

Content

- Invention of the braille alphabet
- The braille alphabet in practice
- The braille alphabet in different languages

Target group

- Children ages 8 to 12
- Level: A1+/A2

Language goals

The children will be able to

- Understand a short (technical) film
- Find precise information in a text
- Expand their passive and active vocabulary
- Understand technical terminology in context
- Understand and answer simple thematic questions
- Formulate their ideas/opinions using simple verbal tools
- Use and develop learning strategies (research on the Internet, make conjectures, reconstruct processes, correctly spell words from dictation)
- Understand and follow instructions

Word bank

blind (blind), *Blindenschrift* (braille alphabet), *Punkt* (dot), *Punktschrift* (braille), *Alphabet* (alphabet), *Buchstabe* (character), *einen Brief lesen/schreiben* (read/write a letter), *Schreibmaschine* (typewriter), *ein Blatt Papier* (a sheet of paper), *Taste* (key), *Wörter tippen* (type words), *Taste drücken* (press a key), *Kugelspitzen* (ball points), *ins Papier stanzen* (punch into paper), *die Buchstaben mit der Fingerspitze fühlen/erkennen* (feel/recognize the characters with one's fingertips), *Zeichen* (character), *genial* (amazing)

Materials

- Laptop and projector
- Audio speakers
- Blackboard and chalk/whiteboard and markers
- 6 numbered eggs, 2 6-egg cartons
- Brown paper
- Glue
- Colored cards
- Pens
- Student portfolios

Materials for printing and/or copying

- *Dots* (Punkte) image cards
- *Braille alphabet* (Punktschriftalphabet) worksheet
- *The Braille Alphabet* (Blindenschrift) character table
- *Louis Braille* quiz and answer key
- *Braille Alphabet* (Blindenschrift) word bank
- My word bank *Braille Alphabet* (Blindenschrift)
- *Now I Know* (Ich kann schon) questionnaire

Duration

3x45minutes

Before the lecture/film

Step	Content	Materials
1	Instructor welcomes the children and attaches the <i>Dots</i> (Punkte) image cards to the board. Instructor starts a discussion with the group: <i>What is this? This is a ball. This is a ladybug. These are dominos etc. What do all of these have in common? They have dots.</i>	Blu-tack; <i>Dots</i> (Punkte) image cards
2	Instructor continues: <i>Where else are there dots in our lives?</i> Students share ideas, for example: - <i>Red/black dot in school,</i> - <i>Dots, such as a rash on your body when you are sick</i> Instructor records the students' ideas on the board. Instructor asks: <i>Do you think dots can be used to read and write? Have you heard of such a thing? For whom could this be useful?</i> Instructor suggests: <i>Let's watch the first part of the film.</i>	Blackboard and chalk or whiteboard and markers

During the lecture/film

Step	Content	Materials
3	Instructor and children watch the beginning of the film (from minute 2:35 to 3:00). Instructor asks: <i>Do you have an idea of who wrote this letter and who can read it? What type of alphabet is this? Who's in class 3?</i> The children answer the questions, instructor helps if needed: <i>Blind children are in the class and it's a braille alphabet.</i> The word "braille" (Blindenschrift) is written on the board. To check this, instructor and children watch the next sequence of the film (until minute 3:38).	Blackboard and chalk/whiteboard and markers; Laptop and projector; Audio speakers
4	Instructor asks whether the children know blind people and whether there is a school for the blind near them. Then they discuss how to recognize blind people on the street (white cane, hat).	
5	Instructor invites the children to watch more of the film (until minute 5:10) and to learn more about the braille alphabet.	Laptop and projector; Audio speakers
6	Instructor asks: <i>Did you notice how many letters are in the braille alphabet? You can find the answer here.</i> Instructor hands out the <i>Braille Alphabet</i> (Punktschriftalphabet) worksheet and the students write the answer on the dotted line.	<i>Braille alphabet</i> (Punktschriftalphabet) worksheet

7	<p>The students gather around the teacher's table and assemble the alphabet as shown in the film with numbered eggs. For this exercise the instructor gives each child a <i>Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i> character table.</p> <p>They first go through the alphabet together with the help of the <i>Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i> character table. Next, they work together to lay out the word "mouse", for example. Then the instructor lays out a variety of short words and the children "read" them, or individual children can also lay out words that they have chosen.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> It is advisable to use short words with a maximum of 4-5 characters.</p>	<p><i>The Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i> character table; 6 numbered eggs; 2 6-egg egg cartons (one carton contains the 6 eggs and the words are placed in the other carton.)</p>
8	<p>The students return to their seats and think about how they would write their names with the help of the <i>Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i> character table. Instructor explains that braille is used internationally but adapted according to the language.</p>	<p><i>Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i> character table; Construction paper; Glue</p>
9	<p>Instructor suggests that the students search the Internet for the braille in different languages.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> It is easiest to do this step in the computer lab so that the children can do research on their own. If this is not possible, the instructor can print out the braille table for the children's native language in advance.</p>	<p>Computer with Internet access</p>
10	<p>The children receive colored cards and write their first names in braille. The cards are glued onto a large sheet of brown paper and turned into a poster. Alternatively, they can decorate the door to the classroom with the cards.</p>	<p>Colored cards; pens; glue; brown paper</p>
11	<p>Instructor and children watch the last part of the film and learn about the typewriter that blind people can use to write.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> There are likely many children who have never seen a "normal" typewriter. It could therefore be interesting to bring a typewriter to class and show how it functions live or to look up on the Internet how one wrote with typewriters before the era of computers.</p>	<p>Laptop and projector; Audio speakers</p>

After the lecture/film

Step	Content	Materials
12	<p>Instructor projects the name of Louis Braille in braille on the screen. The children should guess what is written with the help of the <i>Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i> character table. Instructor writes the answer on the board and explains: <i>Louis Braille invented an alphabet for the blind, which we call braille after him.</i> Instructor hands out the <i>Louis Braille</i> quiz to the children to fill out in small groups with the help of the web page https://goo.gl/7QRD89. The class goes over the answers together.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> It's best to do this exercise in a computer lab. If this is not possible, a copy of the web page can be printed out for each group.</p>	<p><i>Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i> character table; <i>Louis Braille</i> quiz; Computer with Internet access</p>
13	<p>For the sake of review and reinforcement, key words and expressions are written down. Instructor writes the words from the word bank onto slips of paper. Each student picks a slip of paper, reads what is written, and writes the word/expression on the word bank <i>Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i>. When everyone has had a turn, the instructor projects the words/expressions on the screen and the children check each other's worksheets.</p>	<p>My word bank <i>Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i>; <i>Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i> word bank for instructor Slips of paper with words and expressions</p>
14	<p>Instructor and children end the unit with a reflection round in which they discuss what they have learned. Each child then fills out the <i>Now I Know (Ich kann schon)</i> questionnaire to find out whether they have achieved the learning objectives. Instructor also gives feedback on student performance.</p>	<p><i>Now I know (Ich kann schon)</i> questionnaire</p>
15	<p>The children hold onto the following in their portfolios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Braille Alphabet (Punktschriftalphabet)</i> worksheet - <i>The Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i> character table - <i>Louis Braille</i> quiz - My word bank <i>Braille Alphabet (Blindenschrift)</i> - <i>Now I know (Ich kann schon)</i> questionnaire. 	<p>Portfolios</p>

Further ideas for subject matter or CLIL teaching (Native language, ethics)

- Research into blind schools or homes for the blind in the area
- Blind-accessible design for the school (Info boards with braille)
- Preparing and carrying out an interview with a blind person

Suggestion for the children at the end of the learning scenario

At the very end, the children gather around a computer or the instructor projects a computer desktop onto a screen. They look at the home page of the German Digital Kinderuniversität together. The instructor explains to the children that they now have completed the *Braille Alphabet* (Blindenschrift) lecture in the *Humankind* faculty together and draws their attention to the fact that there are many more interesting lectures in this faculty and in the *Technology* and *Nature* faculties.

The instructor and the children click together on the *At Home* link and discover how the website works. As an example, the instructor logs in and goes to the lecture that they just worked through.

The instructor shows the children that the lecture begins with an introduction by Professor Einstein and Ms. Schlauf and that their work is supported by Jowo and Christoph, the field researcher. Professor Einstein and Ms. Schlauf also wrap up all the lectures and thereby frame the work on each theme.

The instructor explains to the children that they can re-watch the film at home and can even set the subtitles to German or English. That way, they can “catch” key words while watching and use these to collect points and solve three exercises and a bonus exercise on the film. The children can also get help from their parents or grandparents, from registering to solving the exercises. The whole family can have fun learning and everyone gradually becomes a professor at the Kinderuni.