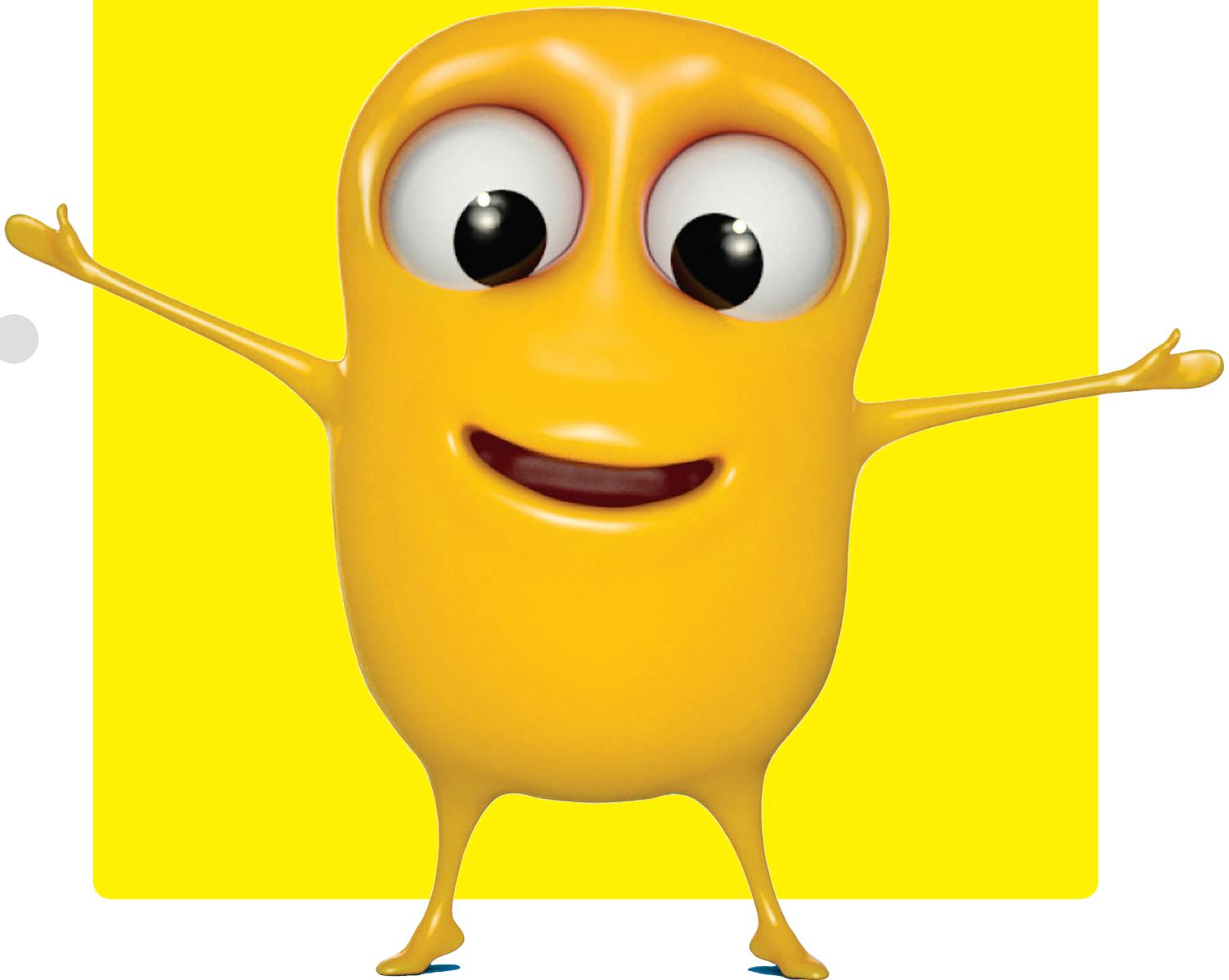


Tips for teaching history to visually impaired students



Why adapt lessons for visually impaired (VI) students?

This 90-second video youtu.be/O7j4_aP8dWA demonstrates how much learning is visual and how much audio description is required to make content accessible. With a few adaptations, VI students can participate fully, understand historical enquiry and learn independently.

General tips

- Always speak to students about what would best help them and how their needs might change over time. They are the experts of their own sight condition and can help you work out the best solution.
- Download **General tips for teaching visually impaired students** from www.macularsociety.org/teaching for introductory information including lighting; emotional support; formatting documents; assistive technology; techniques such as hand-over-hand guiding and further sources of information that have been used to create these resources.

Strategies for adapting design technology lessons

Touch, feel sound and smell

Students with sight loss rely on other means of

communication, so teachers and support staff should use objects and artefacts to convey historical events. These techniques can go some way to help a student who is not able to learn by sight.

- Use tactile displays, artefacts, maps, diagrams, models, pictures and audio devices to give information.
- Use sound effects and newsreels to evoke the atmosphere of the locations where historical events took place, such as First World War battlefields.
- Use relief models of famous places and buildings.
- Borrow historical artefacts from library loan services or other collections which have a distinctive smell or feel, such as gas masks, soldiers' uniforms, watches and clocks.

Adapting visual materials

Where possible, provide either large print or a sound file.

When designing a slideshow or PowerPoint:

- Consider having at least one slide accessible.
- Simplify the slides to the bare minimum of information.
- Enlarge the text.

- Ask the student which combination of text and background colours is easiest for them to read: black text on a yellow background is most readable for some, or white text on a black background.

Field trips and visits

- Discuss the plan for any field trip with the student privately so that they can ask relevant questions.
- Give lots of time for the visually impaired student to explore any objects/maps/displays/diagrams.
- Use audio guides and tactile maps when visiting historical sites.
- Buddy the visual impaired student with a sighted person (maybe a support worker) who understands their needs.

Assistive technology

Assistive Technology (AT) can help VI students make the most of their sight. Here is a list of low-to medium-cost tools to consider.

- Tactile markers with a talking pen are useful for placing historical events in sequence or in context on a worksheet or map.
www.talkingpen.co.uk/pen-technology

- Talking tins record and play short simple instructions or messages.
www.unforgettable.org/talking-tins-magnetic-talking-reminder?gclid=CJ2y8v-89NMCFaa77QodolAMeA
- Virtual Reality (VR) is becoming cheaper all the time, and many schools have bought class sets of Google Cardboard headsets. VR headsets give VI students a unique individual insight into historical events. Use ear pieces or headsets so that the sound becomes the main source of information, and beware of sensory overload.
www.vmistudio.com/esight-the-virtual-reality-tool-giving-sight-to-the-blind
- Headsets have even been used to create virtual field trips.
www.vmistudio.com/esight-the-virtual-reality-tool-giving-sight-to-the-blind
- Magnification software can help visually impaired students see historical records and maps in detail.
- For exams and when using textbooks there are a range of AT apps that can help students to access text.
 - o ClaroScanPen
www.claro-apps.com/claro-scanpen/
 - o vBookz
itunes.apple.com/gb/app/vbookz-pdf-voice-reader/id489447533?mt=8

- C-pen is a pen-sized scanner which has been approved by JQC for exam use.

www.scanningpens.co.uk

- Many mobile devices include a built-in voice search – such as Siri, Cortana or the Google Assistant. VI students can search for information about historical events or texts and have the results read back to them, making them more independent learners.

In this series:

- **General tips** for teaching visually impaired (VI) students
- Tips for teaching **art** to VI students
- Tips for teaching **design technology** to VI students
- Tips for teaching **geography** to VI students
- Tips for teaching **history** to VI students
- Tips for teaching **ICT** to VI students
- Tips for teaching **literacy** to VI students
- Tips for teaching **mathematics** to VI students
- Tips for teaching **music** to VI students
- Tips for teaching **science** to VI students
- Tips for teaching **sport** to VI students
- Tips for VI students on **school trips**

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