play “Go Fish”

- Each player gets the same number of cards – begin with 5 each – and the remaining cards make a pile face down in the middle.
- The first player asks any other player for a card that matches one in their hand.
- If the other player has that card they must give it to the first player who puts the pair aside and asks again.
- If not, they say, “Go fish!” to the first player who must pick up a card from the pile in the middle. Now it is the next player’s turn.
- Continue in a clockwise direction until all cards from the middle pile have been used.
- At the end of the game, the player with the most pairs wins.

## How to play the “Fishing Game”

Endlessly entertaining, you can make this game up to practice new contractions (or anything else, really) ...

### You will need:

- A stick about the length of a ruler
- A piece of string (attached to the stick)
- A magnet (attached to the string)
- Little fish-shaped pieces of card, each of which has one braille contraction that you'd like the student to practise
- Several paper clips (one attached to each little fishy card)

### What to do:

- Place the little fish in a bowl
- Take turns to pick up one little fish with your magnetic fishing-rod
- If you can read the contraction, you can keep the fish (if not, throw it back)
- The winner has the most fish at the end of the game.

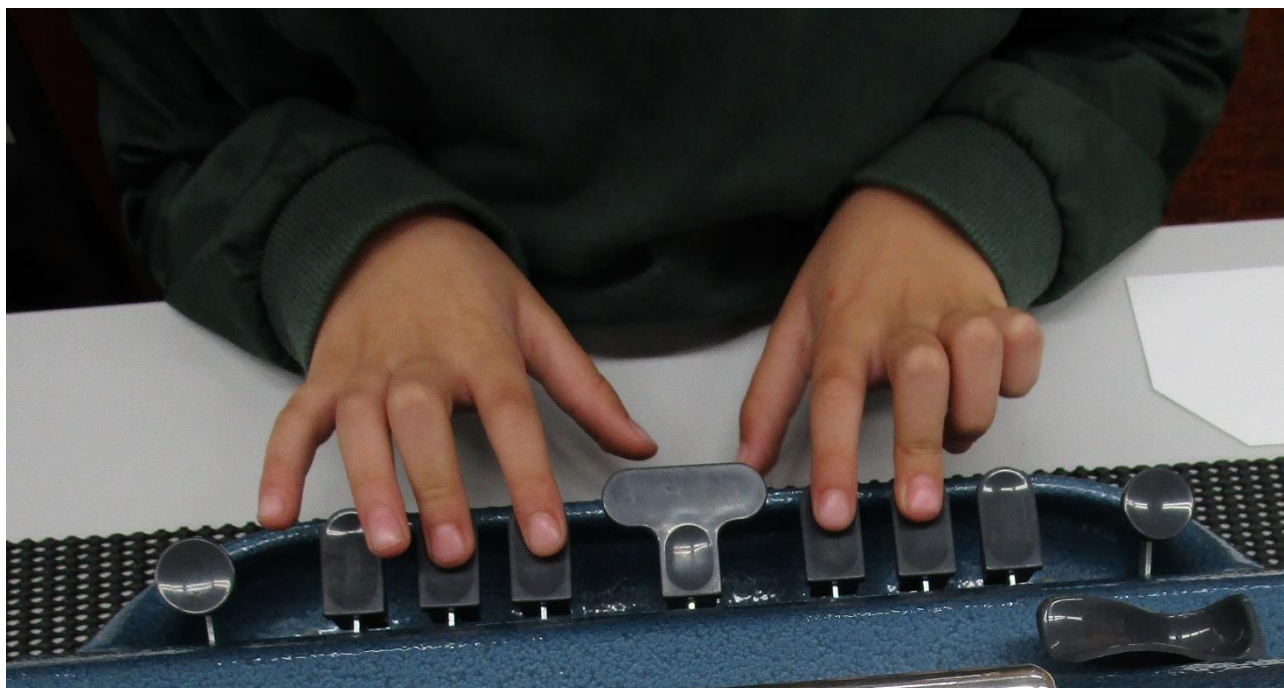


## Writing

Students often find that it is much easier to write braille than to read braille, however, writing in braille can reinforce the reading process providing students read what they have written immediately after it has been brailled.

Reinforce reading of new contractions by also having the student use their braille writer to write the word:

- draw the student's attention to the correct fingers used to make the new contraction
- ask the student to copy a sentence from the Ozzie Dots book ... to change a few words ... and have a laugh
- write the word or words in contracted and uncontracted form to highlight the spelling of the contraction
- write sentences or stories containing the new contraction
- have the student draw a picture relating to the story, either with their Perkins or using a drawing kit
- make up a Cloze worksheet using the new contraction – always encourage the student to immediately read what they have brailled





## More Ideas to Get You Started

Learning to read should be fun! For a child with sight, learning to read begins on the lap of a parent or carer, listening to stories. The sighted child will follow the pictures and notice the print and begin to understand that there is “meaning” attached to the printed word. A parallel process can be provided for a child who is blind.

Encourage children to recognise their own name and then discriminate it from other words or other children’s names.

Use braille labels. Curiosity about braille can be encouraged by labelling many things around the home or classroom with braille. Idle fingers can try reading braille stuck to the desk or folders.

Some items can be made at home or school (e.g. tactual games or flashcards) and some can be purchased (e.g. braille Uno cards).

Books can be brought to life with a collection of tactual items relating to the story. These items can be kept together in a box or in a Book Bag.



### How to Make a Book Bag

Add to a drawstring bag (or sturdy box) the following possibilities:

- actual items featured in the book e.g. hairbrush
- toys representing items from the story e.g. fluffy toy mouse
- part of an item as a representation e.g. a small branch for a tree
- something with a similar quality to something in the story e.g. sheep skin representing a lamb

Always use real objects if you can!



### Feelix Library: Braille and tactual storybook kits

Kits from Vision Australia’s Feelix Library are available in Australia to enhance the early reading experience for children who are blind and their families. The child is then able to begin to engage and interact with the stories, discover braille and begin to understand that there is “meaning” attached to the braille word.



Feelix Library resources are available to students from birth to the age of 7 years. Each kit contains the original picture storybook annotated with braille, an audio version of the story, some tactual aids to help the child enter the world of the story and a little book of tactile graphics so that children can retell the story to themselves or others. For further information, visit:

<https://www.visionaustralia.org/services/library/feelix-childrens-library>

### Purchasing tactile games and learning materials

- Braille Bookstore / Future Aids (USA): <http://www.braillebookstore.com/>
- Exceptional Teaching Aids (USA): <https://exceptionalteaching.com/>
- Vision Australia Shop (Australia): <https://shop.visionaustralia.org/>



## Mem Fox's Reading Tips for Parents/Carers

The following list, adapted from *Mem Fox's Ten Read Aloud Commandments*, applies equally well to children who are sighted as children who are blind:

- Spend at least ten wildly happy minutes every single day reading aloud.
- Read at least three stories each day: it may be the same story three times. Children need to hear at least a thousand stories before they can begin to learn to read.
- Read aloud with animation. Listen to your own voice and don't be dull, or flat, or boring. Hang loose and be loud, have fun and laugh a lot.
- Read with joy and enjoyment: real enjoyment for yourself and great joy for the listeners.
- Read the stories that children love, over and over and over, and always read in the same "tune" for each book: i.e. with the same intonations on each page, each time.
- Let children hear lots of language by talking to them constantly about the pictures, or anything else connected to the book; or sing any old song that you can remember; or say nursery rhymes in a bouncy way; or be noisy together doing clapping games.
- Look for rhyme, rhythm or repetition in books for young children, and make sure the books are not too long.
- Play games with the things that you and the child can find on the page, such as letting the child finish rhymes, and finding the letters that start the child's name and yours, remembering that it's never work, it's always a fabulous game.

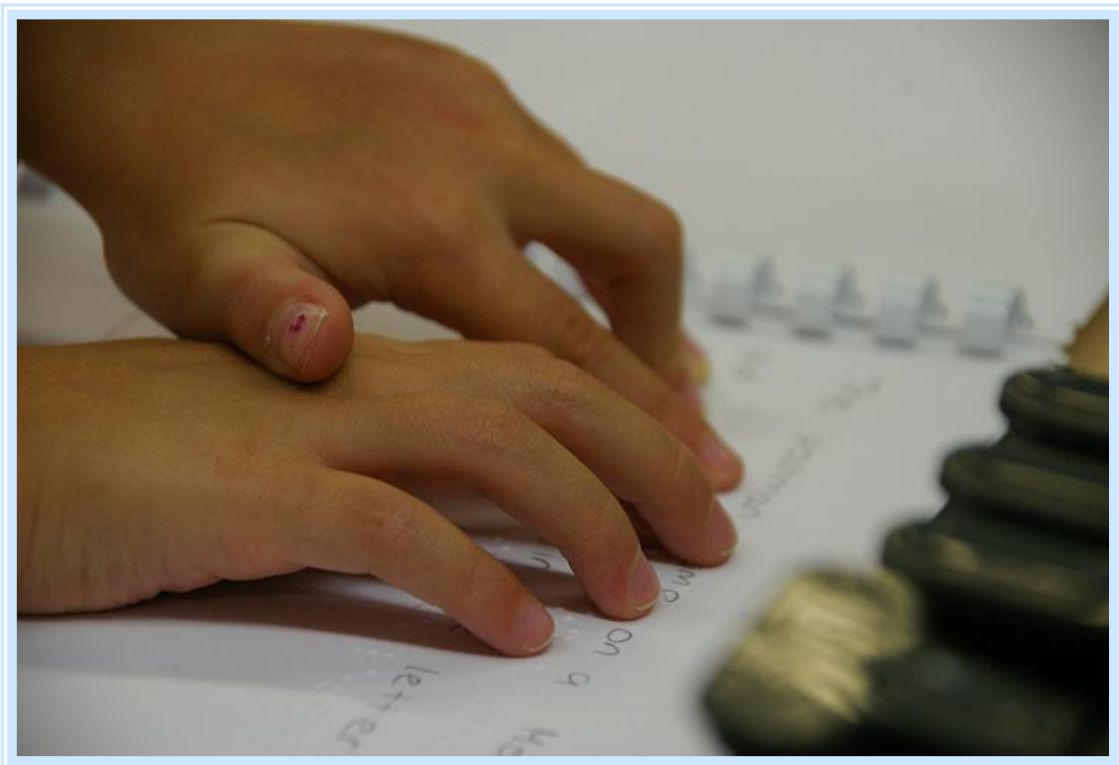
Adapted from: *Mem Fox's Ten Read Aloud Commandments*

<https://memfox.com/for-parents/for-parents-ten-read-aloud-commandments/>



# 5

## Checklists



## Ozzie Dots Contractions Checklists

**Please note:** This following checklist may be used as the basis for an assessment tool. It is not inclusive of all braille signs and symbols and does not summarise all the rules related to the use of the contractions.

For all relevant rules regarding use of contractions, please refer to the braille authority of your country or region.

### Letters and their Wordsigns

Letter		Date	Wordsign		Date
a	⠁				
b	⠃		but	⠃	
c	⠉		can	⠉	
d	⠙		do	⠙	
e	⠑		every	⠑	
f	⠋		from	⠋	
g	⠎		go	⠎	
h	⠓		have	⠓	
i	⠇				
j	⠛		just	⠛	
k	⠅		knowledge	⠅	
l	⠇		like	⠇	
m	⠍		more	⠍	
n	⠝		not	⠝	
o	⠕				
p	⠏		people	⠏	
q	⠑		quite	⠑	
r	⠗		rather	⠗	
s	⠎		so	⠎	
t	⠞		that	⠞	
u	⠥		us	⠥	
v	⠧		very	⠧	
w	⠧		will	⠧	
x	⠭		it	⠭	
y	⠽		you	⠽	
z	⠵		as	⠵	

## Special Signs, Groupsigns and Wordsigns

Special Signs standing alone		Date	Groupsigns within a word		Date
and	⠠		and	⠠	
for	⠠		for	⠠	
of	⠠		of	⠠	
the	⠠		the	⠠	
with	⠠		with	⠠	
<b>Upper Groupsigns</b>			<b>Wordsigns</b>		
ar	⠠				
ch	⠠		child	⠠	
ed	⠠				
er	⠠				
gh	⠠				
ing	⠠				
ou	⠠		out	⠠	
ow	⠠				
sh	⠠		shall	⠠	
st	⠠		still	⠠	
th	⠠		this	⠠	
wh	⠠		which	⠠	
<b>Lower Groupsigns at the beginning of a word or line</b>			<b>Lower Groupsigns in the middle of a word</b>		
be	⠠		bb	⠠	
con	⠠		cc	⠠	
dis	⠠				
			ea	⠠	
			ff	⠠	
			gg	⠠	
<b>Lower Groupsigns in any part of a word</b>			<b>Lower Wordsigns that must be spaced from all other braille</b>		
			be	⠠	
en	⠠		enough	⠠	
			his	⠠	
in	⠠		in	⠠	
			was	⠠	
			were	⠠	

## Composite Signs

Dot 5 Words		Date	Dot 45 Words		Date
character	dot 5 CH		upon	dots 45 u	
day	dot 5 d		word	dots 45 w	
ever	dot 5 e		these	dots 45 THE	
father	dot 5 f		those	dots 45 TH	
here	dot 5 h		whose	dots 45 WH	
know	dot 5 k		<b>Dot 46 Words</b>		
mother	dot 5 m		ance	dots 46 e	
name	dot 5 n		less	dots 46 s	
one	dot 5 o		ound	dots 46 d	
ought	dot 5 OU		ount	dots 46 t	
part	dot 5 p		sion	dots 46 n	
question	dot 5 q		<b>Dots 56 Words</b>		
some	dot 5 s		ence	dots 56 e	
under	dot 5 u		ful	dots 56 l	
time	dot 5 t		ity	dots 56 y	
through	dot 5 TH		ment	dots 56 t	
right	dot 5 r		ness	dots 56 s	
there	dot 5 THE		ong	dots 56 g	
where	dot 5 WH		tion	dots 56 n	
work	dot 5 w		<b>Dots 456 Words</b>		
young	dot 5 y		cannot	dots 456 c	
			had	dots 456 h	
			many	dots 456 m	
			world	dots 456 w	
			their	dots 456 THE	

## Shortforms

Shortform		Date	Shortform		Date
about	ab		great	grt	
above	abv		herself	hERf	
according	ac		him	hm	
across	acr		himself	hmf	
after	af		immediate	imm	
afternoon	afn		its	Xs	
afterwards	afws		itself	Xf	
again	ag		letter	lr	
against	agST		little	ll	
almost	alm		much	mCH	
already	alr		must	mST	
also	al		myself	myf	
although	alTH		necessary	nec	
altogether	alt		neither	nei	
always	alw		oneself	ONEf	
because	BEc		ourselves	OURvs	
before	BEf		paid	pd	
behind	BEh		perhaps	pERh	
below	BEl		quick	qk	
beneath	BEn		receive	rcv	
beside	BEs		receiving	rcvg	
between	BEt		said	sd	
beyond	BEy		should	SHd	
blind	bl		such	sCH	
braille	brl		themselves	THEmvs	
children	CHn		today	td	
could	cd		together	tgr	
declare	dcl		tomorrow	tm	
declaring	dclg		tonight	tn	
either	ei		would	wd	
first	fST		your	yr	
friend	fr		yourself	yrf	
good	gd		yourselves	yrvs	

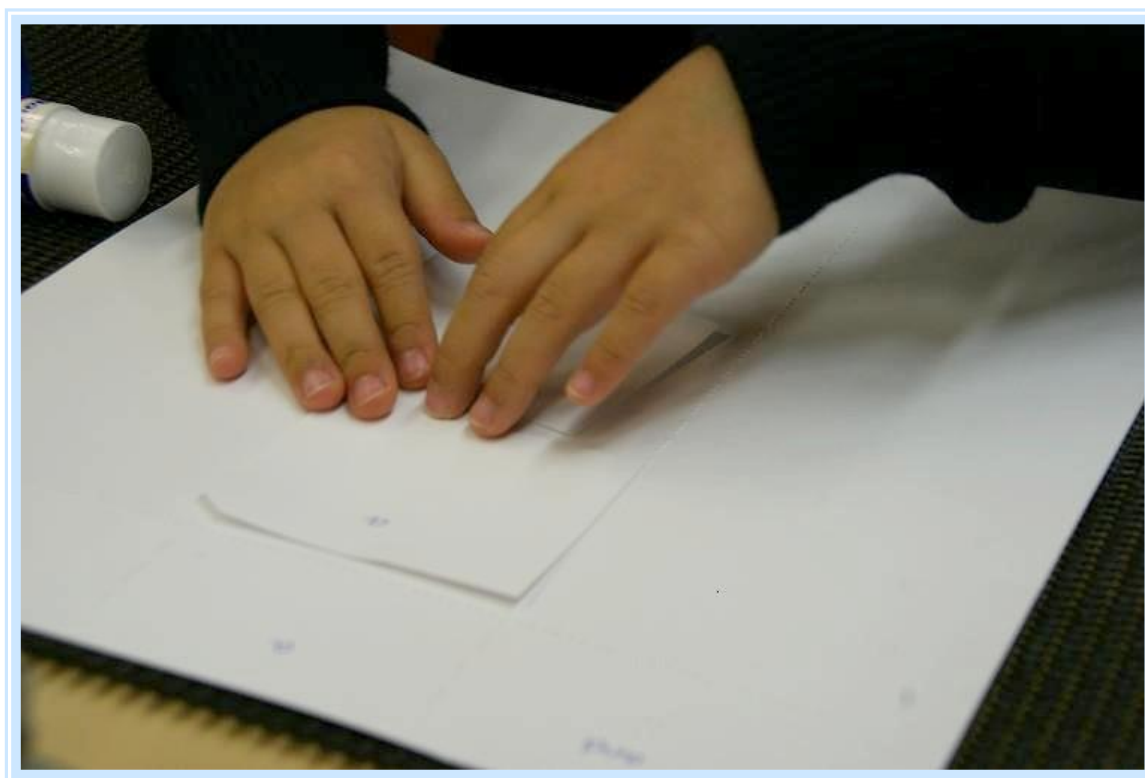


## Punctuation and Other Signs

Punctuation / Sign		Date	Punctuation / Sign		Date
at @	⠠⠠		exclamation	⠠	
addition	⠠⠠		full stop	⠠	
apostrophe	⠠		hyphen	⠠	
bold word	⠠⠠		italics word	⠠⠠	
bold passage	⠠⠠ ... ⠠⠠		Ital. passage	⠠⠠ ... ⠠⠠	
bullet	⠠⠠		g1 indicator	⠠	
capital letter	⠠		multiplication	⠠⠠	
capital word	⠠⠠		num indicator	⠠	
colon	⠠		percent	⠠⠠	
comma	⠠		question	⠠	
decimal	⠠		quotes	⠠ ... ⠠	
division	⠠⠠		semi colon	⠠	
dollar	⠠⠠		subtraction	⠠⠠	
equals	⠠⠠				

# 6

## Information for Transcribers




## Information for Transcribers

As part of the Ozzie Dots program you will find the braille files, the print copies of the braille books and other print resources to support the braille teacher.

Students do not need to read every book. Encourage the braille teacher to select 2-3 books at each level – or more as required – that will particularly appeal to the student.

1. Ensure that the braille teacher receives a print copy of the “Ozzie Dots: Teacher Resource”.
2. Emboss and bind or staple the selected braille books – the front page is designed to be the front cover. A card or plastic back cover can be added.
3. Ensure that a print a copy of the book is included with the braille book.
4. If overwriting the braille, the print should appear above the braille as in the example below:

*A      b i g      i d e a .*  


## Trouble Shooting for Transcribers

The Duxbury files provide flexibility for transcribers and braille teachers. The print and braille files are fully editable. The braille files include minimal formatting so, when embossing, there should be no unexpected surprises. The illustrations will remain embedded in the file through the translate-to-print and translate-to-braille process.

If you have the Duxbury Braille Translation program and a braille embosser with graphics capability, but are having difficulties with embossing the books, please contact your local supplier. In Australia, please contact Nigel Herring of Pentronics: [service@pentronics.com.au](mailto:service@pentronics.com.au)

For information about the Duxbury Braille Translation program, visit: <https://www.duxburysystems.com/>

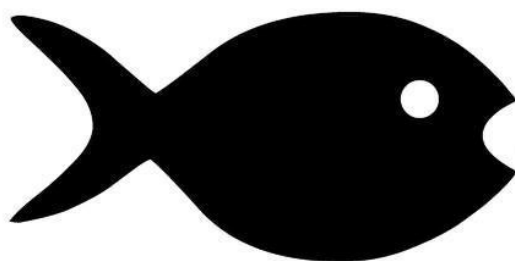
## Feedback Please!

Ozzie Dots is working hard in each Australian state and several Pacific nations including New Zealand, Samoa and Kiribati. Further afield, Ozzie Dots is in use in the U.S.A, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Braille teachers have very kindly provided valuable feedback which is used in the further development of Ozzie Dots.

We'd like to stay in touch with users for continued feedback and so we can let you know when more Ozzie Dots teaching and learning materials are available.

Please send comments, quotes from children or ideas for new stories via the SVRC website: <https://svrc.vic.edu.au/> or email [svrc@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:svrc@education.vic.gov.au)



## Purchasing Ozzie Dots

A small selection of books is available, free of charge, from the Statewide Vision Resource Centre's website: <https://svrc.vic.edu.au/>. Each book is available as a .DXB file with embedded illustrations. The text of each book is also available as a MS Word file.

To emboss the books, you will need Duxbury Braille Translation software and a braille embosser with graphics capability.

The cost of Ozzie Dots for organisations within Australia is AU\$720 + GST = AU\$792

The cost of Ozzie Dots for organisations outside Australia = \$720

Please contact us to request an invoice.

## Selected References and Additional Reading

### Braille literacy

- Emerson, R.W., Holbrook, M.C., & D'Andrea, F.M. (2009). Acquisition of literacy skills by young children who are blind: Results from the ABC Braille Study. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness*, 103(10), pp 610-624.
- D'Apice, P. (2022). *I Do Like It*. Next Sense. Retrieved October 22, 2022, from <https://dapdots.ridbc.org.au/resources/i-do-like-it/>
- Education Queensland. (2021). *Queensland Braille Learning Progression and Assessment Tool*. Retrieved October 22, 2022, from <https://education.qld.gov.au/student/Documents/qld-braille-learning-progression-assessment-tool.pdf>
- Mangold, S. (n.d.). *Mangold Basic Braille Program*. Retrieved October 22, 2022 from <https://exceptionalteaching.com/braille/curriculum/mangold-basic-braille-program/>
- Perkins School for the Blind. (2022). *Paths to Literacy*. Retrieved October 22, 2022, from <https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/>

### Tactual graphicacy

- Bishop, T., (2020). *Tactile graphics to support emergent literacy the BLENNZ way*. Retrieved October 22, 2022, from <https://www.spevi.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Bishop-Tactile-Graphics-to-support-emergent-literacy-the-BLENNZ-way.pdf>
- Curtin, L., Holloway, L., and Lewis, D., (2019). Documenting Tactile Graphicacy. Retrieved October 22, 2022, from <http://printdisability.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Documenting-Tactile-Graphicacy-N12.docx>

### Unified English Braille (UEB) code

- Howse, J., Riessen, K., and Holloway, L. (Eds.) (2016). *Unified English Braille: Australian Training Manual*. Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities Inc. Retrieved October 22, 2022, from <http://brailleaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/UEB-Australian-Training-Manual-Revised-September-2016.pdf>.
- ICEB, (2014). *Unified English Braille: Guidelines for Technical Material, 2008 Version Updated 2014*. International Council on English Braille. Retrieved October 22, 2022, from [https://iceb.org/guidelines\\_for\\_technical\\_material\\_2014.pdf](https://iceb.org/guidelines_for_technical_material_2014.pdf)
- Simpson, C. (2013). *The Rules of Unified English Braille*. Second edition. International Council on English Braille. Retrieved October 22, 2022, from <http://iceb.org/Rules%20of%20Unified%20English%20Braille%202013.pdf>

### Teach Yourself Braille (UEB)

*UEB Online* offers free accessible online training programs in braille literacy and mathematics using the Unified English Braille (UEB) code. Visit: <https://uebonline.org/>

