Arthur's Communication Adventure

Exploring Inclusion and Accessibility

SEE IT ON PBS KIDS

Arthur is a recipient of the VERNON HENLEY AWARD presented by the American Council of the Blind

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American Books

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Arthur and friends reading braille.
Dear Educator,

Libby’s Juicy Juice® has been a proud sponsor of the award-winning PBS series ARTHUR® since its debut in 1996. Like ARTHUR, Libby’s Juicy Juice, premium 100% juice, is wholesome and loved by kids.

Libby’s Juicy Juice is pleased to support ARTHUR’s Communication Adventure. We believe in the importance of teaching children to appreciate the many ways we communicate in today’s world. Learning to appreciate each other’s differences helps children play and have fun together.

Because we share the same commitment to helping children develop and maintain healthy lives, we applaud the efforts of PBS in producing quality educational television.

Sincerely,

Libby’s Juicy Juice

Credits

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About This Guide

All children need to communicate, read, and write. The ways each child accomplishes this may be different. Children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may communicate through American Sign Language or other sign systems, spoken English, lip-reading, or a combination of these means. Children who are blind or visually impaired communicate verbally with their peers, but children who are blind may read and write in braille while children who are visually impaired may make use of large print books. The goal of this guide is to help children who are hearing and sighted become more aware of ways that children who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, or hard-of-hearing learn, play, and enjoy the same things they do.

The guide is organized into four sections. Many Ways to Communicate invites children to consider alternate ways of sending and receiving messages using different senses. Communication Exploration: Blindness helps children examine communication systems used by people who are blind and visually impaired, including braille and descriptive narration for TV and films. Communication Exploration: Deafness introduces students to languages and tools used by people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing, including sign language and closed captions for TV and films. In the final section, Communication Exploration: Wrap-Up, children demonstrate what they have learned by reflecting on their experiences and participating in group projects.

Many Ways to Communicate: Using Different Senses

The activities in this section help students:

• become aware of which senses they use to receive information
• brainstorm ways to make communication more accessible to everyone, including people without sight or without hearing
• develop understanding and positive attitudes about inclusion

Communication Exploration: Blindness

The activities in this section help students:

• explore ways people who are blind or visually impaired use braille, described videos, and other tools to read, write, and learn
• develop positive attitudes about the ways people who are blind and visually impaired learn, play, and communicate with others

Communication Exploration: Deafness

The activities in this section help students:

• explore ways people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing use sign language, closed captions, and other means to talk and learn
• develop positive attitudes about the ways people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing learn, play, and communicate with others

Communication Exploration: Wrap-Up

Resources
Materials and Preparation

Make your students’ Communication Adventure rich and meaningful by providing real-life materials and experiences.

**Borrow materials from your local library:**
- children’s books with braille overlays
- large print books
- *ARTHUR* videos with closed captions and video descriptions
- Books for Kids recommended in this guide (see pages 5 and 10)

**Check the Resources on page 16. You will find the information you need to:**
- order a class set of braille alphabet cards or a braille slate and stylus
- invite a speaker who is blind to visit your class
- find a local theater that shows movies with closed captions and descriptive narrations

If possible, set up a class-to-class pen pal exchange with a teacher at a local school for children who are deaf or blind (see activity on page 15).

**ARTHUR and Accessibility**

All *ARTHUR* programs offer two types of **closed captions**, edited captions (for beginning readers) as well as standard captions. Closed captions are the lines of text that appear on a TV or movie screen, transcribing the words spoken by the characters. Developed for deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers, closed captions can also benefit young readers and English language learners.

All *ARTHUR* programs also offer **video description**, a spoken description of the images on the screen, designed especially for visually impaired audiences. Video descriptions are timed so that they do not interfere with spoken dialogue. Described *ARTHUR* videos can be found in your library or ordered from DVS Home Video® (see Resources).

**Watch Arthur**

_Videotape these programs to share with your students. Check pbskids.org/arthur for local dates and times._

**Prunella’s Special Edition.** Prunella has ordered an early copy of the new Henry Skreeever book, but when it arrives, she discovers it is in braille. Luckily she meets Marina at the library. Marina, who is blind, can read braille and offers to read the book to Prunella. It’s the beginning of a fine friendship.

**Prunella Sees the Light.** The new Henry Skreeever film is coming to the local theater! Prunella wants to invite Marina to a sleepover at her house the night before they see the movie, but then she starts to worry. How will Marina manage to find her way around a new house?

Children learn best through hands-on experiences!
Using Different Senses

“Children are naturally curious about people who are similar to and different from them. It’s important that a teacher creates an environment where students can ask openly about differences.”

—Barbara Ceconi and Kurt Kuss, Access Umbrella

Ways of Knowing. This activity helps children think about the senses they use to receive information. Draw the chart below. Have children identify the five senses. Write them at the top of the columns. Then write in the first column: “What’s for lunch?” Say to the class: We use our senses to learn about the world around us. Let’s think about how each sense can help us know what’s for lunch. Write students’ ideas in the chart.

When all five columns have been filled, ask: If you couldn’t see, could you still figure out what was for lunch? How? If you couldn’t hear, what are some ways to find out? Have children suggest a new situation to write in the first column, and repeat the activity. If you wish, suggest the following: How do we know… when it’s safe to cross the street? …how hot a cup of cocoa is? …if a friend is happy or sad?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Do We Know?</th>
<th>Sight</th>
<th>Hearing</th>
<th>Smell</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Touch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What’s for lunch?</td>
<td>See food in ...</td>
<td>Ask “What’s for lunch?”</td>
<td>Ask</td>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>Touch</td>
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Choose Your Words Carefully! Communicating with words only, no visual clues, can be pretty tricky! This activity builds awareness of communication issues for people who are blind or visually impaired.

Have partners sit back-to-back. Give each partner a matching set of paper shapes. Partner A arranges the shapes in a design and describes the design. Partner B tries to arrange his or her shapes into an identical design, asking questions as needed. Have kids switch roles and repeat. Then discuss the experience. Was it fun or frustrating? Explain why. Let students give examples of clear descriptions and helpful questions.

Without Talking. In this activity, designed to build awareness of communication issues for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, students find creative ways to communicate without sound. Write the following sentences on strips of paper: What time is it? Are you thirsty? Do you have a tissue? What’s your name? I like your shirt! Can I borrow a pencil? Make several sets of these sentence strips. Fold the paper to hide the writing.

Divide the class into groups of six. Give a set of sentence strips to each group. Each student must choose a “mystery sentence” and find a way to communicate the message to the rest of the group without speaking. Later, have children share the strategies they used. Ask: Which of these strategies would help you communicate with someone who could not hear?

Visit the ARTHUR Web site: pbskids.org/arthur. How would you find your way across a room in the dark? Let students test out their skills as they play the new interactive game, Don’t Wake Kate!
Reading, Writing, and Learning with Touch and Sound

What Is Blindness? Lead a class discussion, encouraging students to share background knowledge and personal experiences. Introduce the information below into the conversation.

There are different degrees of blindness. Some people who are blind cannot see at all. Some of these people use braille to read and write. Other people are legally blind. This means they have limited vision that cannot be corrected with eyeglasses. People who are legally blind often make use of large print books and books on tape. Many other people benefit from these tools as well!

Encourage students to pose questions such as: How do you become blind? Is it contagious? Write the questions on a chart. Search out answers together as you share the “I Am Blind” sidebar text, do the activities below, and read some of the Books for Kids (page 5). For more information, see the Web sites and books referenced in Resources (page 16).

Watch, Read, Discuss. Watch the ARTHUR episode, “Prunella Sees the Light.” (See page 2.) Ask:

• What are some of the special tools Marina uses to get around, play soccer, and watch movies?
• Why was Prunella worried about inviting Marina to her house?
• Why did Marina get mad at Prunella? Was Prunella being helpful?
• How would you act around a child who is blind or has low vision?

Then, read and discuss a book about a friendship between a child who is blind or has low vision and a sighted child, such as Brian’s Bird or See You Tomorrow, Charles (see Books for Kids, page 5).

“Peas at three o’clock.” How do you describe the location of food on a plate to someone who can’t see? One method is to use the image of a clock face. Three o’clock means directly to the person’s right. Marina’s mom uses this cueing system in “Prunella Sees the Light.” Have children try the technique with a partner. Give each pair 3-4 different snacks and a paper plate. Have students write the numbers 1-12 around the rim of the plate, like a clock face. Then have Partner A close his or her eyes. Partner B will place snacks such as a miniature cracker, baby carrot, and raisin on different parts of the plate, then put the plate in front of Partner A and say, Have a cracker. It’s at six o’clock. Provide time for children to switch roles.
Sometimes kids with low vision look like they can see more than they really can. They miss the nonverbal body language that goes on in a classroom. Teachers and children often use gestures like a smile, frown, or pointing to convey a message. Using words along with gestures is an important way to include low vision or blind children.

—Terry Maggiore, mother of a legally blind child

Books for Kids

Brian's Bird by Patricia Anne Davis
Looking Out for Sarah by Glenna Lang
Mom Can't See Me by Sally Hobart Alexander and George Ancona
A Picture Book of Louis Braille by David A. Adler
Rainbow Joe and Me by Maria Diaz Strom
See You Tomorrow, Charles by Miriam Cohen

To access TV video description, you need a TV equipped with stereo. Activate the Secondary Audio Program (SAP) feature through the TV’s remote control or on-screen menu. Stereo TVs allow you to choose between three audio options: mono, stereo, and SAP.

To record a program with video description, your VCR must also have the SAP feature. From the on-screen menu, choose the SAP option on your VCR, then record the program in the usual way.
Marina Explains

Marina is blind, so she has different ways of doing some things. Her friends are curious, so they ask her questions.

Marina, how do you pick out matching clothes when you get dressed?

My mom and I make braille cards describing each piece of clothing and pin those cards to my clothes. In the morning, I read what’s in my closet and choose what I want to wear.

Do you play sports?

Yes, I play on the Mighty Mountain soccer team. We use a ball with a beeper in it, so I can hear where the ball is.

Do you play a musical instrument?

Playing soccer (and reading *Henry Skreever* books) keeps me pretty busy so I haven’t had time for a musical instrument. But they have music sheets in braille, so maybe one day I’ll take lessons.

How do you know where you’re going? How do you keep from bumping into things?

My teacher taught me how to use a cane. It helps me know if there is anything near me. But when I’m at home, I don’t use it because I already know where everything is. It’s like when you go to the bathroom in the middle of the night. You don’t turn on all of the lights, you just know how to get there, right? It just takes some practice!

How do you like kids to act when they meet you?

Just like they would with anybody else—that way I can decide if I like them or not. If they’re nice, we can get to know each other and maybe become friends.
Braille is a way to read with your fingers instead of your eyes. You read with touch instead of sight. Each braille letter is made up of raised dots. Below is the braille alphabet. The filled-in dots represent raised dots.

Fill in the dots to write your name in braille. Then write the name of your favorite ARTHUR character in braille.

My name is

My favorite ARTHUR character is
Arthur’s Web-venture

Help Arthur climb to the highest mountain!

Place a game marker, such as a penny, on     1 .

After each adventure, move to the next peak.

Start

Adventure 1

Go to touchthetop.com.  
Eric Weihenmayer was the first blind person to climb Mt. Everest, the highest mountain in the world.

Click on “Photo Gallery.” Roll the cursor over the photos on the left. Where did Erik sleep during his climb?

Adventure 2

Go to afb.org/braillebug.  
Click on “Games and Secret Messages.”

Click on “Countdown” game. Then, click on “Countdown!”
Look at the Braille Numbers. Write your age in braille here.

Adventure 3

Go to beyondsight.com.  
Click on “Catalog.”

Click on “Games & Gifts.”
You can buy a beeping soccer ball like Marina’s here. Which ball or toy would you like to buy?

Adventure 4

Go to ncam.wgbh.org.  
Click on “MoPix®.”

Click on “view current movie list.” Which G or PG movie with closed captions and descriptive video would you like to see?  

You made it!

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