



## **UNIT 1. MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY**

### **ELEMENT 5. MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES**

#### **BRAILLE**

#### **Other Video Transcript**

- NARRATOR** Unit 1, Media accessibility; element 5, Media accessibility services; Braille.
- NARRATOR** Overview. This video is about Braille, a writing and reading system made of small raised marks that users feel with their fingers. Braille is mainly used by persons who are blind or have low vision. This video introduces this accessibility service and shows the personal experience of a user.
- BLANCA ARIA** Hello! I'm Blanca Arias, a member of the Catalan Association for the Promotion of Accessibility. In this short video we'll be presenting braille, a writing and reading system made of small raised marks that users feel with their fingers. Braille is mainly used by persons who are blind or have low vision. The system was created in the 19th century and is named after its creator, Louis Braille, a Frenchman who lost his sight as a result of a childhood accident. In this video, three

participants, braille users and experts, will let us know where braille comes from, how it works, and why it is important. These participants are: Joan Bestard, the president of ACPA in Barcelona; Leidy Aldana, a blind student from the University of the Basque Country who lives in Vitoria-Gasteiz; and Melissa Tondi, a curator at the Louis Braille Museum in Milan. They'll be speaking in their native languages, namely: Catalan, Spanish, and Italian. Let's begin!

JOAN BESTARD

Braille is a tactile code for writing and reading. Each letter is represented by a combination of 6 dots located in different cells. The combination of these 6 dots creates 64 different results. These 64 results are the letters and symbols that we use to write any word. There are several techniques to read braille, but the most common one is to follow the line of text with the tip of your right hand's index finger while using your left hand to stay in the correct line and locate the beginning of the next one, so you don't lose track. When reading, and also writing, in braille it's important to use thick stock paper to make sure it is resistant and it won't tear when we puncture it. That's why books in braille tend to be bigger and bulkier.

NARRATOR

How many people use Braille today?

MELISSA TONDI

It's difficult to provide a final answer to this question. Last data from the WHO, from 2014, show that 285 million people have visual disability.



This is a lot. Very frequently, sight loss is caused by a treatable disease. Let's say that, out of those, 80% of cases can be cured. And there are means of prevention. In Italy, it's estimated that 1.500.000 people have low vision, so quite a bigger number than the 200.000 people who have total blindness. Persons with low vision have residual sight and are able to perceive, to an extent, what's around them, while totally blind persons are far smaller in number.

NARRATOR

A personal experience with braille.

LEIDY ALDANA

I'm Leidy, I live in Spain. I'll tell you my experience with braille. It's actually the only alphabet that I know, since I learned to write and read using braille. I remember I started learning it with games and toys at nursery school. They helped me become familiar with the idea of braille having six dots, with the combinations for each letter, and so on. Just like my sighted peers were learning to read in print. Books with pictures and tales came later. I remember that, back then, there weren't that many, so it was also my family's task to make inclusive children stories. They would buy printed books and transcribe them into braille. That way we could read them together, and that's how they seeded into me my appreciation for books. Later I learned how to read and write in braille at a school level with a Perkins braille, which I used throughout elementary and



middle school. Regarding books, I keep good memories of the *Fairy Oak* series. I remember it consisted of many book in its braille version, but I didn't care, because it probably was the book series that made me love reading. When I started my BA in Translation and Interpreting, I started using the braille display. I slowly switched from paper braille to digital braille, which is currently my basic working tool. I'm studying French and English and I can't imagine doing it without the braille display, unable to check in braille if what I've written is correct. For me, it's the best way to learn a new language. Actually... I think that braille's future lies in technology. I think it will be the most inclusive and accessible way to keep it alive. Thank you very much.

NARRATOR

Why is braille important?

MELISSA TONDI

Braille is important to access books, and above all to access knowledge. It is being less used lately, sadly, partly because of audiobooks or new uses of technology. The Institute and the Union of the Blind recommends learning braille, because braille is important. It's a way of writing, as I was saying, but also a way of creating a mental image. That is essential to be able to grasp meanings, to apply a logic, or a form of discourse. Without writing, this is impossible. Having, for example, a synthesis, an outline, creating a mental framework like the ones used by sighted people. Writing is vital to reach



knowledge, both for blind and sighted people.

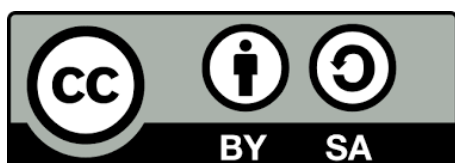
Writing, in this case by means of marks and with the use of touch, is necessary for the cultural development of the person.

NARRATOR

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