

# World Braille Day

## When Is World Braille Day?

World Braille Day is celebrated on the 4th January. This is Louis Braille's birthday, the inventor of braille.



## What Is Braille?

Braille is a code that is used to help people who are blind, to read and write. It is made up of lots of bumps and dips on a page. These bumps and dips all have different meanings.

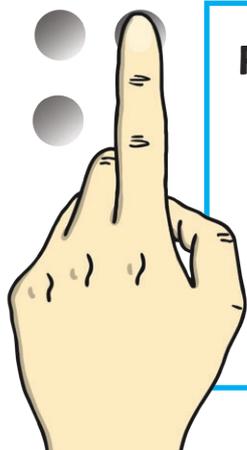
Example:



The different bumps and dips can be used to show letters, numbers and even punctuation. Braille is read by running your fingertips over the bumps and dips, to work out what they mean.

## A Universal Code

Braille is a code that is used all around the world. As well as reading and writing, it can be used for different languages, in music and even on computers. As well as in books, you may see braille at train stations so that blind people can find which train they need to catch.



### Facts about Louis Braille

- Born: 4th January 1809, in France.
- Job: Professor and inventor.
- Fact: Was blind at age 3 after an accident. He invented braille at 15 years old.

# Questions

1. When is World Braille Day?

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2. How do people read braille?

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3. What jobs did Louis Braille have?

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4. Finish this sentence; Braille is made up of bumps and ...

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5. Do they use braille in other countries?

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6. Do you think it would be easy to read braille? Why?

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# Answers

1. When is World Braille Day?  
**World Braille Day is the 4th January every year.**
2. How do people read braille?  
**People read braille using their fingertips.**
3. What jobs did Louis Braille have?  
**Louis Braille was an inventor and a professor.**
4. Finish this sentence; Braille is made up of bumps and ...  
**Braille is made up of bumps and dips.**
5. Do they use braille in other countries?  
**Yes, braille is used all around the world.**
6. Do you think it would be easy to read braille? Why?  
**Varied answers.**

# World Braille Day

## When Is World Braille Day?

World Braille Day is on 4th January every year. This day is chosen to celebrate the invention of this code because it is the birthday of Louis Braille, the inventor of braille.



## What Is Braille?

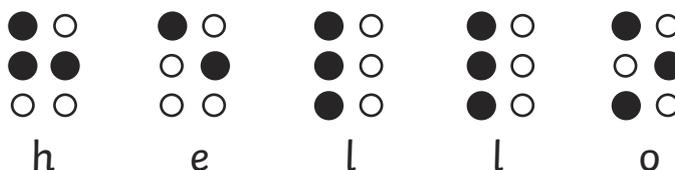
Braille is a special code that can be used to help people who are blind or visually impaired, to read and write. The code was invented after Louis Braille became blind himself. He had a terrible accident when he was little and decided to make a new way of communicating. He started making patterns using raised bumps and indents (dips) on a page. These patterns can mean letters, numbers or punctuation, and are read by running your fingertips over them.

## A Universal Code

Since braille is a code, it can be used across different languages, in music and even computer programming, as the computer recognises the different patterns. Braille allows people to read and write when they have difficulties seeing. It allows people the opportunity to communicate with each other.

### Making a Braille Book

A type of typewriter can be used to write braille, by pushing dots onto paper. Louis Braille's code is organised into groups of six dots (a 3 x 2 pattern). Each group represents a letter, number or piece of punctuation.



# Questions

1. Why is World Braille Day celebrated on 4th January?

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2. Why did Louis Braille invent braille?

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3. What can each of the patterns mean?

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4. Where else can braille be used?

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5. Do you have to be blind to read braille?

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6. How many dots are on a braille grid?

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7. Why does braille need to have numbers, letters and punctuation?

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8. If you could invent anything, what would you invent?

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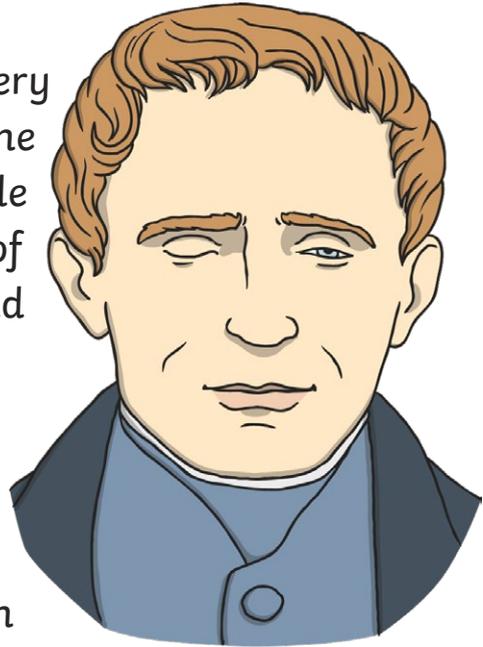
# Answers

1. Why is World Braille Day celebrated on 4th January?  
**It is Louis Braille's birthday.**
2. Why did Louis Braille invent braille?  
**Louis Braille went blind after an accident when he was young, so he decided to invent braille to help blind people read and write.**
3. What can each of the patterns mean?  
**Each of the patterns can mean letters, numbers or punctuation.**
4. What is a braille?  
**A braille is like a typewriter that pushes dots onto paper.**
5. Where else can braille be used?  
**Braille can be used in different languages, for music and computer programming.**
6. How many dots are on a braille grid?  
**There are six dots on a braille grid.**
7. Why does braille need to have numbers, letters and punctuation?  
**In order to communicate effectively, you need to use letters, numbers and punctuation.**
8. If you could invent anything, what would you invent?  
**Varied answers.**

# World Braille Day

## When Is World Braille Day?

World Braille Day is celebrated every year on 4th January, the birthday of the inventor of braille, Louis Braille. Braille invented the Braille code as a way of helping visually impaired and blind people to read and write.



## What Is Braille?

Braille is a code which uses a sequence of raised bumps and indents (dips) to create patterns. These patterns can mean letters, numbers or punctuation and can therefore be used to communicate ideas. Braille is read by running your fingertips over the patterns. Louis Braille was blinded in an accident when he was 3 and he unfortunately lost his sight in both eyes. Before Braille invented this form of communication, visually impaired people read using the Haüy system, which embossed Latin letters on thick paper or leather. This was a complicated system that required much training and only allowed people to read, not write. Discouraged by this, at the age of 15, Louis Braille invented the braille code.

## A Universal Code

Around 150 million people use braille as a way of communicating around the world. Braille has transformed the lives of many visually impaired people and has allowed them to interact and communicate with people with fewer barriers. Braille can be used in many other ways, such as in music or computer programming.



Braille is also used by people who are not visually impaired. It can be read by anyone who recognises the patterns of the dots. Braille is found in public areas such as libraries, train stations and museums, to ensure that everyone is able to access everyday activities.

### Making a Braille Book

Braille can be written in several ways. A brailier is like a typewriter but instead of printing letters or numbers, it pushes the dots onto the paper. An embossed brailier only has six keys and a space bar. This is because braille is written in patterns of six dots (a 3 x 2 grid).

Below are some examples of braille:



a



b



c



d



h



e



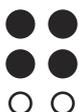
l



l



o



g



o



o



d



b



y



e

# Questions

1. Who was Louis Braille trying to help?  
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2. What is braille?  
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3. When did Louis Braille become blind?  
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4. What does the word 'indent' mean?  
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5. Why was Louis Braille's system better than the Haüy system?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. How has braille helped blind and visually impaired people?  
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7. What kind of letters were printed in the Haüy system?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Why is it important that it is World Braille Day?  
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9. Which activities would be difficult if you were blind?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Where else (other than in books), might you see braille?  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Answers

1. Who was Louis Braille trying to help?  
**He was trying to help visually impaired and blind people.**
2. What is braille?  
**Braille is a code using a sequence of bumps and indents to create patterns.**
3. When did Louis Braille become blind?  
**Louis Braille became blind in an accident when he was 3.**
4. What does the word 'indent' mean?  
**'Indent' is a dip inwards or a dip in the paper.**
5. Why is Louis Braille's system better than the Haüy system?  
**Louis Braille's system is better because you can read and write with it. You also don't need special training in order to use it.**
6. How has braille helped blind and visually impaired people?  
**It has helped visually impaired and blind people to communicate and read when otherwise they may not have been able to.**
7. What kind of letters were printed in the Haüy system?  
**Embossed Latin letters were printed.**
8. Why is it important that it is World Braille Day?  
**Children's own answers.**  
**There are blind people all over the world so it is important to include everyone in the celebration.**
9. Which activities would be difficult if you were blind?  
**Varied answers. May include, reading a bus timetable, finding information from road signs.**
10. Where else (other than in books), might you see braille?  
**You might see braille in public areas such as libraries, train stations and museums.**