



BRAILLE

Introduce your Group to the basics of Braille with this activity



Suitable for **Cubs+**

Braille is a writing technique that enables people who are blind or partially sighted to read by touching a sequence of raised dots with their fingertips. Braille characters are small rectangular blocks consisting of six dots (called cells) and every character has its individual pattern of raised dots.

This activity shows you how to create a basic form of Braille. Once finished, ask your Scouts to read one another's writing so they can appreciate the interpretation required for this impressive form of communication.

Where is Braille?

For years, Braille has been used to provide safety warnings on medicine packets, as well as on bleach bottles, but you can now find it in other places, including on the doors of public toilets, pedestrian crossings, restaurant menus, cashpoints, some bottles of alcohol and other household products. Some countries, such as Canada, even use a form of Braille on their bank notes. Why don't you encourage your Group to look for Braille in the world around them?

What to do

1 Ask your Scouts to familiarise themselves with the Braille alphabet (printed at the bottom of the page) before choosing one or two words to write. They should keep their words a secret from their fellow Scouts.

2 Now ask them to practise writing their words in Braille on the downloadable Braille grid.

3 Give each Scout a small piece of card and ask them to fold it in half. They should write their words in written English on the inside of the card. Folding the card

back over, they should then stick a fresh piece of Braille grid on the front and write out the words in Braille on the front with a pencil.

4 Once they're happy with their Braille, each Scout should use nail varnish to create the dots, being careful not to smudge their handiwork.

5 Leave the cards to dry in a well-ventilated area for up to 20 minutes. Once dry, encourage your Scouts to swap cards with each other and to try to decipher each other's messages.

You will need

- Photocopies of the Braille alphabet (below)
- Photocopies of the Braille grid (download from tinyurl.com/lhqfzub)
- Pencils and erasers
- Sheets of card, cut into 10cm x 10cm squares
- Scissors and glue
- Old nail varnish, glitter pens or gloopy glue

The alphabet

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
•○	•○	••	••	•○	••	••	•○	○•	○•	○•	•○	••
○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•
○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
••	•○	••	••	•○	••	○•	○•	○•	○•	••	••	••
○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•
○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•	○•

RNIB Supporting people with sight loss

More info
To find out more about Braille, blindness and visual impairments, visit rnib.org.uk.