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Check updated [The Bulletin archive](#) for back issues!

Dates for Your Diary – 2017

Here's what's coming up:

- **Support Skills Try Day:** 17 November
- **SVRC Annual Writing Competition Closing Date:** 7 November
- **SVRC Technology Expo:** 28 November – Check out the navigation beacons at SVRC – see below
- **SVRC Christmas Morning Tea:** 6 December

See the SVRC website for more information and online registration.

Dates for Your Diary – 2018

Here is a list of our planned PD for next year.

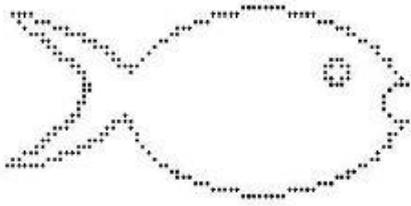
- **Educational Support for Students who are Blind:** 13 February 2018
- **New (and newish) VT Day:** 19 February 2018
- **Educational Support for Students who have Low Vision:** 27 February OR 6 March OR 14 August 2018
- **PE PD Day:** 14 March 2018
- **Educational Support for Students with Vision Impairments and Additional Impairments:** 22 March 2018
- **Braille Music (half day)** 24 April 2018
- **Art4Kids with VI:** 2 May 2018 (date to be confirmed)
- **VT Master Class:** 5 June 2018
- **Technology Expo:** 27 November 2018

Programs and registration will be available on the SVRC website soon!

Alternative Format for 2018

Thanks to everyone who has contacted us regarding students' book lists. We already have over 300 requests for materials in alternative format for 2018 – and it's only October!

Ozzie Dots – Next Steps



SVRC's "Ozzie Dots" was launched in 2013 and includes 255 illustrated books that support the teaching and learning of contracted braille.

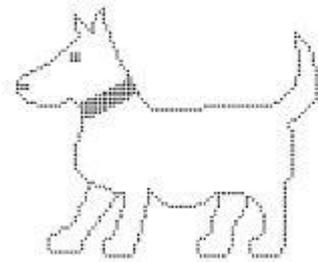
Ozzie Dots is now in use in all Australian states and territories, New Zealand, Tonga, Canada and the USA

Staff from SVRC met recently with a number of VTs who have used Ozzie Dots during the past 18 months to gather

feedback and determine the next steps in the development of this unique approach to teaching contracted braille to blind students.

SVRC receive a great deal of positive support for Ozzie Dots with VTs using a variety of approaches including:

- following the Ozzie Dots program to introduce contracted braille and tactual graphicacy with beginning readers
- reading Ozzie Dots as a reading warm-up activity
- using Ozzie Dots as repeated reading for fluency and speed
- using Ozzie Dots to support class literacy, for example, introduction of "wh", "ing", "st" etc



Following discussions, the Ozzie Dots development team will focus on more learning materials at the very early stages, for example:

- tracking and scanning
- letter recognition
- worksheets and activity sheets
- games
- riddles
- procedures such as how to save a document on a BrailleNote to USB for the teacher
- and more stories featuring Slob the dog!



Also, did you know:

- there is "Teaching Contracted Braille and Tactual Graphicacy" which explains the aims of Ozzie Dots, how the books can be used, and how to support beginning braille readers? We hope to send a copy for all VTs in the next week or so!
- there are audio files read in human voice of all 255 braille books in the Ozzie Dots collection? Bring in your USB flash drive and we can make you a copy!

If you'd like more information about Ozzie Dots, please see the SVRC website or make a time and come in and chat to us!

Developing Skills with a Monocular

From Marion Blazé

Source: <http://www.perkinselearning.org/videos/webcast/getting-know-and-training-use-monocular-telescope>

Visit the link above for a set of six Youtube videos on how to use a monocular. They are mainly O & M related, but number 4 gives quite good tips on how to use a monocular in the classroom. It covers these monocular skills:



Spotting: Visually targeting an object to see through the lens then lining up the device lens with your eye to see detail. This may be spotting a pedestrian signal for safe crossing or spotting a score and time remaining on a scoreboard.

Focusing: Setting and fine tuning focus for identifying details on a distant target such reading letters on a street sign or reading words on a Powerpoint slide.

Scanning: Making repeated fixations with your eye so that you see one item after another such as scanning store signs in a business area to find your destination or scanning musicians on a stage to find the violinist.

Tracing: Visually following a line in space to locate an object such as vertical tracing up a sign pole to find the street sign or horizontal tracing to follow the silver border or a whiteboard to find the homework assignment at the top right.

Tracking: Visually following a moving object such as an approaching bus to find the route number or a basketball player in the gym.

More fun activities to develop skills with a monocular

Source: <https://www.teachingvisuallyimpaired.com/low-vision-device-activities.html>

Picture match: Create a set of cards with unit (or interest) related pictures using clip art or stickers. Pair the pictures with word labels. Place the cards throughout the room, hallway or other designated area at different planes (up high, on the floor, or on a surface). Start large and get smaller as your student's skills improve. Encourage the student to use the monocular to scan and locate and identify the pictures. If using words, have the student read the words. Provide landmark clues or stand near the picture if the student has a difficult time locating the picture.

Systematically scan: Create a set of cards with unit related pictures using clip art or stickers. Pair the pictures with word labels. Place the cards throughout the room, hallway or other designated area at different planes (up high, on the floor, or on a surface). Encourage the student to use the monocular to scan and locate and identify the pictures. If using words, have the student read the words. Provide landmark clues or stand near the picture if the student has a difficult time locating the picture.

Copy the picture: Prepare a drawing of a unit related picture. Place the drawing far enough away so the student needs to use the monocular in order to view it. Provide the student with paper, pencils, and crayons or markers and encourage them to copy the drawing.

Copy the poem: Obtain a unit related poem and write the poem on a chart. Place the chart far enough away so the student needs to use the monocular to see it. Provide the student with paper and pencil or pen to copy the poem.

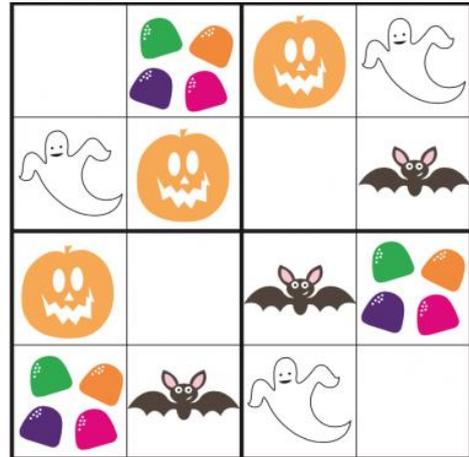
Riddle Focus: Write riddles on cards and answers on separate cards. Place the cards at different distances so the student will have to adjust their monocular in order to read the answers.

Halloween Suduko Puzzle: Grids and Tables

Source: <http://www.perkinselearning.org/technology/blog/halloween-suduko-puzzle-grids-and-tables> by Diane Brauner, 11 October 2017

Sudoku is a fun puzzle that lets kids use their logical reasoning and critical thinking skills. Sudoku puzzles are traditionally numbers; however, any pictures or words can be turned into Sudoku puzzles! Here is a fun print Halloween Sudoku, kids cut and glue pictures into the puzzle. A pumpkin, ghost, candy, and bat must appear once and only once in each row, column, and block.

This Halloween Sudoku puzzle has been modified to be accessible on the iPad for students who are blind. Sudoku is basically a grid – a table without headers. Sudoku puzzles are a wonderful way to teach students who use screen readers how to navigate grids and tables using a screen reader.

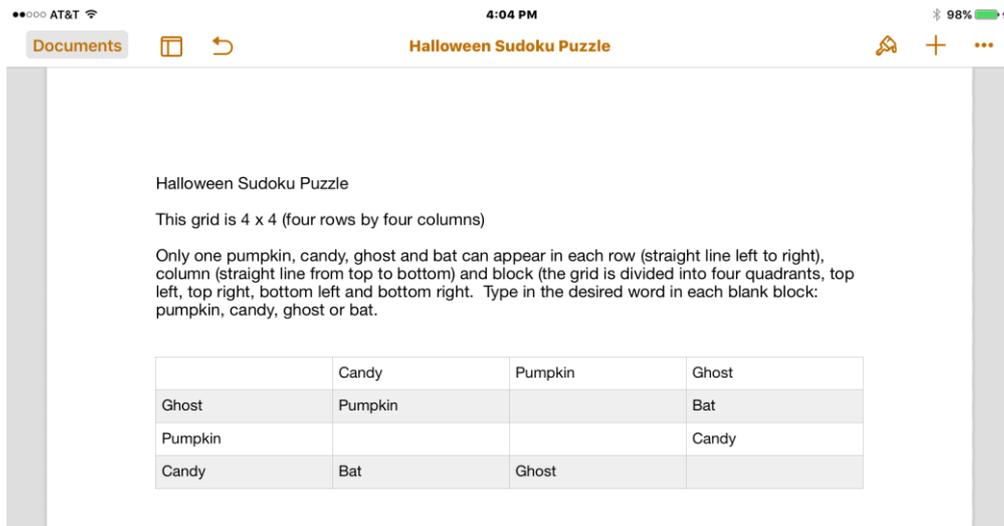


Navigating a Grid/Table with VoiceOver

Here are the directions for navigating and completing the Halloween Sudoku Puzzle in the Pages app on the iPad with VoiceOver:

- Move the VoiceOver focus to the first cell in the table (row 1, column 1). VoiceOver will read, “Table 1, four rows, four columns, column A, row 1, empty cell, double tap to select.”
- Set the rotor to Rows; two finger twist, stopping on the Row option.
- Now, you can navigate through the table by cells, using right, left, up or down swipes.
- Navigate across the table, staying in Row 1; right swipes to navigate to the right.
 - VoiceOver has already announced, “Column A, empty cell” so the next cell announcement will be “Column B, Candy” then, “Column C, Pumpkin” and the last announcement for Row 1 is, “Column D, Ghost”.
- Now the student knows that Row 1 has an empty cell then Candy, Pumpkin and Ghost; “bat” is the only word left.
- Navigate to the empty cell (row 1, column A) and type in the word “bat”.
- Check Column A to make sure that each word is only used once. When in the first cell, swipe down. VoiceOver will announce Row 2, Ghost, then Row 3, Pumpkin, then Row 4, Candy.
- Move to Column B then swipe down to complete the puzzle in Column B or move to Row 2 and swipe right to complete the puzzle in Row 2.

Teacher Hint: Make sure that the student LISTENS to the VoiceOver hint about row numbers and column names. This will help your student learn the spatial relationship of the grid. (If the student right swipes without listening to the VoiceOver hints, he/she does not know when VoiceOver has moved to the next row or column – spatially, the student thinks the cells are all in one long line.) For students who do not yet have a good mental model of a table, teach the student to drag his/her finger - in a straight line - across the row or down the column. The student should carefully listen to the VoiceOver hints, as VoiceOver announces either the new row or the new column, depending on which way the student drags his/her finger. This announcement will alert the student if he/she has accidentally dragged down and not in a straight line across the row. For efficient table navigation, the student should use swipes (or arrow keys on a Bluetooth keyboard or braille display).



Create an Accessible Sudoku puzzle

To create an accessible table on the iPad;

- Open the Pages app.
- Create a new Pages document.
- Type in the title of the Sudoku Puzzle.
- If your student is learning about grids/tables, type a sentence that describes the grid. Example: "This grid is 4 x 4 (four rows by four columns)."
- Type the Sudoku directions.
- To make the table, select the "insert button" (plus symbol).
- Select the Table button (first button in the popup).
- Select the Plain Table (third option – the one without Headers). The table now appears in your Pages document.
- Type the desired words in each cell, leaving blank cells.
 - For beginners, leave only one blank cell in each row and column.
 - For more challenging Sudoku puzzles, leave additional cells blank, but be sure that students can still complete the puzzle correctly.
 - Add additional rows or columns (and add additional words).
- The default table is 5 rows x 4 columns. To make the table 4 rows, tap the circle under the table then select the desired number. (When working on the table, to the rows will be numbered on the left side and the columns will be labeled at the top.)

If a student is just learning about grids/tables, create a tactile grid first. Use sticky-backed foam shapes (star, circle, square, triangle) and create a simple Sudoku puzzle. Create the same puzzle on the iPad. Teach the grid/table concepts with the tactile puzzle, then transition to the digital puzzle.

Go to Education.com for the colorful [print version of the Halloween Sudoku puzzle](#).

Unfortunately, the formatting is lost when I tried to upload the accessible Pages document to the Paths to Technology website. You will have to create your own, following the steps listed above. The Pages screenshot above shows the accessible version with the words - pumpkin, ghost, candy and bat - instead of pictures. (Note: The grid lines did not show up in the screenshot above; however, in Pages, the table's grid lines are visible.)

Do you have a student using a computer? Create your own Sudoku tables in Word! Here is a [post about creating accessible Word tables](#).

Want to know more about digital grids and tables? Go to [Digital Transitions post](#).

Beacon Technology Comes to SVRC

As described in a recent article in The Age, beacons are being installed in various Melbourne locations to assist people with vision impairments navigate inside buildings.

The SVRC has had beacons installed and students who attend Support Skills have been working with the O&M Instructors from Guide Dogs Victoria to learn how to use them.

Blindsquare Event is a free GPS app which, when installed on your iPhone or iPad, provides information from the beacons to the user.

According to The Age article, NDIS is funding this pilot program.

The Age article is available online: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/new-technology-a-helping-hand-for-melbournes-vision-impaired-20171014-gz14u2.html>

Download the BlindSquare Event app from the app store:
<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/blindsquare/id500557255?mt=8>



Ballyland Sound Memory

Ballyland Sound Memory is the latest app by Sonokids – and some say it's the best so far!

Ballyland Sound Memory is a fun sound-matching audio game, specifically designed for children who are blind or have low vision. It challenges listening and memory skills, and is engaging and fun for all! Like all popular Ballyland game apps for iPad, Ballyland Sound Memory introduces children with vision impairments to new, important digital skills: a digital game grid (spoken rows and columns), and new navigational gestures.

Take advantage of the special introductory price of 2.99 USD – offer ends 1 January 2018!

[Ballyland Sound Memory is available from the Appstore.](#)

Blind Sporting/Recreation Activity for Teens in 2018

The team at BSRV are excited to create a BRAND NEW program for teens who are blind or have low vision. For this to be the best it can be, BSRV would love you to tell them what YOU'D like to participate in. If you are teenager who loves being active, making new friends and having fun please contact janelle@blindsports.org.au.

Visiting Teacher Position Available

Methodist Ladies College (Kew) is seeking a qualified, experienced teacher of the vision impaired one day per week. **Commencing Term 1, 2018 Working term time only 1-2 days per week (TBA) for 2018.**

Current registration with Victorian Institute of Teaching and knowledge of "Principles and Standards for the Education of Children and Youth with Vision Impairments, including those with Multiple Disabilities" (SPEVI) are essential.

For further information please see the MLC web site at www.mlc.vic.edu.au/about-us/employment or phone (03) 9274 8542.

https://www.seek.com.au/job/34633287?utm_campaign=joraau&utm_medium=cpc&utm_source=joraau

You Can't Ask That!!! - SVRC's Annual Writing Competition

Here at SVRC, we're forever telling people there is no such thing as a "silly" question. If you want to learn, you have to ask! So inspired by the TV show, "You Can't Ask That!", this year we'd like students to write about:

- Funny/strange things you've been asked about your vision impairment
- Unexpected ways people have reacted to your vision impairment
- Ways you've reacted to people's questions/curiosity

Any student supported by SVRC, can submit a written piece in their format of choice (braille, audio, etext, print, etc), with pictures or photos if you like. Submissions will be judged by a panel and prizes awarded within age categories. With permission, some submissions may be published in our Bulletin or on our website. There is no word minimum or maximum, but the judging panel may not take kindly to reading your novel!!

Prizes will be announced and presented at the SVRC Expo on Tuesday, November 28, 2017. Prizes will include some wonderful Bolinda audio books – thanks Bolinda!!

Closing date: 7 November 2017

Please submit your entries, including include your NAME, YEAR LEVEL, SCHOOL, Visiting Teacher name and contact email or telephone number, to:

Marion Blazé – SVRC PO Box 201, Nunawading, 3131 or blaze.marion.g@edumail.vic.gov.au

Dialogue in the Dark – Free admission for teachers

There has been rather slow uptake of the free admission for teachers to Dialogue in the Dark. This offer is currently only until February next year (though this may be extended). Please tell teachers and other VTs about it. They can use the code SVRC820 to book a complimentary ticket at any time that DiD is open (school hours, after school hours, weekends, school holidays, etc). If they wish to have a certificate of evidence of this PD, they can do the online learning package on our website and will be sent a certificate for their VIT Special Needs professional learning records.

BNP Slimline: Does Anyone Have One???

Marion is looking for a Braille n Print Slimline to add to our collection of old braille technology. The Slimline attached to the bottom of the Perkins braille and could be used to produce a print copy of the work being brailled. Common in the 1980s, we haven't see one for about 25 years! And it is such old technology now, I couldn't even find a decent image on the internet! If there is one of these early pieces of technology kicking around an office or school, SVRC will happily take it off your hands!

The Bulletin: Archive

The archive page of The Bulletin has recently been updated – you'll find back issues to 2008. The search engine doesn't locate content in the PDFs but Google can!

Finally

Apologies to those who received issue 15 and 16 of The Bulletin twice. It was due to a technical issue which has now been rectified (thanks Glen!).

Deb Lewis (Ed)



Statewide Vision Resource Centre

presents

Technology Expo 2017

featuring best practise
in access technology options
for students with vision impairments

Promoting inclusion and access in education

Tuesday 28 November 2017

10.00am - 2.00pm

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

370 Springvale Road, Donvale

(in the grounds of Heatherwood School)

Parking: in the lower carpark at the Manningham DISC next door (see map)

Displays and demonstrations: of the latest in access technology for students with vision impairments from Guide Dogs Victoria, Humanware, Quantum RLV and Vision Australia.

Come and try: magnification and screen reading software,
audio books, navigation and optical character recognition devices
braille technology and more.

You can even try out the new navigation **beacons** with the BlindSquare Event app (see above).

The day is open to: teachers, ES staff, families, students, mobility instructors, therapists or anyone with an interest in access technology for students with vision impairments.

Plan to spend the time to try out something new!

Cost: Free (and no need to register)

For further details: phone 9841 0242, email svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au

or head over to our website: www.svrc.vic.edu.au

SVRC parking

There is no parking available at the Statewide Vision Resource Centre or Heatherwood School. Please park **in the lower carpark** behind the Donvale Sports Centre (Manningham DISC), the building beside (to the north) of the SVRC. You can then walk through the double gates and the Statewide Vision Resource Centre is to the left.

Public transport: Bus and train

The nearest and most accessible train station is Nunawading. Trains on the Belgrave and Lilydale lines run through this station. A bus also runs from Box Hill Central which also has good train access.

The Statewide Vision Resource Centre is serviced by **3 bus routes**.

- 902 Smart Bus, Chelsea to Airport West
- 271 Box Hill to Ringwood
- 273 Nunawading to The Pines

The 902 and 273 both leave from the Nunawading station. It is an 8 minute trip to the SVRC.

