

ITS VISION TIME

Issue: 11 Term 2 2009

Welcome to the 11th issue of ITS VISION TIME.

In this Issue:

- **Team Spot: Lisa Britton's team. Wow what a team!**
- **Teacher Spot: We have a Vision Teacher from Minnesota, USA**
- **New technology update from Dr Scott Hollier**

Scott discusses issues surrounding Windows 7 which will be the operating system on the new Year 9 Netbook rollout (eventually)

Scott will be a regular subscriber to ITS VISION TIME. His column is called:
"SIMPLE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM"

Scott will be happy to answer any technology questions you may have. He is a wealth of information!

- **Question and answers??**
- **Fantastic websites to visit**
- **Information for Mimio users**
- **Eye Spy: Nystagmus**
- **Adapting pre school books.. June Brayne**
- **Photography and the vision impaired student**
- **Can you twitter?**
- **What did Western Australia Vision Team do for Louis Braille Day? Check it out!**
- **Bits and Pieces**
- **And lots more....**

Sydney Region Vision Support Team Southern Zone based at GyMEA Bay PS...



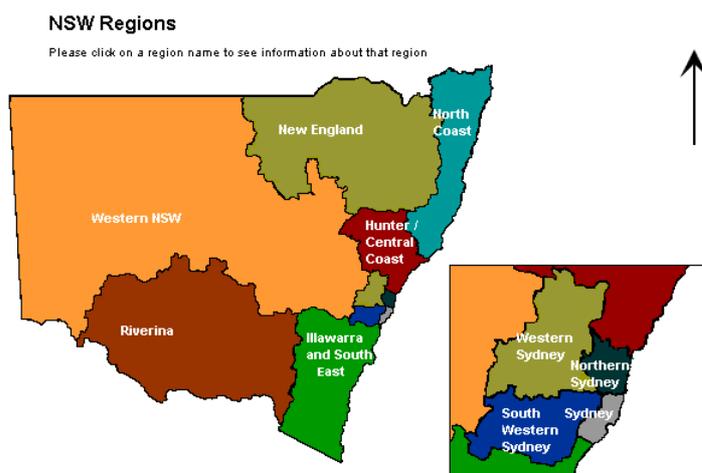
Amanda Dodson Linda Kaye Kim King Bev Fox
Wendy Gruggen Lisa Britton Jennie Malone

Who are we?

Between us, we have over 108 years of experience! (And yet Lisa doesn't look a day over 82?!) Our ISTVs have come from as far afield as Ettalong and Wollongong, from Nimaloola and Wagga Wagga, yet it feels like we were always meant to work together! Lisa initially trained in Qld (as Lisa Laird in those days!) and moved to "The Big Smoke" in 1989, (ostensibly for 5 years, but still here 20 years later!) She is now the Assistant Principal of this dynamic team. Lisa, Jennie, Amanda and Wendy have worked together for many (many) years. More recently, Bev and Linda have come to us from South Western Region and Kim from Central Coast (and we thank their previous APs profusely for this generous donation as they have become tremendous assets to our team!)

Where are we?

Sydney Region, while small geographically, is densely populated. There are 229 Public Schools with 83,876 students enrolled. We represent a small section of the 7000 teachers and support Staff in this Region. While we work collaboratively with the other teams in Sydney Region managed by Anne Doyle and Sue Munro, we are based at GyMEA Bay PS, which is near Cronulla. Our team predominantly covers an area affectionately known as "The Shire". We currently support 5 Braille students.



How are we different?

Although a homogenous team, we are different in so many ways; that's what keeps it interesting!

Hair: from brunette to blonde (to grey!)

Tastes: from beer to champagne

Children: from raising adolescents to doting on gorgeous grandchildren

Status: from 35th Wedding Anniversaries to happily single

Music: from "Gary Puckett and the Union Gap" to "Bliss N Eso" (Hip Hop)

Fashion: from Kmart to Collette Dinnigan

How are we similar?

- ☑ We are a team of individuals who are all pulling in the same direction to enhance outcomes for our students, support our schools and maintain the professional reputation of our service.
- ☑ We are all passionate about our work and our students.
- ☑ An exceptional strength is our concern and support for one another.
- ☑ We all have a profound love for the Braille Code!
- ☑ We all have a sense of humour!!
- ☑ We are a very caring team with high morale and a belief in our ability to utilise our skills and professionalism to "make a difference" in the lives of our students and in community perceptions of our students' abilities.



Our Professional Learning Projects are extremely well-received. Here, our teachers are pictured using simulation glasses to develop an understanding of their student's specific vision impairment.

How are you similar to us?

Tick if

applicable!

- You can immediately recognise the wordsign in Amanda (Well done!)
- Your car boot is filled with resources, programs and paraphernalia
- You view Travel Claims as a necessary evil
- Your car often serves as your office and your lunchroom
- You find your work challenging and fulfilling!
- You also enjoy beer and/or champagne

We look forward to hearing about your team soon!

Lisa.Britton@det.nsw.edu.au

Deaf Blind students.....

From the internet:

- There is a new book, "Assessing Communication and Learning in Young Children Who are Deafblind or who have Multiple Disabilities". It is available for download at no cost at http://www.ohsu.edu/oidd/d2i/com_pro/DeafBlindAssessmentGuide.pdf

The book describes collaborative processes among families and professionals of all disciplines, and at the end of the book included are summaries of assessment tools that were reviewed by persons with experience with young children who are deaf-blind.

Source: Michelle Clyne, M. S. Ed.

Deaf-blind Specialist (US)

- Another great resource is available at:

<http://www.chsbs.cmich.edu/dbcentral/>

this website has lots of contacts in the resources page as well.



SIMPLE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

Dr Scott Hollier

Accessibility features of Windows 7

One of the biggest issues when providing assistive technologies to students with low vision is the cost; schools and itinerant teachers work hard to try and provide the best student outcomes, but often this is a time-consuming and expensive process.

Recently, though there have been a number of developments within contemporary technologies which are starting to bridge the gap between everyday computing and specialist products and services. The aim of this regular segment is to highlight some of those current and emerging trends that are free or low cost, yet provide another option to itinerant teachers in meeting the needs of students.

One of the most significant things that will happen in the area of affordable accessibility in 2009 is the introduction of Windows 7, the new Microsoft operating system designed to replace Vista. The final preview release has just been released to developers, and the final version is currently tipped for a release in October.

The reason why Windows 7 is so significant to itinerant teachers that work with students with low vision is due to its significant accessibility improvements, arguably the most significant since the release of Windows 2000 nearly nine years ago. The key new feature in the operating system is the inclusion of a full-screen magnifier, very similar to ZoomText or MAGic. As with these products, the magnifier can zoom in and out, allowing a vision impaired user to scroll around the Windows desktop. The feature can be operated by holding down the 'Windows' key and pressing the '+' key to increase the zoom, and the '-' key to make it smaller.

Although the built-in magnifier isn't as feature-rich as Zoomtext, it works better with multimedia applications due to its incorporation with the Aero graphical interface. It also provides a translucent window to let the user know where they are in relation to the larger desktop.

The benefit of having this feature built into Windows is clear; as Windows 7 gains acceptance, students with low vision will be able to use any computer in a classroom and easily activate the new magnifier feature. Also Windows 7, unlike Vista, will run happily on the small ultraportable 'netbook' computers, such as the Asus Eee PC, meaning that an overall solution can be more affordable.

However before trying to convince a school of a Windows 7 upgrade, it's worth noting that there are some issues with it. Firstly, the smoothing isn't as good as a specialist product so ZoomText will still provide a better quality of zoom when set to high magnification levels. Secondly, the full-screen magnifier doesn't work at this stage with the high contrast colour schemes, meaning that if a student with low vision were to turn on a colour scheme like High Contrast Black, it will drop back to the old magnifier strip at the top of the screen.

Overall, it's encouraging that Microsoft are working on improving the accessibility of Windows after a long drought, and it's exciting that students will soon have the ability to enable such features. The new Windows 7 full-screen magnifier may not suit all students with low vision, but it will be enough for many.

Dr Scott Hollier is the Project Manager, New Media for Media Access Australia, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to helping people with disabilities gain access from contemporary technologies. For further information on contemporary access solutions, please go to the Media Access Australia website www.mediaaccess.org.au and look in the 'New Media' section.



Subject: Welcome to the Digital Education Revolution

For more information on the DET laptop roll out of Netbooks for High School students go to: <http://www.digitaleducationrevolution.gov.au/>

You will note the last paragraph of the article which refers to students with special needs. Also there is audio and LP information at:

[Read more: NSW school laptops feature great access potential](#)



What a great idea!

I have a kindergarten student with anterior segment dysgenesis. She requires size 28-32 print. We were faced with the dilemma that she only requires the reading books for a relatively short period of time and we thought we could produce them ourselves as there was very little print. At first, the teacher's aide and I were photocopying and colouring each book for in class reading groups and for home readers. This system was very time consuming and because the pictures were being hand coloured, some of them were hard to recognise.

I decided that it would be much easier to re-type the sentences, print them and simply attach them over the top of the original writing in the book. This would allow the font size to be enlarged and the font type to be changed. The problem however, was finding something to attach the enlarged typed writing to the book that was not going to be permanent. I visited Office Data Systems and found 'Pritt refill roller non-permanent glue' for \$12.85.

This glue is applied to the back of the paper and can then be placed on the book. The paper will stick to any surface and can be quickly and easily removed when finished without leaving any residue or marking the book. This is a great little tool that can be used in many situations and is so quick and easy to use.

Emma Emma.lonergan@det.nsw.edu.au



Eye ConditionsNystagmus

General information:

Many of our students have this condition and mostly in addition to another eye condition. It is frequently associated with albinism, cataracts, optic atrophy, amblyopia, astigmatism and myopia.

Suggested resource: www.nystagmus.org

Implications:

- Images may be blurred.
- Reduced visual acuity. The faster the eyes move, the lower the acuity
- The student may adopt an unusual head position or head wobble to decrease the nystagmus which is called the 'null point' (ie a position of the eyes at which the nystagmus slows or ceases completely).
- Nystagmus will decrease as the eyes converge to look at a close object
- Nystagmus will increase when one eye is covered, so that no light enters the covered eye
- Nystagmus may increase when the student is tired, nervous, unwell or stressed (eg when reading aloud, sitting tests or exams, after late nights etc)
- The student's visual functioning will vary according to the changes in the nystagmus ie the vision will worsen with any increase in nystagmus.

Suggested teaching strategies:

- ensure that all staff working with the student, including casual teachers, are aware of the vision impairment and its educational implications
- be aware that stress or tiredness will cause the student's vision functioning to decrease
- students may not automatically discover their null point. If they have one, they may need to be helped to identify the best eye position and encouraged to use it. To locate the null point, hold a pen or small bright object in front of the eyes. Ask the student to hold his/her head still, and follow the object as it is moved from side to side, and up and down. Watch for any increase or decrease in the nystagmus.

In the Classroom:

- once the null point has been identified, placement of the student in the classroom should take this into account.
- if the null point is when the student looks straight ahead, then s/he should sit so that work is directly in front of him/her (ie centrally in the classroom)
- if the null point is when the student looks down, then chalkboard work, which requires him/her to look up, will be difficult. Worksheets may be preferable in this case
- the student should be encouraged to place their reading material in the most beneficial position in relation to their eyes and their null point
- the student with nystagmus may experience reading problems such as skipping letters or lines. Tracking and scanning skills, which will be difficult for the student with nystagmus, can be developed and practiced. Initially, the use of a 'reading

window' (a cardboard cut out which only allows the student to see one line of print at a time) may help the student to keep his/her place

- enlargement of reading material is often necessary. This is due to the nystagmus lowering visual acuity and also because the nystagmus is often secondary to a central field loss or other impairment
- reading material often needs to be modified eg tactual diagrams, audio format, braille, enlargement. For young students it may be sufficient to bring reading material close to the eyes
- utilise high contrast materials eg black texta for writing, textas for drawing, coloured paste, using clear bold illustrations to cut around
- bold lined paper may assist
- always use a clean chalk board with white or yellow chalk or white board with black marker. Use a consistent layout when presenting information on a board eg homework is always found on the far right hand side of the board
- students will benefit from desktop demonstrations ensuring visual access eg correct handwriting formation of a new letter, science experiment etc
- organisational skills may require development. Developing efficient organisational skills will assist a student with a vision impairment eg having a large pencil case to store pens, calculator and visual aids; setting aside extra time to collect any equipment required; allowing extra time to complete visual tasks etc
- additional verbal description and verification may be required to ensure the student has access to his/her environment eg describe a new classroom or excursion venue, provide verbal praise etc The student with a vision impairment may miss a smile of encouragement
- the use of a personal computer (eg laptop) may be of great assistance to a student with a vision impairment as an alternative to handwriting and to reduce visual fatigue. Software is available for enlarging text and graphics, including icons, menus etc. Voice output is available for both IBM and Macintosh computers. Individual assessment of the needs of each student is essential. Keyboarding skills should be taught in primary school
- strategies to reduce vision fatigue should be considered eg appropriate visual rests may include listening to audio tapes both for information and relaxation
- students with a vision impairment often need to be taught social skills using a direct teaching approach. Modelling appropriate social behaviours can be difficult when you cannot see them accurately
- understanding and acceptance of the student's vision impairment, individual learning modes and work production methods (eg braille, computer etc) may be facilitated through carefully planned simulation activities and class education programs.
- Most individuals with nystagmus perceive objects as being stationary. It is believed that the brain is responsible for the perceptual adjustment.

Some suggested solutions:

Educationally, children with nystagmus (who may tend to lose their place in beginning reading instruction) may be helped through the use of a (card with a rectangular hole, to view one word or line at a time) or an underliner (card or strip of paper to "underline" the line being read).

Photo of student

Information for teachers:

Name of student: XXX

Year: X

Eye Condition: Nystagmus

Definition: It is the involuntary, rhythmic movement (horizontal, vertical or oscillating) of the eyes which is independent of normal eye movement.

Implications for the classroom:

1. Student will have decreased visual acuity which may require a larger font size ..18

to 24 point eg **this size to this size**

2. Style and print format may need consideration, e.g. letter spacing
3. Student may need to work at a close working distance from their work
4. May have difficulty seeing work on the board:
Solutions: Provide student with own copy of work
Buddy system to read from b/b
Use a low vision aid for distance viewing
If LP is required LP texts can be provided by Vision Staff
5. Using a black pen and/or heavy lined books may assist as will high contrast material.
6. Lighting conditions will need to be controlled to ensure optimal classroom performance.
7. Try not to stand in front of a window or light source when teaching or speaking.
8. Student may suffer from eye fatigue.
9. Student is the best to position themselves in the classroom minimizing glare.
10. A slower reading speed, frequent loss of place and increased frustration may be experienced with reading.

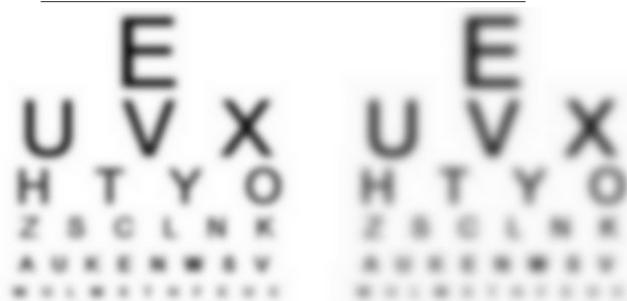
Implications for the playground:

Student:

1. should be included in all tasks although some games involving small balls may cause problems.
2. may suffer from depth perception problems eg stairs, ball skills, judging distances.
3. may have trouble using a monocular for distance viewing, as occluding one eye usually causes the eye movements to increase.
4. may need some orientation and mobility lessons

- **Contact details:** Please contact your students' Vision Support staff for any further information. Contact: YYY@det.nsw.edu.au as your vision teacher
- Mobile phone no: 1111
- Timetable is attached.

A sample of visual acuity of 6/18 and 6/24.



6 Metre Eyechart 6/18

6 Metre Eyechart 6/24

Attention Mimio users.

1. If you have not already found this great resource have a look at this.

For those who are interested in or already use Mimio (portable interactive whiteboard and capture device), the Mimio website (www.mimio.com) has released new training resources that may be useful: see

http://www.mimio.com/training/mimio_quick_learn/index.asp. These include short online video tutorials and web based live training sessions. Even with the time difference to America, there are some evening sessions that correspond to our mornings (5pm there = 8 am here approx). You can also find a range of Mimio user guides and setup guides and reference cards at

<http://www.mimio.com/support/documentation/index.asp>.

2. The Mimio device enables any whiteboard to be turned into an interactive whiteboard, and captures handwritten notes from the whiteboard and save them as files for printing, editing or viewing on a computer. Mimio is supported with free to download software that:

- enables notes captured into the software can be manipulated – change size, colour
- includes a handwriting recognition feature, which converts the handwriting on the whiteboard into editable text.

Mimio can support a range of diverse student needs including students who struggle to see the board, those who have difficulty copying notes from the board, students who struggle with writing etc.

Mimio can be used in several different ways:

1. as an interactive whiteboard when connected to a laptop and data projector
2. to display the image of the notes being written on the classroom whiteboard directly to a laptop, as notes are being written. These images appear on the 'whiteboard' within the free Mimio software and can be saved as files for future reference.
3. to record the notes being written on the classroom whiteboard as a video file that can be played back. There are lots of applications for this feature - great for recording processes, diagrams etc – e.g. in Maths it could be used to record the steps of solving an equation, or drawing and labelling graphs, diagrams etc.
4. to capture notes to the Mimio without it being connected to a computer, for downloading to the computer software at a later time.

Source: from the QLD listserv

+++++

This video from You Tube was posted to the TeenConnect Message Boards. It is a video showing many people with different disabilities using computers with JAWS rapping. They sing about WCAG. There is a singer playing a guitar walking through the streets of New York City.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-lWBT4Tk3t0>

....Lee

Teacher Spot



Name – Amy Colaizzi

Job Title – Itinerant Teacher of Students who are Visually Impaired (4 days per week) & Assistive Technology Specialist (1 day per week), Hiawatha Valley Education District, Winona, Minnesota, USA

Interests – I love to cook and have many cookbooks. I enjoy travelling with my husband. We have 3 cats ranging from 2 years old to 18 years old and they are “helpful” companions when we’re at home. I love watching birds and we have many bird feeders around our yard which is bordered by woods and we have a small fishpond in which the birds enjoy bathing! I also enjoy volunteering and have been a basketball coach for Special Olympics in the past and am currently a member of the Lions Club.

Background – I grew up in the tidewater region of Virginia and attended college in the mountains of Virginia at James Madison University. I graduated with a degree in Special Education of the Mentally Retarded (I know that is no longer politically correct and really hate saying that... in Minnesota, the wording has changed to Students with Developmental Cognitive Disabilities... a little better). I taught students in New Kent County, Virginia, with developmental disabilities in grades K-2 for 10 years in a resource room/pull-out model. During my 9th year of teaching, I had a student with a mild visual impairment and wanted to know what to do to help her. There was an itinerant teacher who was never able to come to see me so I complained to my Special Education Coordinator... Well, her suggestion was for me to get my certification! At the time, it was a fully paid-for program through the University of Virginia which consisted of only 4 courses and took place for 2 weeks in the summer and 2 semesters of videoconference classes. I figured, why not? ☺ Meanwhile, my husband was in graduate school and finished his Ph.D. in art history in 2007 and found a job at Winona State University. So, after 15 years of teaching in Virginia, we moved to Minnesota!

Itinerant Teaching in Minnesota – I live in Winona, Minnesota, which is located in south-eastern Minnesota and started working in my current job in January 2008. My 17 vision students are spread out over about a 75-mile radius around Winona – but not to the east because that would put me in the Mississippi River! The snow in this area is amazing! We had snow on the ground from the end of November until about March 20th!!! PILES of snow! In Virginia, when it snowed 4 inches, we would stay inside and it would melt the next day! Seriously, it’s a truly beautiful area so the driving isn’t so bad – especially with the prospect of spring arriving! I love to drive along the Mississippi to the south and often see bald eagles, snowy egrets, and blue herons! When I’m not near the river, I’m in farming country – cows, horses, old farmhouses and beautiful vistas! It does get frustrating on days when I have to drive from one end of my region to the other and I’m trying to incorporate as many phone conferences as I can for meetings but, because so many of my students and families are new to me, I often feel obligated to physically BE there.

I am used to direct teaching and now have to learn how to work in a system where the indirect/consultation model is becoming more and more necessary due to teacher shortages and misunderstandings by administrators of the need for direct instruction in the areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum. I find that some teams are more able to carry out my suggestions than others and that can lead to unsatisfactory outcomes or, at best, slower acquisition of skills for the student. Still, I am doing what I can and am appreciative of email! Most teachers are good about checking email now so I am able to send them tips and updates that way because I don't always have time to explain everything when I'm physically there. I LOVE my students! I have a special place in my heart for my students with multiple disabilities and love when I see them learning new things! I have one student who has low vision who is really taking off with learning how to use a monocular this year. I have another young man in 3rd grade who has autism in addition to visual impairment and he is learning braille thanks in part to the "The Braille Rap Song" (see http://www.aph.org/edresearch/braille_rap/index.html)! I have had lots of new referrals this year and not all of them qualified for services (thank goodness) but many did. We have a wonderful low vision specialist nearby who has been very helpful to many of my students with regard to low vision devices and recommendations.

Going Back to School - Our Education District employs another fulltime TSVI and she is wonderful! She has 30+ years of experience as a TSVI – in the US and in New Zealand. She is so knowledgeable and is helping me put pieces together. On that note, I found that Minnesota would not honour my certificate in vision (I wonder why they don't think that FOUR classes is enough???) so I am currently enrolled in a masters program in vision at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada! It is a comprehensive program (unlike my previous program and I will have spent 3 summers in Vancouver when I finish in August 2010 (with online courses during the school year, of course). Vancouver is beautiful! It's like a rainforest – the plants are gigantic! I am learning so much as the result of my courses and my colleague so I know my students will benefit! Many exciting things going on!
Amy from Minnesota



Family Connect - New online resources



Five new Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) audio interviews with professionals have been added to the Audio Library section of Family Connect. These messages are for parents and families and highlight the following ECC areas:

Sensory Efficiency, Self-Determination, and Compensatory Skills/Communication, sensory efficiency and tactile communication skills for deafblind children; sensory efficiency and effective listening skills for children who are blind or have low vision; self-determination skills for deafblind children; communication skills for children with visual and multiple impairments; compensatory skills and communication skills for deafblind children.

To listen to these audio interviews visit <http://www.familyconnect.org> The ECC audio interviews are in the featured topic area "Education."

Source: SVRC Bulletin

From WA

Louis Braille Day in **Western Australia**.....

On Friday 23rd March, eleven out of our fifteen brailleing students in WA came together with their Visiting Teachers, to celebrate the life and achievements of Louis Braille. Although the Vision Education Service is part of the Department of Education in WA, we were able to use the excellent facilities at the Association for the Blind of WA on the day. Students brought their Perkins brailers and their BrailleNotes and after a short discussion on the importance of braille in their lives, the day started with some braille activities. Morning tea gave the students the first opportunity to get together and socialise and all the students regardless of age, took the opportunity to get to know each other. The next session was a talk by a Guide Dog Instructor and an opportunity to meet two of the dogs as well as ask some very pertinent questions. After we managed to tear some of the students away from the guide dogs, we moved to the gym where four different activities had been set up-bowling, basketball, skittles and swish. Swish, in particular brought out the competitive nature of some of our students but everyone from Year 2 to 11 enjoyed themselves. (Currently we have no braille users in Years 1 and 12.) Lunch was another opportunity to mix and chat and then we held a session of board games. Students were able to enjoy games such as Twister, Tic Tac Toe and Scrabble. Our Louis Braille Day was a great success with all the students thoroughly enjoying the activities and the opportunity to get together. If you have the opportunity to organise something similar this year, we strongly recommend it as a way of celebrating the Bicentenary with those whose lives are most enriched by Louis Braille's wonderful invention.



Figure 1 Brendan and Annabelle enjoying a game of swish on Louis Braille Day

Question and Answer.....

1. Does anyone know where you can get LP crossword puzzles?....

Jenny

Sure do! Here are some websites that may help you out.

1. <http://www.gets.com/crossword.htm>
2. and from Penny: <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/>

2. I realise social skills are very important for vision impaired students but how can I teach facial expressions to a student? ... Luke

Teaching about emotions on faces...try this webpage site: <http://www.do2learn.com/>

Or try this website: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/7967381.stm>

3. Have you come across in your travels a knife guard for vision impaired students? Corinne (Tassie)

*I work with a student with hemiplegia and only has the use of one hand - his cooking teacher has requested a knife with guard attached. I checked VA resources and they don't appear to have one. Have you seen or know of anywhere I could locate one please?
Cheers*

PLEASE can anyone help Corrine out?

4. How fast should a student read braille to cope at the tertiary level??

Braille Reading Speeds:

TSBVI lists the following information in their Assessment Kit - Reading:

3RD Grade 51 WPM

4TH Grade 58 WPM

5TH Grade 66 WPM

6TH Grade 67WPM

College 115 WPM

There is also a Michigan scale which has different figures:

3rd grade--30 wpm.

6th grade--60 wpm.

9th grade--90 wpm.

High school graduate--120 wpm.

University level it has been suggested that a speed of 150 wpm is essential.

5. Is there a easy and cheap way of enlarging print whether in Word, Internet, Excel, games etc.

The Microsoft Comfort 3000 mouse has a built-in enlarging window which sounds like the perfect solution for you. It is a regular mouse that you can buy from Harvey Norman or similar shop for around \$28. The 3000 is a regular mouse size but there are smaller versions as well. This is a quick and easy solution for your student.

6. I have a student in a support class that I think would benefit from using a Light box. I can remember having one years ago but forgot where I got it from. Would you have any recent information on them.... Jane

Try <http://lightbrightbooks.net> It is however an American company.

You can quite easily make a light box yourself. Some suggestions you can find at: http://www.lifehacker.com.au/2009/01/make_your_own_sad_light_box

7. Dragon Naturally Speaking and Jaws... will Dragon and Jaws work together so a student can dictate words onto a computer AND listen to Jaws at the same time??

For people who are totally blind, a combination of JAWS and JSay are used with Dragon and people who are low vision could use Dragon with ZoomText. I have had some experience with DNS but not working in combination with Jaws. However you could contact Scott Erichsen at: scott.erichsen@tandt-consultancy.com.au This would certainly suit a student with very limited hand use.

8. I use a Brailenote and need to print off work with a student. Can you suggest compatible printers for the BN??... Lee

From Ramana Mandy at HumanWare. We have tested a number of new printers and have posted the compatible models to our website. They can be found on the site below:

http://www.humanware.com/en-usa/support/brailenote/brailenote_mpower_compatibility

Here are a list of some that were recently added:

HP K8600
HP Office Jet k5400
HP Office Jet H470
HP Office Jet All in One J6480
HP Office Jet All in One J6310
HP Photo Smart d7650
HP Photo Smart d5360
HP Desk Jet 6988
HP Desk Jet 6940

Remember that we continuously update the list on this site.

Ramona Mandy

HumanWare Tel: 03 9686 2601 Mob: 0404 834 924

9. I have a student who is autistic and is vision impaired. Is there some good information out there that will assist me in working with him?.... Bill

An excellent introductory article about Autism and Visual Impairment might get you started.: <http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/vmi/autism-and-vi.htm>



Wonderful Websites to visit:

Below are some wonderful web pages that you just have to try. Enormous amount of useful resources to download and use:

Sites that provide FAQs, Fact Sheets and teaching and training notes include:

Priory Woods School: <http://www.priorywoods.middlesbrough.sch.uk/resources/>

The PowerPoint FAQ: <http://www.PPTfaq.com/index.html> - tips, templates and add-ins!

A Bit Better <http://www.bitbetter.com/powerfaq.htm>

Lessons and Tips <http://www6.district125.k12.il.us/staffdev/tutorial/PPTt/PPTt102.html>

PowerPoint in the Classroom <http://www.esu5.org/techteacher/powerpoint.htm>

A Video Tutorial <http://www.videojug.com/film/how-to-create-a-talking-book-in-microsoft-office-powerpoint-2003>

Downloadable MS PowerPoint Files which are wonderful for producing Sensory Kits for support classes.:

Priory Woods <http://www.priorywoods.middlesbrough.sch.uk/resources/books.htm> - a great collection!

TAR Heal Books <http://alltogether.wordpress.com/2008/06/19/tar-heel-reader-an-open-source-library-of-talkingbooks/>

PowerPoint Talking Books <http://www.talkingbooklibrary.net/>

Publishing and Sharing Sites:

SlideShare <http://www.slideshare.net/> - SlideShare is the best way to share your presentations with the world. Let your ideas reach a broad audience. Share publicly or privately. Add audio to create a 'Webinar'

Add-Ons and Tools PPTT Tools <http://www.PPTtools.com/index>



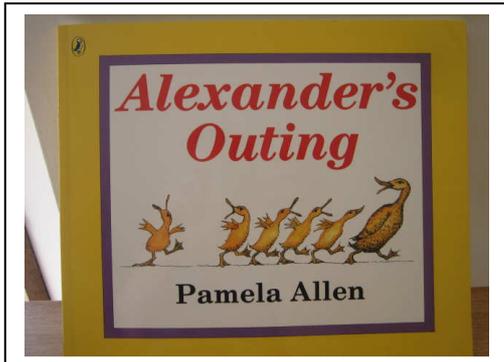
Employment: For that different sort of job for a vision impaired student check this news story.
<http://abcnews.go.com/International/story?id=3875889&page=1>

How I have adapted reading books in a Pre School.

Number 1 of a series of picture book ideas for CH a 3yr old preschool student who is blind (light perception only). The preschool reads the story on Friday and has activities associated then mum has the book during the week. The book is then kept at the preschool in a library. **June Brayne Wagga Wagga ... june.brayne@det.nsw.edu.au**

“Alexander’s Outing” by Pamela Allen

This is quite a long story so I decided not to put the story into Braille. I made three strips about 30X12cm on the sides and 45cm the middle section. The only Braille on this story is “quack” repeated on Braille label. I sent home a print copy of the book as well as a duck puppet that quacked.



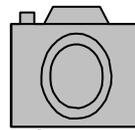
The book



Three strips



Close ups.



Photography and the student who is blind??

Someone asked me about a student with a severe VI who wanted to do photography as an elective at school. Some of my research came up with this information that may be of use to some of your students in the same situation.

Blind photographers:

<http://zonezero.com/exposiciones/fotografos/bavcar/#> Benjamin Mayer-Foulkes

<http://home.pacbell.net/thammon/Bay.htm> Terry Hammon

<http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/photog.htm> Vision Quest for low vision photographers

<http://www.lisafittipaldi.com/> A Brush With Darkness (about Lisa Fittipaldi)

<http://visualpartho.com/whatsnew.htm>

<http://www.eolife.org/article.php?aid=e1ba64997da8de9ac93d74579fba712e> photography program for the blind in Israel – A New Angle on Seeing

Blind Photography Page:

<http://www.geocities.com>

Things that Motivate a Visually Impaired Photographer

<http://www.myshutterspace.com/profiles/blogs/1177697:BlogPost:113824>

Shooting Blind: Photographs by the Visually Impaired

<http://www.amazon.com/Shooting-Blind-Photographs-Visually-Impaired/dp/0893819948>

From the Internet... on promoting video games to improve visual functioning.

“Researchers found playing video games (aiming and shooting games) improved the ability to notice even very small changes in shades of grey against a uniform background.

The games immersed players in an environment where they had to be constantly ready to react to unpredictable events, and where visual information had to be responded to instantly in very precise physical ways.

That games were stimulating and rewarding were also a attributing factor for the success of this research. The hope is that by using video games researchers can encourage the two eyes to work together, and restore the stereo vision which is lacking in people with a lazy eye.” *So maybe those old video games may be of some use after all!*



Who said Grade 2 braille is the only way to go???

ONE IS FUN: GUIDELINES FOR BETTER BRAILLE LITERACY is available free online.

In case you are not familiar with this resource, "One" refers to grade one braille. For some students especially in support classes this may be a more realistic option than sticking with Grade 2. ONE IS FUN can be found at the following URL:

http://snow.utoronto.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=48Itemid=65

This site also offers you lots more information about technology, vision, hearing etc.

Are you on Twitter yet?

If not don't hold your student back from being on one of the latest techno communication websites. No excuses if you think your LV student cannot use it as here are some commands for your student to access this site. Twitter is a popular free service that allows users to send short text messages of 140 characters or less. Called "tweets," these messages are sent to twitter "followers" who have requested to receive them.

Twitter commands adapted for use with braille and screen reading software:

<http://www.candleshoreblog.com/mark/twitter-commands-page.htm>

Fred's Head from APH - Do You Tweet?

Did you know about the thousands of helpful articles posted on APH's Fred's Head blog, Fred's Head uses tweets to deliver links related to blindness or visual impairment. Links to articles specific to the Twitter page and articles from the Fred's Head blog are posted.

You can follow the tweets from Fred's Head by visiting

<http://www.twitter.com/fredshead>

Source: APH Newsletter

Bits & Pieces.....

- For great reviews and evaluations of software and hardware go to [the News and Reviews](#) page from the DET's **Andrew Downie**, Project Officer, Adaptive Technologies, Knowledge Sharing Services **Centre for Learning Innovation**
- Mobile phone using Talks software.
A review can be accessed from www.lalrecordings.com through the accessible phones link.
There are quick key navigation similar to that used by jaws, search engine browsing and Email access plus a lot of other topics.
- **New Research from OS...**
Braille to the touch screen.. go to:
<http://www.gadgetrepublic.com/news/item/463/mobile/researchers-bring-braille-to-touch-screen-technology/>
- This is an artistic project by one individual in Portland, US, to create and affix "braille graffiti" in public areas. Some of your students may like to listen to it.

<http://laughingsquid.com/braille-graffiti-public-art-for-the-blind/>

- **Linking students across the world:**

NABS or National Alliance of Blind Students is an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind. It is a website to link students up across the world. It is at: <http://acbstudents.org/>

Belgium police hire blind people as police officers to listen to crime tapes.

- **TYPING PROGRAMS:**

In a recent issue of ITS VISION TIME, typing programs were highlighted. TypeAbility was a typing program that was recommended as being really engaging for students and it works with Jaws.

From Quantum's Tim Connell:

"Just thought I'd mention that Typability is sold and supported by T&T Consultancy here in Sydney. T&T is basically Scott Erichsen. His email address is:

scott.erichsen@tandt-consultancy.com.au A single user licence for TypeAbility is \$150 including delivery.

Thanks Tim

- Scott also sells J-Say software which is required when you are using Dragon Naturally Speaking and Jaws. Cost is \$995. Contact Scott for more information. This would allow a Jaws user to use their voice to control a computer.

- ***From: Neville Bagot***

As the collector of all resources that could be useful thought I would mention this. Over the last few months I have become increasingly impressed with the range of open source software that is available. The specific thing that may be useful given all the PowerPoints that were being used in SSPs as distributed on the Vision CD last year at conference. Using "Open Office" available from www.openoffice.org you can open a PowerPoint in the open office equivalent (open office presentations - I think - it's straightforward to find) and export it as a flash swf file. Simple as that, and it takes about one third the disc space.

I like the software, you can do everything that the Microsoft software does and it's free (importing images from a scanner to a document is similar to the word 2003 and significantly easier than 2007). In my view ms software's dominance will be threatened severely in the future.

Anyway must go. Hope this is useful if you don't use it already.

TRAIN

Directions:

1. Space 3, s, space twice, ED, 4 "c"s, n.
2. Space 3, FOR, space 2, dots 4-5-6, space 4, l, space 12, IN, 9 "c"s, EN.
3. Space, OW, p, c, v, hyphen, number sign, space 4, l, space 12, l, space 3, FF, colon, DD, space 3, dots 4-5-6.
4. Space 2, l, space 8, l, space, p, 8 "c"s, TH, space, l, space 3, l, space, dots 4-5-6, space 3, dots 4-5-6.
5. Space, ST, v, IN, c, EN, 2 hyphens, IN, c, EN, r, colon, v, IN, c, EN, 2 hyphens, IN, c, EN, number sign, colon, v, IN, c, EN, 2 hyphen, IN, c, EN, hyphen, number sign.
6. Write ST, space twice, e, hyphen, i, space twice, e, hyphen, i, space 3, e, hyphen, i, space 2, e, hyphen, i, space 3, e, hyphen, i, space 2, e, hyphen, i.

Well that is it for this Issue.

Thankyou to all the people who have sent contributions and articles into the Newsletter.

It is amazing how much useful information is out there.

I would welcome any information, tips, suggestions, questions or comments anyone has to offer the Newsletter.

That's it until the next issue.....

Please email Kym Gribble at:

kym.gribble@det.nsw.edu.au

Mobile: 0408409344

Hastings Public School
Port Macquarie
2444
NSW