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# Supporting General Education Classroom Teachers of Braille-Reading Students.

## Subject Specific Information – Elementary

Braille using students in elementary classrooms require added support in many areas of the curriculum. As the classroom teacher you are expected to teach students the necessary skills that will help them gain access to the regular curriculum. You are not expected to do this alone!! Your school/district should have in place a Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI) that can help in planning and implementing programs that would benefit the braille reading student in your classroom. This person is a valuable resource and communication links between both you and the TVI should be established early. There are also organizations that help in implementing programs in the school that will help the child who is visually impaired. Some of these relationships may have been built before the child arrives at the school, but others may need to be contacted.

Literacy is the main objective when educating a child. Students who use braille need to be exposed to braille as other children in the class are exposed to print. Providing these experiences is the responsibility of parents, teachers, and other stakeholders involved in the student's IEP. The purpose of the links below is to provide you as the classroom teacher with a starting point to working with braille in your class.

## Art

As the classroom teacher, it is your responsibility to teach skills and concepts in art to all of your students, including your braille-reading student. You have probably noticed the enjoyment your elementary aged students get from participating in the rich and meaningful process of creating art. This will likely be true of your braille-reading student as well.

You may be wondering how your braille-reading is going to participate in drawing or painting activities if they have little to no vision. Remember, you have the ability and tools to provide a rich learning experience for your braille-reading student. There are many people that can help you, such as your student's TVI and teachers from previous years that have had an opportunity to teach art to your braille-reading student. The following information will provide you with strategies and tools used to teach art to your braille-reading student. Don't doubt yourself. You probably already have some great ideas!

**Considerations in Planning for Instruction in Art:**

When planning for your elementary art lesson, remind yourself of the unique learning process of your braille-reading student. Consider, for example, how your braille-reading student will learn about pottery. You will probably be showing your entire class examples of pottery that either you or others have made. By simply viewing the pottery, the majority of your class will instantly be provided with information about the type, style and characteristics of each piece. However, your braille-reading student may need to manually explore each piece of pottery in to obtain the same information, similar to putting together pieces of a puzzle to see the entire picture.

**Art Strategies for Learning:**

The following practical strategies will allow you to give your braille-reading student some of the pieces that he or she will need to put the art puzzle together.

- Be proactive in planning for how your braille-reading student will access your lesson. While planning your lesson, ask yourself, “How will my braille-reading student access the concepts learned in today’s lessons?” Make sure that you have an answer to this question before you teach your lesson.
- Set aside time for your braille-reading student to explore any equipment for upcoming art tools, demonstrations or field trips. Remember, if your student is familiarized with equipment ahead of time, they will likely put more energy toward their creativity, rather than learning how to use a tool.
- Verbalize all information that is written on the board or on posters. Pair your braille-reading student with a peer who can read allowed the notes from the board while your braille-reading student takes notes.
- Provide an electronic copy of your notes to your braille-reading student if they use high-tech devices, such as a braille notetaker or computer.
- Allow your braille-reading student to sit close to you when you are demonstrating an activity. Allow him or her to explore any equipment and supplies at appropriate times during your demonstration.
- Encourage ample dialogue about concepts that are learned in your art class. Pair your student with a peer to discuss their art projects.
- Take time from every class to individually touch base with your braille-reading student to ensure concept gaps are being addressed.
- Pay attention to your classroom environment. As you know, the classroom can easily become a cluttered mess during an art activity. This clutter can make it a little difficult for your student to move safely around his or her class. If classroom furniture has been moved, such as pushing

desks together to create peer groups, ensure that your braille-reading student knows about these changes ahead of time.

- Try not to discourage a student who wants to try using tools, such as a paintbrush or pencil, even if they don't have any vision. These experiences will provide your braille-reading student with a concrete understanding of the tools used to create different types of visual art.

### **Use of Art Supplies in the Classroom:**

Your elementary braille-reading student may initially need to be shown how to use the different tools in your art class. The following are some ideas of how to introduce your braille-reading student to tools and equipment used in the art room.

- **Explore the Tool** - Give the tool to your student and let them fully explore it. Provide them with information about the equipment, such as the name of the different parts of the tool. For example, if you are showing your student an easel, allow him or her to fully explore while you explain the how the different parts of the easel are used, such as the ledge where the paint brushes are held or the stand on which the canvas is placed.
- **Guide Hand Under Hand** - In demonstrating how to use a tool, ask your braille-reading student to put their hand over your hand while you use the tool. For example, if are demonstrating how to use a paintbrush to create long brush strokes, ask your student to place their hand over yours to feel the movements that your arm makes in the process.
- **Guide Hand Over Hand** - Once your student understands the idea, allow him or her to try it alone and if necessary, you can place your hand lightly over theirs to replicate the movement.
- **Independence** - Finally, move your hand away and let the student take over.

You may be wondering how your student is going to use other art tools, such as scissors. Remember that your student's TVI can help you answer these questions.

### **Additional Art Tools for your Braille-Reading Student**

At times, it may be necessary for your braille-reading student to use specific tools to create their art. For example, if you were planning a drawing activity, you may question how your braille-reading student is going to draw if they have little or no vision. The following is a list of tools that can be used for specifically for a student who will need a more tactile art experience:

**Tactile Drawing Board or Screen Board** - This is a textured board that, when drawn on, will produce raised lines.

**The Internet** - If you are teaching the history and culture of different types of artwork, the Internet can be an easily accessible tool for your braille-reading student to use.

**Wikki Sticks** - These flexible sticks are made out of a piece of yarn that has been dipped in wax. Wikki Sticks are cheap and fun tools to use. They are flexible enough to outline simple pictures and provide tactile guidelines for your braille-reading student.

**Materials in Daily Life** - Materials found in everyday life, such as egg cartons, cans, pine cones, plant leaves, sticks, and much more can be both cheap and easy to use.

### **Clay or Play Dough**

**Textured Paint** - Mix different textures, such as rice and sand, into different colours of paint to allow your braille-reading student to identify different colours.

Teaching art to braille-readers is a popular topic and many ideas have been shared among classroom teachers.

### **National Art Challenges for the Blind**

Two art challenges: Hellen Keller and APH. Every year they accept art work from kids all over North America.

## Language Arts

As the classroom teacher, it is your responsibility to teach skills and concepts in your language arts class to all of your students, including your braille-reading student. Just like you, many elementary school teacher have a lot of questions in how to teach a braille-reading student concepts learned in the language arts classroom, especially since many general education teachers are unfamiliar with the braille code.

First of all, take a deep breath and remind yourself that you are a trained teacher who has the necessary skills to teach language arts in your classroom. In addition to your general teaching knowledge, you will have the help of your student's teacher of the visually impaired to help you make decisions on how make learning accessible for your braille reading student. The following information will provide with strategies and tools to help you along the way.

### **Considerations in Planning for Instruction in Language Arts**

When planning for your elementary language art lesson, remind yourself of the unique learning process of your braille-reading student. Consider, for example, how your braille-reading student will complete an activity where they have to make a prediction on what is going to happen in the story by looking at the picture. Since your braille-reading student may not be able to access the picture, they will need an alternate way to get the same information as the rest of the student in your language arts class. As a teacher, you should be prepared to create lessons that are accessible to your student. While this may

initially seem like an uncomfortable task, the adaptation that you make can be as simple as asking one of your students to describe, to the class, what is seen in the picture.

### **Language Arts Strategies for Learning**

The following practical strategies will allow you to give your braille-reading student some of the pieces that he or she will need to put the art puzzle together.

- While planning your lesson, ask yourself, “How will my braille-reading student access the concepts learned in today’s lessons?” Make sure that you have an answer to this question before you teach your lesson.
- Set aside time for your braille-reading student to explore the braille version of a book prior to use in class
- Verbalize all information that is written on the board or on posters. Pair your braille-reading student with a peer who can read aloud the notes from the board while your braille-reading student takes notes.
- Provide an electronic copy of your notes to your braille-reading student if they use high-tech devices, such as a braille notetaker or computer.
- Encourage ample dialogue about concepts that are learned in your language arts class. Pair your student with a peer to discuss concepts.
- Take time from every class to individually touch base with your braille-reading student to ensure concept gaps are being addressed.

### **Language Arts Tools for Learning**

Your braille-reading student will likely use specific tools to access your language curriculum. Your student’s TVI will help you understand how these tools are used. The following is a list of possible tools that may be used by your braille-reading student in the social studies class.

- Slate and Stylus, Perkins Braille or other electronic braille notetaker for reading and writing.
- Computer with Jaws or other speech program.
- Social Studies textbooks or informational books available in braille.
- Tactile maps, charts or graphs.

### **Additional Resources**

It is likely that you will continue to have questions about strategies and methods of teaching language arts to your braille-reading student. Although you may feel a little hesitant in your skills, remember that you are not alone. Your TVI will provide you with as many resources as you need. You can also find a list of rich resources on-line.

# Mathematics

As the classroom teacher, it is your responsibility to teach mathematics concepts to all of your students, including your braille-reading student. Teaching math to elementary braille-reading students can be a fun and exciting experience. In fact, many elementary math teachers report that the adaptations they make for their braille-reading student help all of the students in the class better understand abstract mathematical concepts. Remember, you are not alone in this process. Your student's TVI will guide you in developing adaptation and teaching strategies so that your braille-reading student can access your math curriculum.

## **Considerations in Planning for Instruction in Mathematics**

When planning for your elementary math lesson, keep in mind the following important point about the power of learning through vision. Your vision is like a digital camera, allowing you to quickly and seamlessly 'chunk' visual information into your memory. When you look at a cat, you understand, in a matter of seconds, the unique characteristics of the entire animal. You can instantly compare and contrast these characteristics with other animals that you have seen, such as a dog or a rabbit. Unlike a digital camera, the learning process of your braille-reading student is constructed in parts, kind of like a puzzle. Your braille-reading student must learn to sequentially put the pieces of this puzzle together to understand concepts, such as 'catness', in its entirety.

## **Math Strategies for Learning**

There are many simple strategies that you can use to help your braille-reading student put the 'pieces of the math puzzle' together. The following list of learning strategies will help you in your teaching process. Some of these strategies can even be used with your entire class:

- Provide your student with manipulatives to manually explore elementary math concepts.
- Encourage plenty of dialogue about the concepts being learned. For example, your braille-reading student can be paired with his or her peer to discuss how to solve a problem.
- Relate math concepts to things that are already familiar to your braille-reading student.
- Provide opportunities for your braille-reading student to show you how to solve an early elementary math problem using their manipulatives. This strategy can also be used for test taking.
- Ensure all handouts and notes are transcribed and ready to hand out with the materials for the rest of the class. Consider how concept gaps can develop if students don't have the necessary materials they need for their learning.

## **Math Tools for Learning**

Your student's TVI will help you outline some of the tools your student will need for them to help them access your math curriculum. The following is a list of math tools that may be used by your student.

- Manipulatives
- Cramer's Abacus

- Tactile ruler or measuring tape
- Tactile or brailled number line
- Low Tech devices, such as a slate and stylus or Perkins Braille
- High tech devices, such electronic braille notetakers
- Tactile graph paper, clocks

### **The Nemeth Code**

The [Nemeth Code](#) is a tactile representation of the math and science materials. This code is different from the literary braille code. Your elementary braille-reading student may be learning how to read and write using the Nemeth Code. Don't worry, it is not your job to teach this code. Your student will be instructed to use this code by his or her TVI.

### **Additional Resources**

It is likely that you will continue to have questions about teaching mathematics to your braille-reading student. Remember, you are not alone. In fact, this area of learning is of great interest to many educators working with visually impaired students. Your student's TVI will have [many resources](#) that will help you. However, there are many rich Internet resources that you can access yourself. As nervous as you are now, with a little bit of practice, you will be able to effectively teach mathematics to your elementary braille-reading student.

## Music

Students with a visual impairment have the same innate hearing and musical ability as any child, however they may be more interested in sounds and consequently may learn to pay closer attention to what they hear. A student in a music class will most likely enjoy the class as much as any child and should be encouraged to participate fully.

There are some considerations to ensure that the student is successful in the class, such as where the student sits, making the instruments available and sheet music. An orientation and mobility specialist will likely work with the child to help the student be comfortable and independent in the class, helping the student to know where and how to access the instrument room, seating and stands. The teacher of students with visual impairments may assist the student by accessing braille music technology to help the student to be successful.

## Physical Education

As the elementary classroom teacher, it is your responsibility to teach physical education curriculum to all of your students, including your braille-reading student. The benefits of physical fitness extend beyond health. The skills you teach in your physical education class provides students with opportunities to learn the importance of cooperation, teamwork, spatial awareness, body awareness, balance,

coordination, agility and focus. Unfortunately this very important area of education tends to be one of the most neglected for many braille-reading students. Some feel that there is a real lack of opportunities for braille-reading students to participate in physical activities, due, in part, to barriers such as societal attitudes about the physical abilities of blind or visually impaired children, (Lieberman & Hand, 2006).

Interestingly enough, the negative implications of being 'excused' from participating in physical education activities are magnified for the visually impaired child. Vision allows you to safely and efficiently move through different environments. Naturally, your student's visual impairment will cause him or her to extend additional energy to perform tasks that involve gross motor and even fine motor movements. If your braille-reading student is not provided with the opportunity to learn adequate biomechanics, such as balance and coordination, even simple, daily living tasks will become an onerous and exhausting job for him or her to accomplish.

Fortunately, many classroom educators have had similar concerns arise from teaching a braille-reading student in the inclusive physical education class. As a result, several resources have been developed for classroom teachers like yourself. It is likely that you already have strategies that you have used with your braille-reading student in your PE lesson. Remember, you are not alone in this process. Your student's TVI will help you develop strategies so that your braille-reading student can access the PE curriculum.

The following information will provide you with strategies to teach and include your braille-reading student in the inclusive PE setting.

### **Considerations in Planning for Instruction in Physical Education**

When planning your PE lesson, it will be necessary for you to think about the unique learning process of your braille-reading student. Consider how easy it is for your class to learn from watching you demonstrate the technique of kicking a soccer ball. Visual demonstrations provide your students with immediate information about the how this action is carried out. In fact, the majority of students in your class will be provided with additional incidental learning opportunities from observing this technique while watching a soccer game. Your braille-reading student will not have the same quick and incidental learning experiences as the rest of your students. Instead, he or she will need to be taught specific movement skills in sequential chunks in order to understand the entire skill.

### **Physical Education Strategies for Learning**

There are many ways in which you can help your braille-reading student participate in meaningful physical activities in your inclusive PE class. The following is a list of simple strategies.

#### *Safety Strategies*

- Ask your student's TVI specific questions about the nature of your braille-reading student's visual impairment. It will be good to know if there are any safety concerns with the potential of being hit on the head with a ball.

- Orient your braille-reading student to their gym space prior to your lesson. This will be especially important at times when significant changes are made to the gym floor plan, such as temporarily setting up gymnastics equipment.

### *Skill Teaching Strategies*

- Teach movement skills in a sequential order. Instruct your braille-reading student in gross motor skills before teaching fine motor skills. For example, the simple action of throwing a ball starts with the gross motor skill of taking a step and preparing the muscles in your legs, back, shoulder and arm to throw the ball. The final movement of letting the ball roll from the tips of your fingers is a fine motor skill.

### *Spatial and Body Awareness Teaching Strategies*

- Have your braille-reading student verbalize where his or her body is in relation to an object or person. Encourage him or her to use descriptive vocabulary, such as above, under, beside, to the left/right, on top, beneath, to help him or her verbalize where their body is in space.
- Use balance boards to teach body and special awareness. Balance board activities will also allow your student to practice their reaction skills.
- Teach games that allow your braille-reading student different ways his or her body can move in space. Games that require your braille-reading student to pretend that they are different animal will encourage him or her to explore different movements in a fun way and safe way.
- Spend time showing your braille-reading student how to perform a movement or skill. You could pair your braille-reading student with a peer to practice these skills.

### *Other Strategies*

- Consider using high contrast or audible balls.
- Verbalize any demonstrations of skills that you are teaching

There are many other strategies and suggestions for teaching physical education to braille-reading students in the inclusive setting. Remember, you can always ask your TVI questions about where to get these resources. There are also several wonderful resource guides that are available to you on line.

### **Challenging PE Activities**

There may be times in which your braille-reading student simply cannot participate in a physical activity. This is okay. For many braille-reading students, the idea of participating in activities that require good visual-motor coordination, such as Doctor Dodge Ball or volleyball, is a very frustrating or even scary thought. Realize, however, that this does not mean that your braille-reading student should be excused from learning about these types of sport. There are many social implications attached to simply knowing how a sport is played. Consider, for example, the amount of hockey dialogue that takes place during hockey season. If your braille-reading student is not familiar with this game, he or she will have a difficult time taking part in such typical social interactions among elementary school children.

If you feel that your braille-reading student cannot inclusively participate in an activity, consider providing the following adaptations for their learning:

- Teach your student the basic rules of the game.
- Show your student the basic movements used in the sport. Provide your braille-reading student with opportunities to practice these basic skills and movements individually, in pairs or small groups.
- Take your braille-reading student on a field trip to a sports game or encourage them to listen to the game on the radio or TV.
- Assign your student the task of researching the history of the sport that you are teaching in your class. Allow them to do a presentation about what they learned during one of your classes.

### **Student Volunteers or Peer Helpers in your PE Classroom**

Some elementary schools encourage students from the local high schools to volunteer their time in the elementary PE class. While the idea of having a high school student volunteer who is excited about PE and willing to help is welcomed by most classroom teachers, it is important to remember that you are the one with the expertise in teaching. The following is a list of guidelines on how to use student volunteers who work with braille-reading students in the PE class.

- Provide training time to show your peer helper how to work with your braille-reading student.
- Give direct and specific directions to your peer helper so that he or she is not left to make decisions about how to adapt an activity for your braille-reading student.
- Pay attention to where your high school student volunteer works with your braille-reading student. Asking your student volunteer to work in a different room without your supervision can quickly become a question of liability. Remember, you are responsible for the safety of your students in the PE class.
- Provide opportunities for your high school student volunteer to work with a little group of two to three students rather than only working with your braille-reading student.

### **Games for the Visually Impaired**

There are many highly competitive games and activities that are played by visually impaired athletes from around the world. The following links will provide you with information about Paralympics sports for the visually impaired.

- [Goal Ball](#)
- [Running](#)
- [Cycling](#)
- [Skiing](#)
- [Swimming](#)

## Reading and Writing Instruction

Children who are blind or visually impaired who will use braille as their primary literacy medium are learning to read and write braille much like children who are sighted learn print reading and writing. You will be an important member of the educational team for braille-reading children who are learning to

read. Including your student in class literacy activities will be very important and can be done with the help of your student's teacher of students with visual impairments. The following information may be helpful:

Who will take responsibility? Teaching braille reading and writing to students who are blind is a shared responsibility. While the teacher of students with visual impairments will be highly involved in reading and writing instruction and will likely take the lead in reading instruction, he or she will not likely be available throughout your student's school day. Because early reading and writing instruction is infused throughout the school day, it will be important for you to take responsibility for making sure that your braille-reading student is included in balanced literacy program throughout the day.

What is unique about what my braille-reading student will learn? In addition to learning the same reading and writing skills as your print-reading students, a braille-reader will need support from a teacher of students with visual impairments in the following areas:

- Use of tactile skills for discriminating different braille cells, tracking across the line and moving the fingers smoothly and evenly.
- Concept development for student's understanding of visually based information (e.g., a flickering flame of a candle, a zebra's stripes, the moon and stars).
- Use of unique characters (contractions) in the braille code.

As with print reading students, it is important to create a strong foundation for literacy early in the student's life. To create this foundation, the teacher of students with visual impairments and the general education classroom teacher should make sure that a significant amount of time is dedicated to reading and writing instruction each day. This instruction should be conducted by a qualified teacher.

In addition, it is important to create an accessible literacy environment in which your student has numerous materials available for reading and writing independently, and in collaborative groups. Finally, it is essential to create opportunities for braille reading and writing skills to be applied throughout the school day and at home.

## Science

As the elementary classroom teacher, it is your responsibility to teach science concepts to all of your students, including your braille-reading student. Teaching science to your braille-reading student can be a wonderful experience. The teaching strategies that you use will guide your braille-reading student to discover the world around them in a meaningful way.

If you are feeling a little out of your comfort zone, remember, you are not alone! Your student's TVI will help you develop strategies to help your braille-reading student access your science curriculum.

**Considerations in Planning for Instruction in Science**

When planning for your elementary science lesson, keep in mind the unique learning process of your braille-reading student. Much of the science class is visual. Students view pictures, charts and graphs that demonstrate a scientific process that otherwise would be impossible to view in its entirety. Consider the ease in learning the process of metamorphosis by examining a diagram and pictures of the process from larva to butterfly. However, your braille-reading student will need to explore each step of the metamorphosis individually to create a whole understanding of the process, similar to putting together a puzzle to create a whole picture.

**Science Strategies for Learning**

You can help your braille-reading student put together the pieces of the puzzle in a sequential and concrete way. You will be happy to hear how simple and practical these strategies are. In fact, you may already be using many of the strategies in the following list:

- Use a discovery approach in your learning. Encourage your braille-reading student find answers to questions and problems.
- Consider a hands-on approach to teaching. Provide models of concepts available for your student to explore. Your student's TVI can help you get some of these resources.
- Set aside time for your braille-reading student to explore any equipment for upcoming science experiments, demonstrations or field trips.
- Verbalize all information that is written on the board or on posters. Pair your braille-reading student with a peer who can read notes from the board for your student to braille.
- Provide an electronic copy of your notes to your braille-reading student if they use high-tech devices, such as a braille notetaker or computer.
- Speak with your braille-reading student about topics of upcoming science units. Try to be a detective and figure out any gaps in your student's understanding. Do this will offer valuable information about the 'pieces of the puzzle' that your student has and the pieces that are missing.
- Allow your braille-reading student to sit close to you when you are demonstrating an activity. If the materials are safe to touch, let your student explore any equipment and supplies at appropriate times during your presentation.
- Encourage ample dialogue about concepts that are learned in your science class. Pair your student with a peer to discuss and solve problems.
- Take time from every class to individually touch base with your braille-reading student to ensure concept gaps are being addressed.

**Science Tools for Learning**

Your braille-reading student will use specific tools to access your science curriculum. Your student's TVI will help you understand how these tools are used. The following is a list of possible tools that may be used by your braille-reading student in the science class.

- Slate and Stylus, Perkins Braille or other electronic braille notetaker for reading and writing.
- Computer with Jaws or other speech program.
- Science textbooks or informational books available in braille.

- Tactile rulers and measuring tape. You may need to adapt some of the science materials by yourself, such including tactile markers on a beaker measuring guide or thermometer.

**Additional Resources**

As you work with your braille-reading student, it is likely that you will continue to have questions about teaching science to your student. Although you may feel a little hesitant in your skills, remember that you are not alone. Other elementary educators have had similar questions and concerns. Your TVI will provide you with as many resources as you need. You can also find a list of rich resources on-line.

## Social Studies

As the elementary classroom teacher, it is your responsibility to teach the social studies curriculum to all of your students, including your braille-reading student. By teaching concepts and ideas from the social studies curriculum, you provide a way for your students to gain insight in important areas such as history, culture, values, place, geography, environment and citizenship. Your students learn to make connections between disciplines, identify problems and issues within their immediate and extended environments, and gather and analyze information about the world around them. You will be able to provide the same rich learning experiences to your braille-reading student. Your student's TVI will help you in developing tools and strategies to help you along the way.

**Considerations in Planning for Instruction in Social Studies:**

When planning for your social studies lesson, begin by reminding yourself about the unique learning processes of your braille-reading student. If you are teaching a unit about Canada's geography, you will likely need to give your class a map to review. Consider the ease in learning about the features of Canada's landscape simply by looking at this map. You probably have a map of Canada hanging up on your classroom wall. Consider the extent of incidentally learning that is happening every time your students look at that map. The learning process of your braille-reading student will be a little different. Your braille-reading student will need to explore the map in sequential pieces to develop the same holistic understanding of it, similar to putting pieces of a puzzle together to view a whole picture.

It is important that you take a proactive approach when creating your social studies lessons. While planning your lesson, ask yourself, "How will my braille-reading student access the concepts learned in today's lessons?" Make sure that you have an answer to this question before you teach your lesson.

The following information will provide you with strategies to teach and include your braille-reading student in your inclusive social studies class.

**Strategies for Learning:**

The following strategies will help your braille-reading student access you social studies curriculum:

- Use a discovery approach in your learning. Encourage your braille-reading student find answers to questions and problems.

- Use a hands-on approach to teaching social studies. Provide your braille-reading students with real objects to explore.
- Relate the real life experiences of your braille-reading student to concepts being learned in your social studies class.
- Encourage lots of dialogue during the learning process. Pair your braille-reading student with a peer to discuss issues and problems.
- Verbalize all information that is written on the board or on posters. Pair your braille-reading student with a peer who can read notes from the board for your student to braille.
- Provide an electronic copy of your notes to your braille-reading student if they use high-tech devices, such as a braille notetaker or computer.
- Speak with your braille-reading student about topics of upcoming social studies units. Be a detective and try to look for any gaps in your student's understanding.
- Frequently touch base with your braille-reading student during your class to make sure that he or she is actively participating in your lesson activities.
- Prepare your braille-reading student for any upcoming fieldtrips. It may be necessary for him or her to be orientated to the fieldtrip site ahead of time.

**Social Studies Tools for Learning:**

Your braille-reading student will likely use specific tools to access your science curriculum. Your student's TVI will help you understand how these tools are used. The following is a list of possible tools that may be used by your braille-reading student in the social studies class.

- Slate and Stylus, Perkins Braille or other electronic braille notetaker for reading and writing.
- Computer with Jaws or other speech program.
- Social Studies textbooks or informational books available in braille.
- Tactile maps, charts or graphs.

**Additional Resources:**

It is likely that you will continue to have questions about strategies and methods of teaching social studies to your braille-reading student. Although you may feel a little hesitant in your skills, remember that you are not alone. Your TVI will provide you with as many resources as you need. You can also find a list of rich resources on-line.