

Number 15, Friday October 14, 2022

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PD events

Tuesday October 18 [Preparing for a student who reads braille](#)

Providing practical support for school staff preparing to welcome and include a new student who will be learning to read using braille.

Tuesday November 22 [EXPO: Assistive Technology for students who are blind or partially sighted](#)

Showcasing & demonstrating assistive technologies that can promote inclusion & achievement for students who are blind or have low vision. This year's Expo will be a hybrid format event with both onsite and online attendance available.

On Demand PL

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

Message from the Manager

Source: Kim Foley, Manager, SVRC

Welcome back from the school break and we hope this message finds you well.

Support Skills Program Graduates

Today, we can farewell our SSP Graduates Josiah, Zac, Connor, Rory, and Lachlan for 2022. Rory and Josiah started in our DOT Power Program and Connor was one of our first SSP Leaders who contributed many ideas on how a leader can support other students on the day. We wish them well with their further studies over the next few years.

Braille Music Camp

During the second week on the school holidays, Di Bennett volunteered her personal time to accompany four young ladies to the annual Braille Music Camp held in Mittagong, NSW. To enhance the experience, Di designed a very glittery Music Camp lettering across the front of windcheaters to identify the group as they travelled by plane. Braille music reading students from across Australia attended the camp. During the day, the students participated in whole group choir, small group braille music lessons, junior or senior choir, orchestra and band. Each night was capped off by a mini concert by those who wished to perform. The town folk of Mittagong came out to watch the final concert on Friday evening. Thank you to Jordie Howell for assisting with organising the annual camp and Di Bennett for chaperoning our Victorian students. A great exhausting time was had by all!

NASA Space Camp 2023

It is a requirement that you have 60/60 vision to be an astronaut. This presents a huge barrier for anyone with vision impairment, but people with vision impairment have never let anything stop them!

For one week each year, Space Camp, in Huntsville Alabama, is organised exclusively for students with vision impairment. Kids come from all around the world to participate in an incredible program. It provides our students with a small taste of what it is like to go out into the cosmos.

For more than 20 years Statewide Vision Resource Centre has supported the facilitation of students from Victoria to participate in this exciting opportunity. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we have been unable to attend the last few years, however, we have started the initial planning phase for a group of vision impaired students from Victoria to attend Space Camp 2023. The Department of Education's (DET) international travel policy now allows international travel for Victorian students in 2023! The North West Victoria Region Visiting Teacher Service (Vision) staff will accompany the students and will adhere to all DET international travel guidelines.

The Space Camp itinerary will include time in Los Angeles enjoying Disneyland and Universal Studios as well as the journey to Huntsville Alabama for the Space Camp week. The Space Camp trip is usually two weeks in length. The cost of Space Camp is self-funded, and a number of scholarships are available which cover the costs of airfares and Space Camp. This trip is fully chaperoned by experienced Visiting Teachers (Vision). If you are interested and would like more information on Space Camp 2023, please contact Kim Foley on 0417 362 306 or Peter Davis on 0478 821 287 during business hours.

SVRC Landlines

We currently have one active landline and hope to have an additional five by the end of this week. Thank you for your flexibility in emailing instead of phoning us during this incredibly challenging time over the last month.

Design Fringe: "Design the future don't waste time"

Source: Support Skills Program

On October 7, Support Skills Group B jumped on a bus to attend two tactile tours as part of the Melbourne Design Fringe. The exhibition 'Design the future: don't waste time' is linked to the major global challenge of sustainability. With art/design works ranging from furniture to recycled vacuum cleaners, it was a great adventure. The Linden New Art Gallery is in a beautiful old mansion, and the second gallery, The Carlisle Street Art Space is within the St Kilda Town Hall.

The Design Fringe tactile tours are led by Vitae Veritas, presented in partnership with Melbourne Fringe, Linden New Art & Carlisle Street Art Space, supported by City of Port Phillip, Creative Victoria, Monash University Art, Design & Architecture, Naomi Milgrom Foundation and the Victorian Women's Trust.

Thank you to Nilgun Guven who coordinated our tours and introduced us to some of the artists. And to the Melbourne Fringe who provided the bus for the day.



SSP student top tips for getting and staying organised

In Term 3, the focus at Support Skills was on 'getting and staying organised'. We challenged the students to think about how organised they are (e.g. Did you bring your technology and is it charged ready to use?), what strategies might improve their organisation, and by the end of the term we had developed a list of their top organisational tips under three headings, 'General', 'Time management' and 'With technology'.

General

- Make lots of lists
- Always keeping things in their place
- Pack school bag night before
- Keep everything you need for school in one place
- Use colour-coding and labelling
- Keep bedroom tidy
- Keep desk or study area tidy
- Get enough sleep to stay organised and focused
- Use self-advocacy to organise what is required
- Use and check timetables
- Make lists of things you WANT to do (not just what you need to do)
- Have a particular place to put school notices within your school bag

Time management

- Use routines, especially during the school week
- Get things ready the night before
- Make time for leisure
- Set a timer and take breaks
- Estimate how much time a task will take, and how many tasks you will fit into the time you have
- Keep a note of due dates in your calendar
- Set alarms as reminders

With technology

- Keep your devices charged
- Bring what is needed to school/classes
- Using electronic calendars
- Organising folders on Polaris
- Have sensible names for files on devices
- Reduce the number of devices you use to what you really need
- Carry what's needed rather than everything
- Have a structure for files on your computer
- Back up files
- Have a 'fall-back' device in case one doesn't work
- Have a charging site
- Use folder hierarchies on your technology – use folders and sub-folders on devices
- Use appropriate file names so you can search for things
- Keeping things in appropriate folders on your technology
- Use pockets in bags for small devices
- Make sure your water bottle doesn't leak on devices in bags

Sexuality and Relationships Resources

In a very productive and valuable partnership in 2021, Monash University Occupational Therapy (Honours) students, Claire Pardo and Hei Wah (Natalie) Chan, produced a handbook for educators, "[Relationships and Sexuality Education for Students with Vision Impairment](#)", which is available for download from the Statewide Vision Resource Centre website.

Topics in this resource include:

- Glossary of terms and definitions
- Accessibility requirements
- Anatomy
- Relationships
- Consent
- Sexual health
- Personal care
- Puberty

From the booklet: "Relationships and sexuality education is an essential part of all students learning and is a compulsory element of the Victorian curriculum. It occurs throughout all ages and stages of development and involves more than simply learning about sex. Content that is explored includes gender, relationships, bodily changes and puberty, sexual health, and sexual safety. Accessible materials and relevant content will enable students with vision impairments to engage in relationships and sexuality education in the classroom and gain the knowledge, skills, and behaviours they need to empower them to make safe and responsible choices."

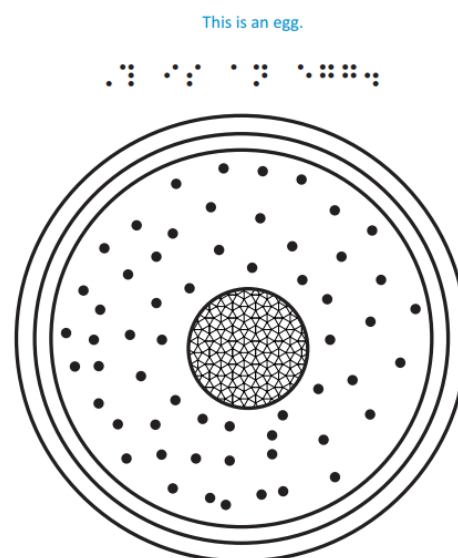
To assist educators, staff of the SVRC are currently developing a resource of tactile diagrams that may be useful when teaching sexuality and relationships with students who are blind.

Diagrams with braille labels will be presented in a downloadable booklet which, when complete, will be uploaded to the SVRC website.

Our plan is to create a collection of useful diagrams, suitable for students in upper primary to mid-secondary level, for educators to select from to support their teaching. These diagrams can be printed to swell/capsule/stereo paper and then raised using a heat fuser (e.g. PIAF machine). The heat fuser will raise the black lines (including braille labels), but not the print labels (in light blue – see example, right). The light blue print labels are provided to give sighted educators, education support staff and class members access to the braille labels.

- Step 1: select suitable diagram(s) from the pdf
- Step 2: print in colour to swell paper
- Step 3: create tactile diagram using a PIAF machine
- Step 4: enjoy accessible resources in your classroom

If you'd like to have input or make suggestions for diagrams that we can include in the resource, please contact Deb Lewis.



New 3D prints for Term 4

Source: SVRC

We've been busy over the school holidays finding, creating and improving 3D print resources for our students.

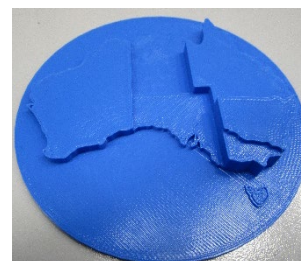
A Bigger Solar System

The Solar System has been one of our most popular 3D prints, and Version 2 is bigger, and painted, to allow easier exploration of the relative size of the Sun and planets in the solar system. Perfect for students in Year 3 and Year 7 who are doing units on Space. (You can still request V1 if you'd like a more compact print!)



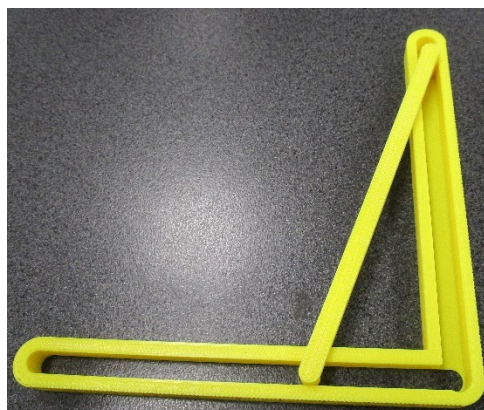
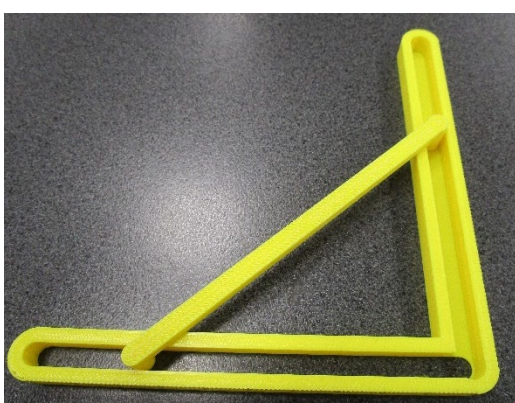
Population by state

This print is a map of Australian states, where the height of each state represents the population of that state. Could be used in Geography, or when doing Statistics in Maths. If you'd like other quantities to be represented in the same way, please get in touch.



Hypotenuse

This print, with attached lesson plan, comes from a set of [Geometry lessons designed for Blind/Visually Impaired Learners](#). It's a manipulative for exploring how the angles and side lengths of a triangle change when the hypotenuse is kept constant, great for introducing and exploring Trigonometry in Year 9 and Year 10.



Equipment for sale

Source: Vision Technology Library, SVRC

We are selling some items that used to be part of the Vision Technology Library at SVRC, but are now surplus to requirements. They are at different prices, depending upon how much they have been used and what accessories are with them.

The items and price ranges available are:

- Victor Reader Stream: \$49.50 – \$123.75
- Victor Reader Trek: \$277.50 - \$555.00
- BrailleNote Touch: \$1499.00 - \$1873.75
- BrailleNote Touch Plus: \$1873.75
- Brailliant (BI14, 32, 40): \$497.50 - \$1947.50
- Draftsman Drawing Kit: \$240.00

These prices do not include delivery costs.

If you're interested in purchasing some equipment, or would like more information, please contact us at vision.tech.library@education.vic.gov.au. Items will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

Strengthen your knowledge of learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia, with postgraduate study in 2023

Source: Inclusive Education Scholarships Unit, DET

The Department is offering 75 fully funded places for learning specialists, leading teachers, and classroom teachers working in mainstream Victorian government primary or secondary schools to undertake the **Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) program**, commencing study in Semester 2, 2023.

A bespoke program designed for the Victorian context, the course will be delivered by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education at the University of Melbourne.

Start planning your study now! Application Round 2 opens on **Monday 30 January 2023 (9:00am)** and closes on **Tuesday 28 March (11:59pm)**. Visit the [Graduate Certificate webpage](#) for more information about eligibility and how to apply.

Master of Inclusive Education Program 2023

Source: Inclusive Education Scholarships Unit, DET

Are you interested in gaining a department-funded master's level qualification specialising in vision impairment or inclusive education? Apply for a master's course at one of our partner universities for Round 9 (R9), opening 9:00am Monday 30 January and closing 11:59pm Tuesday 28 March 2023.

The long-term vision is for all Victorian government schools to have a master-level qualified inclusive education teacher on staff, creating and leading a more inclusive school environment for all students regardless of their abilities and backgrounds.

There are 75 places available, and the program will consider providing schools with an additional masters if teachers are interested in specialising in **vision impairment**, through the following course:

- **NextSense - Macquarie University:** [Master of Disability Studies](#)- Blindness/Low Vision

For all other Inclusive Education courses, please see course details below:

- **Australian Catholic University:** [Master of Education \(Inclusive Practice\)](#)
- **Deakin University:** [Master of Specialist Inclusive Education](#)
- **La Trobe University:** [Master of Education \(Inclusion and Diversity\)](#)
- **Monash University:** [Master of Applied Behaviour Analysis](#)
- **Monash University:** [Master of Inclusive Education](#)
- **University of Melbourne:** [Master of Learning Intervention Stream A](#)
- **University of Newcastle:** [Master of Special and Inclusive Education](#)

Please see the [Master of Inclusive Education website](#) for further information, including testimonials from graduates of the program. To find out more or to check whether your school is eligible, please contact the IESU at: inclusive.ed.scholarships@education.vic.gov.au or call 9084 8496.

Meet My Grandies

Source: Nilgun Guven, [Vitae Veritas](#)

A cast of young performers take on their greatest challenge yet – playing their grandparents! Based on hours of verbatim interviews, Meet My Grandies reflects on the unique bond we have with our grandparents. Straight from the mouths of some big hearted, unruly grandchildren, expect some tongue in cheek tales that will strike a chord with all ages.

Saturday 22 October, La Mama Courthouse, 349 Drummond St, Carlton

11am show with tactile tour at 10.15am (highly encourage people to make it to tour). \$20 full, \$10 concession, companion card holders get free ticket. More information on [La Mama website](#). Enquiries, please call La Mama, the friendly staff there can assist with any questions on (03) 9347 6948.

SenseMath – Making Sense of Math by Audio (free iOS app)

Source: Adapted from post by Wendy Voorn via SPEVI List <spevi-list@googlegroups.com>

SenseMath is a free iOS app, in which every mathematical graph can be listened to.

To make math more accessible, useful and possibly even more fun, Visio developed the iPhone app SenseMath. With SenseMath, every mathematical function (e.g. y equals x squared plus 3) can be converted into sound. With an audio representation of a graph it is possible to get a quick overview of a graph. This audio representation offers information about the sort of mathematical function it concerns (e.g. a mountain or valley parabola; the number of function that are presented in the graph etc). The mathematical elements, such as intersections and extrema (maximum/minimum values), are made audible and the playback speed can be easily changed.

SenseMath is not a calculator; and it does not read the coordinates of a point, however it offers a quick and accessible addition to tactile diagrams.

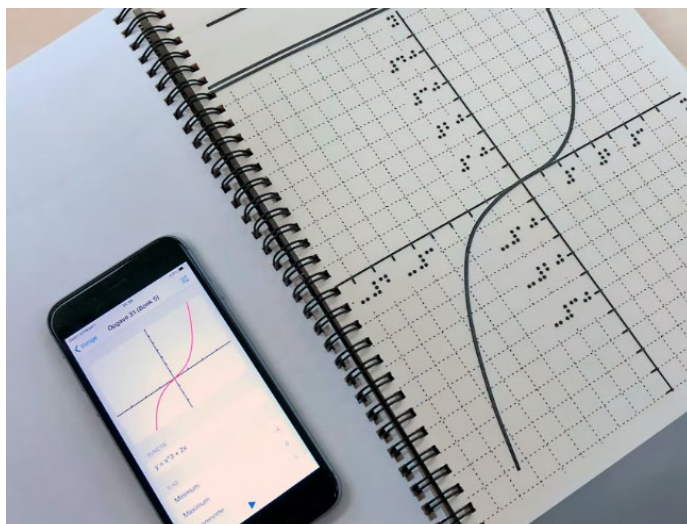
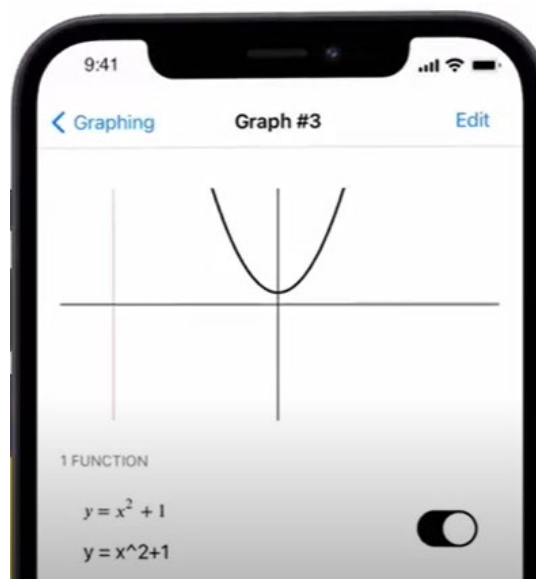
SenseMath was developed with a large group of experts including mathematicians, programmers, accessibility experts and end users to achieve the best usability and accessibility.

Overview of the app: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UnPUDyyilw>

Student experience (promotional video): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bGyl4iqWykA>

Visio is always open to suggestions and tips to improve SenseMath – to improve accessibility and/or suitability for students outside The Netherlands. Contact Visio through visiolab@visio.org.

SenseMaths is available to install at any time through the Self Service App on SVRC iPads.



Unified English Braille Australian Training Manual (2022)

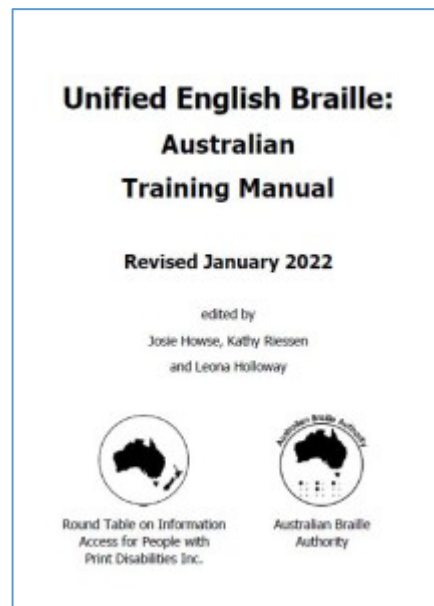
Source: Kathy Riessen, ozbrl group

The **Unified English Braille Australian Training Manual** is a series of lessons and practice exercises by which teachers, transcribers and parents can learn UEB. The 2022 edition is an update of the 2013, 2014 and 2016 editions with some [changes as listed in this Word file](#).

The **Training Manual** is available for free download as print or braille.

There are two PDF files, one with [braille represented using SimBraille](#) and the other using [Unicode braille](#) (better for screen readers and refreshable displays).

The embossable braille versions (four volumes) are formatted for A4 paper at 30 cells per line and 25 lines per page. When opening the braille .brf files using the Duxbury Braille Translator, ensure that "read formatted braille without interpretation" is checked in the Global menu under Formatted Braille Importer. The electronic braille version is a single file designed to be read using a refreshable braille display.



Quantum RLV – Sight Support Expo

Source: Stewart Andrews, [Quantum RLV](#)

Free Sight Support Expo

Are you, or a friend or relative, affected by macular disease, glaucoma, dyslexia or learning difficulty, stroke, blindness or low vision? If so, this expo is for you.

Quantum Sight Support Expo will provide an opportunity to talk to the experts, see the extensive range of vision aids on display and give you a hands on opportunity to try the latest in assistive technology.

Thursday 17 November 2022: 10am – 4pm

Quantum Showroom, 6/417 Ferntree Gully Road, Mt Waverley

Phone: 1300 883 853

And finally ...

Palindromes are words or phrases that read the same way backwards as forwards, but what about braille words that feel the same way backwards as forwards? There's ice (⠠⠠⠠⠠), weir (⠠⠠⠠⠠), fixed (⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠) and chicest (⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠). Let us know if you can think of any more!