

The Weekly Update

from SD State Library School Library Services

January 3, 2022

January is Braille Literacy Month

If you are looking for a unique display idea for January, consider recognizing Braille Literacy Month in your library!

In the United States, January is Braille Literacy Month, which helps to raise awareness of this literacy system that aids the blind and visually impaired. In addition to the month-long recognition, January 4th is also known internationally as World Braille Day to honor the birthday of Louis Braille, the inventor of said system.

In your library, you can recognize Braille Literacy Month by:

- Creating a book display with books about braille, blindness, and visual impairments.
- Creating a bulletin board or other tactile display featuring braille.
- Explore everything the [South Dakota Braille and Talking Book Library](#) has to offer!

Click the [Bitmoji library](#) below for a closer look at these ideas and resources.



South Dakota Braille and Talking Book Library

Did you know that the South Dakota Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) does not just serve visually impaired patrons? That's right! It's a common misconception that our services are only available for patrons who are experiencing vision loss, but in fact, we offer free services to a people of all ages with a wide variety of disabilities.

The BTBL is part of the Library of Congress's National Library Service (NLS) whose motto is "That All May Read". They have set up regional libraries around the country in nearly all fifty states, and our mission is to provide materials to our patrons who cannot otherwise access standard print. BTBL does this in a variety of ways. Primarily, BTBL offers materials in audio format, as in audiobooks and magazines. The library also has access to titles in Braille. In partnership with the American Printing House for the Blind, the library also provides Braille and large print textbooks for those who might need them. Additionally, in the past year NLS has greatly expanded its foreign language collection, so BTBL can provide materials to non-English speakers.

What Materials and Services Does BTBL Provide?

View the School Library Scoop with Scottie below!

Who is Eligible for BTBL's Services?

We serve three broad categories of individuals.

- First, BTBL does serve the visually impaired. Patrons who have any sort of visual impairment that inhibits their ability to read standard print are eligible for our service. Patrons need not be totally blind to receive our services but should have a visual impairment that significantly limits their ability to read print.

- Secondly, BTBL serves individuals with physical impairments. There are plenty of people who are unable to hold a book steady or who can't turn pages or track lines. This could be due to neurological or orthopedic issues.
- Finally, individuals with learning disabilities are eligible for our service. This includes anyone with dyslexia or language processing disorders for whom reading standard print is difficult. (Note: we do not provide service to individuals who are illiterate—the distinction is that our patrons are unable to read due to a disability, not because they haven't learned how to read.)

How Can Someone Qualify?

NLS has relaxed its regulations regarding who can declare a patron eligible for our service. It used to be that a doctor would have to sign the form to acknowledge that a person had a disability. Now, teachers, librarians, social workers, and school principals can sign up their students. This eliminates a great deal of the hassle associated with trying to have a student made eligible when a teacher or school employee might know better about a student's disability from working with them day-to-day can sign them up.

Next Steps and More Information

- Qualified students need to be signed up as patrons before BTBL can send them Braille, Large Print or audio books.
- Materials can be sent to the home, school or both for classroom use or leisure reading.
- BTBL a contract with the Utah Braille library, so our braille reading patrons can receive books from there as well.
- Select books can be downloaded to a Braille embosser.
- Textbooks can be purchased from American Printing House for the Blind (APH) or produced at Pheasantland Industries. Sometimes we can borrow them from another state.
- BTBL collaborates with consultants from the SD School of the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- In BTBL's collection, they have a TWIN VISION FORMAT book about Louis Braille. Twin vision means that there are 2 formats in one book- print and Braille.

Perhaps you have a student who is eligible for our services and you didn't even know it. Perhaps you would like to put some of our equipment in your school library or resource center for students to try out before they sign up. Perhaps you are ready to sign up students today! For information and applications, please visit our website at <https://library.sd.gov/BTB/>

If you have questions or want any additional information, please feel free to contact the BTBL director, Kate Kosior at 605.773.5081 or kate.kosior@state.sd.us and she will be happy to chat with you more!



Check out the latest Loud Librarians Lead!

In this episode, Laura Kelly interviews BTBL's Josh Easter about the winter reading program.

[SDSL: Loud Librarians Lead with Laura Kelly](#)

LOUD LIBRARIANS LEAD! December 2021 with SDBTBL's Josh!



1 Braille Programming Idea

From the article "[Six Sensational Dots: Braille Literacy for Sighted Classmates](#)" found in the [ProQuest](#) database, comes an interesting program idea + many more techniques for creating a "braille-rich" environment in the library or classroom.

"Amid the din of indoor recess in Ms. Lemark's third-grade class, there is an undercurrent of crunching coming from the back table. Five children bend over their braille slates, punching dots with great concentration.

'I wrote my name!' announces Stacey, pulling her paper out of the slate. 'Amanda, will you check it?'

Amanda runs her fingers over the dots. 'You did it!'

Both girls beam with pride. One has learned something new, and the other has used her special expertise to help a friend.

From the moment sighted children see their first dot... "[\[keep reading\]](#)"

2 Braille Bulletin Board Ideas



*From asking4seconds blog



*From Blog on Blindness, Institute on Blindness at Louisiana Tech

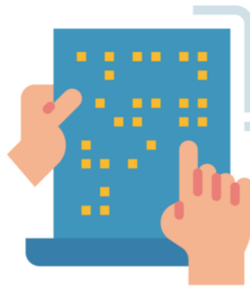
3+ Fun Facts About Braille

Louis Braille was 15-years-old when he invented braille.

There are 2 "levels" of braille. Uncontracted braille, where each letter is represented by a braille cell, and contracted braille, a "shorthand" version of braille, where common letter combinations or words are represented by one or more cell.

*Facts from the New England Consortium on Deafblindness

A braille cell is made up of six raised dots.

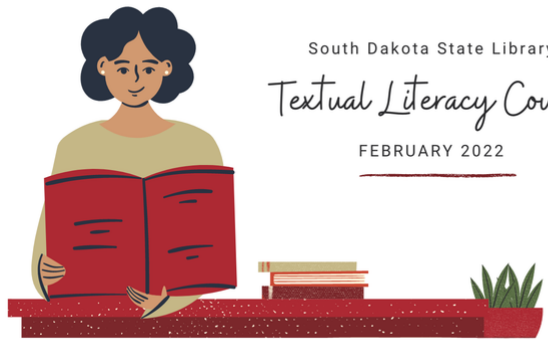


Every letter, number, punctuation, and symbol can be written in braille (including musical notes). Braille can also change the typographical emphasis of a word or sentence (bold, italics, etc.).

Braille is a tactile code, not a language. In fact, many languages including English, Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic can be written and read in braille.



Upcoming Learning Opportunities



South Dakota State Library
Textual Literacy Course
FEBRUARY 2022

REGISTER TODAY!
February 2022

MORE INFO



SDSL School Library Webinar

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WITH PRESENTERS
ELIZABETH FOX - GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS LIBRARIAN, SDSU
MICHAEL BIONDO, ELECTRONIC RESOURCES & SCHOLARLY
COMMUNICATIONS LIBRARIAN, SDSU

Wednesday, March 16 11am CST/10am MT

SAVE THE DATE!
July 2022

MORE INFO



EXCITE!

Exchange. Create. Infuse. Transform. Energize.
2022 Theme: INFORMATION LITERACY



COLLECT
+
CONNECT

BECOME A MEMBER



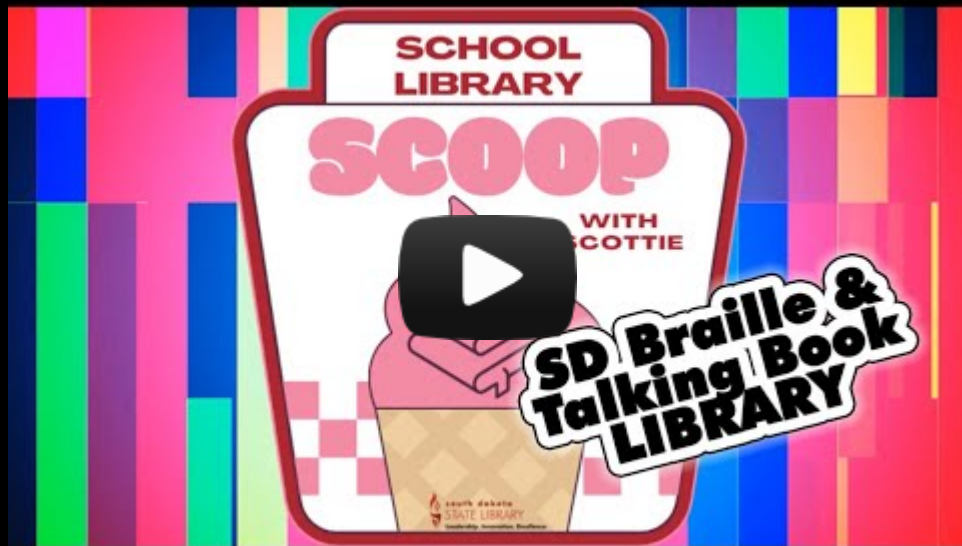
The SD State Library's Collect + Connect Facebook Group is for SD School Librarians! Join to share your ideas and photos, ask your questions, reach out for advice, and discuss all of the awesomeness that happens in your library!

The School Library Scoop with Scottie

Episode 14: South Dakota Braille and Talking Book Library

I hope you're enjoying this new platform for short tutorials on school library services, technology tips and trends, and so much more. If you have suggestions or requests for future topics, please click the "Topic Suggestions" button below. Past episodes can be viewed on [SDSL's YouTube Channel](#).

School Library Scoop with Scottie: Ep14 SD Braille and Talking Book Library



Topic Suggestions



..from SDSL School Library Services

The Weekly Update is a correspondence from the South Dakota State Library focusing on current topics in school libraries, best practices, resources, professional development, and more.

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