

C O N S U L T A N T S' C O R N E R

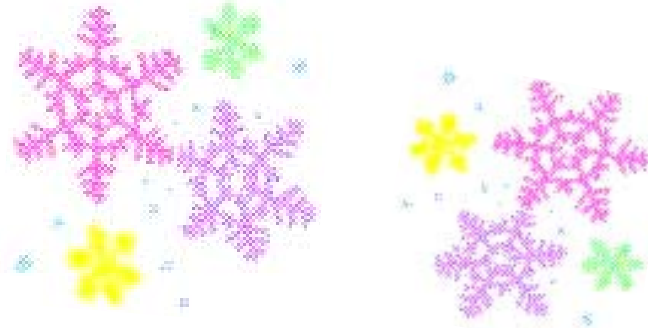


SD School for the Blind
and Visually Impaired

WINTER 2006

Volume 8 Issue 2

Editor: Riki Nitz



HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Welcome to another edition of the Consultants' Corner.

We hope you will find some articles of interest as well as some helpful information for you and your child/student.

And we wish each of you all the best in 2006.

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The Story of My Life

Helen Keller's moving autobiography, *The Story of My Life*, is accessible free online via the American Foundation for the Blind website. **The Story of My Life** first appeared in 1903 to critical acclaim, and it has remained the most popular of Helen Keller's works and a widely read classic of American literature. The fully accessible online version is accompanied by historic photographs from AFB's Helen Keller Archives and interesting facts about the book and Keller.

To read this story, visit the AFB website at www.afb.org/mylife.

**“ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE,
TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO
MUCH.”**

HELEN KELLER

Read READ



Help your child become a successful *Reader!*

Celebrate Literacy

by attending a free seminar
sponsored by
SDSBVI Outreach Vision Consultants
SD Braille and Talking Book Library Staff
SDSBVI Librarian

When: Thursday, February 2, 2006
6:30 p.m.—7:45 p.m.

Where: Rapid City Public Library
(610 Quincy Street)

Upcoming seminars:

- February 22, 2006—Mitchell
- June/July—Aberdeen



To register, call:
605-626-2580 or 1-888-275-3814

Milk and cookies (and coffee) will be served.

Come Join Us!

TYPOGLYCEMIA

Believe it or not, the following can be read.
Try it!

I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulacly uesdnatnrđ waht I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mind! Aoccdrnig to a rseacerh at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mttær in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are; the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihis is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig huh? Yaeh, and I awlyas tohghut slpelnig was ipmorantt.

(Taken from an email message)

APH Educational Materials

Lots of Dots: Learning My ABC's

Lots of Dots: Learning My ABC's is a raised-line coloring book designed for future print and braille readers. It facilitates braille character recognition through repetitive activities for young children with visual impairments and multiple disabilities.

Each letter of the alphabet has two pages.

The first page features a large braille cell with six raised-line open circles. The braille equivalent of the upper and lower case alphabet letter is also shown, as well as a braille cell depicting which dots need to be colored in order to complete the alphabet letter in braille.

The second page shows the alphabet letter and a tactile graphic depicting an easy-to-find object that begins with that letter and that the student can color.

Included with the book are suggested exercises for each letter, allowing a student to fully associate the braille letter, the tactile graphic, and the object.

This product is available from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH). For more information on this product or other APH products, contact your area Outreach Vision Consultant.

TWO COOL BOOK SOURCES

Sadie Can Count is a multi-sensory tactile book in both print and braille created by Ann Cunningham, an artist and sculptor from Colorado. This book can be used in many different ways: as an introduction to counting, as an introduction to print and/or Braille, as an introduction to colors and rhythm, as an introduction to similarities and differences, and as an introduction to picture recognition both visually and tactually. It has multi-sensory pictures throughout, and all of the objects pictured in **Sadie Can Count** are common objects, such as keys, a ball, or a pair of socks. The tactile and visual qualities of this book promote sensory integration for all readers. And when real objects are collected/purchased and used to explain how the two dimensional picture in the book is a picture of the real object, this book is a great learning tool.

Information about this book can be found at www.sensationalbooks.com. Here you will find suggestions, ideas, and creative activities regarding the objects and topics discussed in the book and tactile techniques for exploring the book as well as cost and ordering information. Check it out!



BrailleInk. is a new non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the experience of reading by providing materials with both print and braille in a unique, easy-to-use format that encourages shared reading and promotes braille awareness. Book editions are produced as large-size board books so that the braille embossing is more secure and the construction is sturdier. The back of each book features a brief braille glossary that provides the alphabet, numbers, punctuation, and basic rules for braille usage in that book.

Two books are currently available from BrailleInk.—***Guess How Much I Love You*** by Sam McBratney and Anita Jeram, and ***The Dot*** by Peter Reynolds. The target age range for ***Guess How Much I Love You***, with uncontracted Braille, is 18 months to 8 years. The target age range for ***The Dot***, with contracted Braille, is 5 and up.

Information about the story behind this organization and these books, as well as cost and ordering information, can be found at www.brailleink.org or by contacting Bruce Curtis at 800-324-2919 or at bcurtis@brailleink.org. Also, sample pages can be viewed at this website.

Check these out!

DESIGN CONTEST

The SD Braille and Talking Book Library is sponsoring an artwork contest open to students, ages 6-15, and who are registered with the SDB&TBL. Various grade level awards will be given and the overall award winner will have his/her artwork featured on the front of the Lifetime Reader Cards. Artwork must be original and must be either a painting done in watercolor or a drawing done in crayons, pencil, pastels, colored pencils, markers, or ink. All entries need to be postmarked by April 8, 2006 and become the property of the SDB&TBL.

For further information regarding questions, rules, and guidelines, contact:

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www.sdstatelibrary.com



Remember Louis Braille!

By Donna Iszler

A Very Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year!

The Season fills us all with
Thoughts of good cheer.

And with the new year, let us
Remember without fail

January's the birthday of our
Friend, Louis Braille.

He lived years ago and he had no clue
What his lifetime would mean to me and to you.

He wanted very much to read and write
Which in his lifetime was not possible without sight.

He was hungry for knowledge and wanted so much
To learn what he could through his sense of touch.

He experimented with a code used at night
By soldiers who needed to communicate without light.

And so he developed this system of dots
Which to you and to me represents lot and lots—

Letters and words and sentences, too,
Numbers and music and more, it is true.

It's our independence and so we must show
All who could benefit so that they know

That this is Good News and will bring them Good Cheer.
Happy Birthday, Louis Braille!

(“Reaching Out,” North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind, 2005)

Donna Iszler, originally from northeast South Dakota, lives in North Dakota. She worked at North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind for many years and is a retired music teacher who is blind. She has been and is involved in many organizations and activities serving the blind and visually impaired and has received both local and national recognition from the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER). She has been an inspiration to many Dakotans and others over the years.



Video Views

Focused on: Importance and Need for Social Skills

The *Focused on: Importance and Need for Social Skills* video and accompanying manuscript by Karen E. Wolffe, Sharon Z. Sacks, and Karen L. Thomas are full of valuable content. The knowledge shared includes the philosophical theories that explain the importance of learning social skills as well as how we learn social skills. The content is research based.

Content includes theories of social skills development, learning social skills, teaching social skills, needs of individuals who are blind and visually impaired as they learn social skills, and the unique challenges of teaching social skills to students who are visually impaired. Each of the content areas moves us from research to logical expectations and implementation.

This material is designed for educators and university students as well as parents who want a thorough understanding of the topic.

For further information on this video, or on other videos previously viewed in this column, please contact your area Outreach Vision Consultant or the SDSBVI.

EXPANDED CORE CURRICULUM

SOCIAL INTERACTION SKILLS

Because children with visual impairments cannot learn by casual observation (incidental learning), they need to learn the skills of social interaction through careful, conscious, sequential teaching. Mastery of appropriate social interaction skills can mean the difference between social isolation and a satisfying adult life.

LIST OF SOCIAL SKILLS

STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS SHOULD DEMONSTRATE BY AGE

MIDDLE SCHOOL-AGED STUDENTS (AGES 12-14)

- ✓ Demonstrates appropriate eye contact, body stance, and body space as appropriate for specific social situations
- ✓ Uses appropriate facial and hand gestures to express feelings and ideas
- ✓ Can carry on a socially appropriate conversation for at least ten minutes with peers and adults
- ✓ Shows no inappropriate use of mannerisms
- ✓ Initiates conversations with peers and adults using appropriate eye contact and body posture
- ✓ Participates in conversations without interrupting, and responds appropriately to questions or comments from others
- ✓ Has a repertoire of topics that are age-appropriate to talk about with others
- ✓ Can take the role of others and understand others' feelings in various social situations
- ✓ Selects clothing that is appropriate for a specific social situation
- ✓ Is aware of personal hygiene needs, and knows when clothing is dirty or wrinkled
- ✓ Attends and participates in social activities with peers (visually impaired and sighted)
- ✓ Hangs out with peers, and travels to malls, restaurants, or school activities with peers
- ✓ Understands and can explain visual impairment to others
- ✓ Uses problem-solving to determine how to act in specific social situations
- ✓ Takes responsibility for one's actions in social situations

HIGH SCHOOL-AGED STUDENTS (AGES 15-18)

- ✓ Can advocate for one's needs in a variety of social situations
- ✓ Uses assertive social behavior when interacting with peers and adults
- ✓ Asks for assistance in an assertive manner
- ✓ Problem-solves social situations to determine appropriate use of specific social behaviors
- ✓ Uses a range of social skills in an appropriate manner for specific situations (flirting, dating, job interviews)
- ✓ Can converse with others on a range of interesting topics without dominating the conversation
- ✓ Compliments others and reciprocates when appropriate
- ✓ Takes the role of others and offers assistance when appropriate
- ✓ Interacts effectively in large group situations (dances, conferences, school assemblies)
- ✓ Interprets non-verbal social cues appropriately
- ✓ Uses social etiquette in an appropriate way depending on the social situation
- ✓ Uses appropriate social skills during job or college interviews (being on time, shaking hands, using eye contact, asking appropriate questions)
- ✓ Evaluates social behavior in a variety of environments in a realistic and honest manner
- ✓ Uses a trusted friend or colleague to provide information about a specific social situation
- ✓ Can easily discuss one's visual impairment, including expressing specific needs or adaptations
- ✓ Dresses appropriately for all social situations, and selects clothing independently or with friends or a person shopper

(Excerpt from Sacks, S. A., & Wolfe, K. E. (Eds.). (in press) *Teaching Social Skills to Students with Visual Impairments: Research to Practice*. New York: AFB Press.)

SUMMER PROGRAMS 2006

Dates have been set—and it's never too early to start planning ahead. SDSBVI summer programs specifically address and provide opportunities for students to focus on the Expanded Core Curriculum for Students with Visual Impairments.

Dates are as follows:

<u>Session I</u>	<u>Session II</u>
Week 1: June 12-16	Week 4: July 10-14
Week 2: June 19-23	Week 5: July 17-21
Week 3: June 26-30	Week 6: July 24-28*

Stay tuned for further details regarding registration and application.

Also, look for further information regarding the Expanded Core Curriculum in a separate mailing later this winter.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

for

COMMON ACRONYMS USED IN EDUCATION IN SOUTH DAKOTA

What do the following acronyms mean?

1. **OIL**
 - A. Organization of Individual Labor
 - B. Opportunities for Independent Living
 - C. Office of Independent Living

2. **DHS**
 - A. Department of Human Services
 - B. Department of Housing Services
 - C. Disability Housing Services

3. **WRDI**
 - A. Western Resources for disABLED Independence
 - B. West River Deer Information
 - C. Writing Resources Development Institute

4. **PC**
 - A. Personal Communication
 - B. Personal Computer
 - C. Parent Committee

5. **PFC**
 - A. Private First Class
 - B. Private Family Counseling
 - C. Prairie Freedom Center



(Answers: Page 8)

"A MISTAKE IS EVIDENCE THAT SOMEONE TRIED TO DO SOMETHING."

