



# Sight-Reading Braille for a New Generation

*The Described and Captioned Media Program*

[www.dcmp.org](http://www.dcmp.org)

Cindy Camp

[ccamp@dcmp.org](mailto:ccamp@dcmp.org)

## *Our Mission:*

Our mission is to promote and provide equal access to communication and learning through described and captioned educational media.

## *Our Goal:*

The ultimate goal of the DCMP is for accessible media to be an integral tool in the teaching and learning process for all stakeholders in the educational community, including students, educators and other school personnel, parents, service providers, businesses, and agencies.

## *Importance of Language Development and Literacy in Children*

Language development and literacy is no doubt a critical part of any child's overall development. It supports the ability of your child to communicate, and express and understand feelings. It also supports your child's thinking ability and helps them develop and maintain relationships.

Language development lays the foundation for the reading and writing skills in children as they enter and progress through school. Language is needed for all aspects of their education in the classroom as they connect with peers and teachers, and throughout their lives as they grow into adulthood.

Found at: <https://www.hope-amc.com/importance-of-language-development-and-literacy-in-children/>

## *Do We Still Need Braille?*

To me, inquiring if Braille is necessary is like asking if print is still important. For people who are blind, knowing Braille is the equivalent of knowing to read and write print by someone with sight. I began learning Braille during preschool, the same time my sighted classmates were learning print. Braille

allows those of us without sight to learn to read and write. What's most important, it teaches us to spell and to understand the rules of grammar and punctuation. It would be difficult at the very least to learn all of this by simply listening to audio materials.

Sandy Murillo, blind journalist and blogger with The Chicago Lighthouse

### *Benefits of Braille for Children*

- Braille supports development of accessible and efficient reading and writing.
- Braille allows the student access to the same written materials in the classroom as sighted peers.
- Braille supports instruction in correct written language usage, such as structuring sentences, spelling, formatting paragraphs, and editing.
- Braille literacy can be crucial for future employment and success.

Found at: <https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/resources/sample-form-benefits-braille>

The unemployment rate within the group of non-braille users is about 77% whereas is it 44% for braille users.

Found at: <https://www.iamhable.com/blog/benefits-of-learning-braille>

### *Benefits of Braille for Sighted Adults*

- The ability to read in the dark.
- Communicate effectively with an individual who is blind
  - <https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/resources/sample-form-benefits-braille>
- Be able to help a child who is blind with their braille reading
- Teachers and parents can learn enough to follow along
- Inclusion in the classroom

### *DCMP Sight-Reading Braille Module*

The [Sight-Reading Braille modules](#) are designed to teach the basics of sight-reading braille. There are five parts which teach the braille alphabet, capitalization, and basic punctuation.

Braille proficiency represents competency, independence, and equality for students who are blind and low vision. When parents, teachers, and even peers learn to sight-read braille it provides an added level of support to these students.

These modules are designed for students and adults who want to learn to sight-read braille.

The five braille modules are designed to be completed in order:

1. Braille Characters a-j
2. Braille Characters k-t
3. Braille Characters u-z
4. Braille Capitalization
5. Braille Punctuation

You will need to use a standard keyboard for these modules. You CANNOT use a smartphone or tablet, unless you have an external keyboard for your tablet. Some exercises include a braille simulator app which requires a standard keyboard to type the braille characters.

To access the modules, simply create a free eLearner account with DCMP. If you're already a DCMP member, you can use your existing account to log in. eLearner account holders can access the modules but not DCMP media.

After you create an eLearner account, go to your eLearner Dashboard. There you'll find a list of modules you can start. You can also return to modules you have in progress.

At this time these modules do not have a certificate of completion.

The storyline of our modules are two students: Josh and Kristi. They have a new teacher, Mr. Michaels, who is blind. When they see him reading with his hands they want to learn more. So he set up an afterschool program to teach them the basics of braille.

### *Target Audience*

- Teachers
- Paras
- Peers
- Family members
- Students with progressive vision loss

We chose this approach because we wanted to reach a wide age range.

Much of the braille training that is out there is designed for adults and can be somewhat dry and academic.

We designed our modules to be fun and interactive. They are meant for ages fourth grade and up.

Often students who are blind or have low vision may feel left out and be embarrassed to use different methods of accessing information. Teachers can use our modules to teach the entire class about braille to create an environment of inclusion.

In addition, teachers and families can use our modules to learn themselves. There are other online programs out there that teach braille and are not trying to replace any of them. We just want to offer an additional resource that makes learning braille engaging for all ages. It can even be used in conjunction with other programs for additional practice.

Another benefit could be for students with progressive vision loss who are learning to sight read braille in preparation for tactile reading later.

### *Interactive Exercises*

The practice materials are designed to allow participants to always be successful. If you answer incorrectly, you can try again. As you progress through the modules the exercises will become more challenging. In the beginning, the braille cell will have numbered dots and a letter. Then just the letter and later just the braille cell. This allows the learner to develop confidence in their braille reading skills.

We have also developed a braille simulator which allows learners to type braille characters using a standard keyboard. We use the same keys as popular braille programs, so there will be no relearning if

you move on to more advanced programs. Once you have typed a word or sentence in the simulator activity you can print out your complete exercise to review later.

### *No Unlearning*

Currently, our training only goes through Grade 1, uncontracted braille. But we have chosen to use only words that do not conflict with Grade 2, contracted braille. This way learners will not need to unlearn or change how they type or read words as they move from Grade 1 to Grade 2 braille.

### *Accessibility with captions and description*



DCMP makes media accessible by adding captions for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing and description for individuals who are blind and have low vision. And American Sign Language (ASL) for students who prefer ASL to reading captions. These accessibility features help all students. Captions are shown to improve reading skills and audio description enhances vocabulary development. Parents, educators, and support personnel can sign up for a free account then access thousands of accessible videos, as well as many other resources.

### *Who Qualifies for Membership?*

Professionals who work with at least one student with a disability who is an early learner through high school age qualify for full membership. Families of these students qualify as well.

Additionally, college students who are in teacher training programs, interpreter training programs, and other programs for future professionals who will work with students with disabilities qualify. We want to be sure that they know about the resource and how to use them when they get into the classroom.

Just fill out an online application, verify your email, and your application will be processed within 2 business days.

Those who do not qualify for full membership can still sign up as an eLearner and access our online modules and our freely available videos.

### *How Can I Access DCMP Media?*

Access DCMP media on almost any Internet enabled device: computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone. We also have an app for the Roku and Apple TV. You can also order DVDs by mail. We ship it free and include return postage.

### *CEUs available through DCMP*

DCMP offers several opportunities for professionals to earn Continuing Education Credit. Trainings are pre-approved for RID (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf) and ACVREP (Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals). All participants who successfully complete a training will earn a certificate which can be used with other credentialing organizations. Here are some of our online trainings.

- **Access: Post-Production/Offline Captioning Module** Approved for 0.2 RID CEUs in GS.
- **Access: Realtime Speech-to-Text Module** Approved for 0.15 RID CEUs in GS.
- **Access: The Fundamentals Module** Approved for 0.1 RID CEUs in GS.
- **Access: Description Module (Teacher/Parent Version)** Approved for 0.2 RID CEUs in GS. Approved for 2 hours of ACVREP credit.
- **Access: Working With Students Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision** Approved for 3 hours of ACVREP credit.

For more information visit the website: <https://dcmp.org/elearning>.

### *Transition Curriculum*

#### **Map It: What Comes Next?**

This is a free, online, interactive training designed for transition-aged students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The training utilizes three questions:

- Who Am I?
- What Do I Want?
- How Do I Get There?

Video vignettes signed in ASL with spoken English and written transcription, self-assessments, and a series of interactive questions guide students as they identify their goals and develop strategies to achieve them. All interactive materials are saved and compiled in an electronic portfolio.

#### **Getting a Job! for Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired**

This online training was developed and designed for students who are blind and visually impaired and the professionals who work with them. Focusing on the transition from school to work, the training offers a series of activities, supporting documents, and topical videos designed to help the job seeker prepare for the world of work. It features several blind and low vision role models to guide students along the path to work.

## [Getting a Job! for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)

This online training was developed and designed for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and the professionals who work with them. Focusing on the transition from school to work, the training offers a series of activities, supporting documents and topical videos designed to help the job seeker prepare for the world of work. All the videos in the modules are presented in ASL, and are also voiced in English and captioned.

### *Other Modules*

#### **Access: Description Module (Student Version)**

***Access: Description Module Student Edition*** is an overview of description and why it is essential to providing access for individuals who are blind or have low vision. Students will learn what makes up high-quality description and what they should expect from description. They'll learn about the history of description and what laws promise them equal access to media. The module contains interactive components to engage students as they learn.

The module is designed for students in grades 6-12.

### *Contact Us*

Cindy Camp: [ccamp@dcmp.org](mailto:ccamp@dcmp.org)  
[info@dcmp.org](mailto:info@dcmp.org)