# The Tactile Times Newspaper

Issue Number 3

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[tactiletimes.org](https://tactiletimes.org)

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Welcome to the 3rd edition of the Tactile Times!

We are Ellie, Lexy and Theo, three young braillists who thought it would be fun to put together a free and easy way for children and young people who are braillists, to share news, event information, tips, opinions and ideas. We hope you like what we have put together.

Please [send us](#_8._Get_in) any ideas you have for sections we could add. Also, we would love to include more articles from our readers in the next issue. If there is something you really enjoy doing, or a place you had a good time visiting, why not write a short article about it for the Tactile Times? Or submit your favourite joke, or a puzzle?

We are really excited about the Tactile Times being a way for more and more of us braillists to keep each other up to date, so if you know someone who might like to get a copy too, recommend it!

The Tactile Times is a great way to share tips and experiences with people that you can't physically see.

## Some navigation tips

Because this is a Touch-friendly newspaper, we have put a line of 10 +’s between sections. We have put == before each article so you can search for == to find the beginning of articles and for +’s to find sections. You can also search for numbers as each section heading is also numbered. If you are reading this on a computer or phone, sections, articles and sections of articles are also headings. Here are the different Heading levels we have used:

Level 1: Title

Level 2: Contents and sections

Level 3: Articles

Level 4: Sections of articles

We have also put hyperlinks in the contents page that can quickly jump you to the section you need if you are using a computer or phone (N.B. Touches will not see these links, you would need to find +++). We also have back to top and back to contents links at the bottom of this issue. As this is the first time we have done this, we would welcome any feedback.

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## 1. News and Events

### == We have a new custom email address!

We have recently got a new custom email address, info@tactiletimes.org

We are slowly switching over to this address, so if you want to get in touch, use it instead of our old gmail.com address. The Gmail address will continue to be checked (although it will be on a less frequent basis).

We are using Gmail to access the new custom address as it will easily sync to touches, computers, phones and more.

You can also quickly get to our website by going to tactiletimes.org or tactiletimes.com

### == Buddy Dogs Restarted

Great news if you love dogs, Guide Dogs have restarted their Buddy Dogs Scheme. You can find more information on their website or by calling 0800 781 1444

One of our editors, Theo, has a Buddy dog from Guide Dogs called Penny. She is a gorgeous, calm and loving black Labrador retriever cross. She is six years old now and loves going out with Theo everywhere. She is also happy to snore loudly in her bed while he edits the Tactile Times! All dogs are different but Penny had lots of training from Guide Dogs and is very well behaved and super friendly. She likes to rest her head on people’s laps, has the softest ears ever and quickly becomes friends with children who are sometimes a bit scared of dogs. Her favorite thing is lying front of the fire with Theo, oh, and wallowing in muddy streams! Buddy dogs are not Guide Dogs, they do not guide you but they can be a calm, reassuring presence to have near you.  They are also great listeners and can always cheer you up. You also learn a lot about taking care of a dog when you have a Buddy Dog join your family. They need grooming, feeding, lots of love, walks and of course you need to clean up after them!

<https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/Getting%20support/Help%20for%20children%20and%20families/buddy%20dogs%20for%20children>

### == Amber Trust launch new online resource to help young blind people get great music lessons

The Amber Trust, who are an organisation supporting musical opportunities for blind and partially sighted children, have launched a new website to help music teachers who are working with young people who are blind...ask your instrumental teacher to check it out! It is called Amber Sound Touch. It has some really interesting stories on there about young blind musicians, so maybe have a look, and listen, round it yourself too.

<https://ambertrust.app/sound-touch/>

If you are not learning a musical instrument but have always wanted to, you could look into the Amber Trust Music Awards. They might be able to help you realise your dream.

<https://www.ambertrust.org/amber-music-awards/>

### == Sight and Sound

Sight and Sound are still doing Webinar Wednesdays. You can register for the sessions at sightandsound.co.uk.

These sessions are now every two weeks.

We recommend you subscribe to their newsletter to receive their registration link and session description each week. You can subscribe on their website.

Contact them on 01604 798070 or info@sightandsound.co.uk.

### == VICTA

VICTA have lots of content available at <https://victa.org.uk/festival> but they do not have any online events.

Contact them on 01908 240831 or admin@victa.org.uk

### == HumanWare

HumanWare have stopped their webinar series but they say it will return at some point. More info at <https://tactiletimes.page.link/HLWS>

Contact them on eu.support@humanware.com or 01933 415800

### == Braillists Foundation

The Braillists are doing Zoom calls. You can find their schedule at [braillists.org/events](https://braillists.org/events)

You can contact them on help@braillists.org

### == Look UK

Look-UK have been doing lots of events during lockdown. Look’s music forums are now back. These fortnightly music forums are aimed at all visually impaired U18 year old’s (plus family members).

<https://www.look-uk.org/look-youth-music-forums/>

Contact them on 07464 351958 or **events@look-uk.org**

### == British Blind Sport

British Blind Sport are doing workshops on National fitness day. You can find the schedule on their website at britishblindsport.org.uk

You can also find many audio led sports workouts in the Active at Home section of their website. There are links to accessible, remote yoga, pilates, dance, HIIT, boxercise and strength training sessions.

<https://britishblindsport.org.uk/active-at-home/>

Contact them on info@britishblindsport.org.uk or 01926 424247

N.B. All phone numbers listed are UK numbers. If you are not in the UK please add +44 or 0044

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## 2. Fun things to do

### == Fun with Alexa – Dungeon adventure game review

By Ellie.

Play dungeon adventure

Dungeon adventure is a fun audio super hero dice game on Alexa. Dice are rolled to decide what you do.

#### How to play

You do not need a dice to play because the Alexa does it. You start by creating a character. The Alexa rolls four six — sided dice. It adds the highest 3 values together and you have to assign the number to one of your attributes which are: strength, dexterity, constitution intelligence, wisdom, charisma and perception. It is good to have a high dexterity. Then the Alexa gives you some gold and hit points which are your life value. Then you go into the town centre where there are lots of places to visit and things to buy. You can name your character if you want to. Then you are ready to go into the dungeon to fight the monsters. There are also some cool sound affects. Try to kill as many monsters as you can. Avoid the traps and open all the chests. Good luck!

To find this game search for "Dungeon adventure" on the Amazon Alexa skill store and enable it for your account.

### == Cooking

This recipe is adapted from Mums Know Best: The Hairy Bikers' Family Cookbook

### **Apple and blackberry crumble**

It is the time of year when apples are ripening so we have a recipe for Blackberry and Apple crumble for you in this issue. So get out there and do some foraging!

Serves 6

#### Ingredients

##### For the filling:

* 2 eating apples, peeled, cored and then sliced
* 3 Bramley cooking apples, peeled, cored and then sliced
* 2 teaspoons of cinnamon
* 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
* 100g sugar
* 300g blackberries

##### For the crumble topping:

* 175g plain flour
* 1 teaspoon cinnamon
* 140g soft brown sugar
* 35g porridge oats
* 180g cold unsalted butter

#### Preheat the oven to 170°C, gas mark 3

#### Method: prepare the fruit

* Put the sliced apples in a bowl and shuffle them around to mix them up a bit.
* Mix the cinnamon with the sugar in a separate bowl.
* Put half the apples in an oven dish and sprinkle with a third of the sugar mixture.
* Add the blackberries and sprinkle with the second third of sugar mixture.
* Cover with the remaining apples and add the remaining sugar and cinnamon mixture.

#### Method: make the crumble topping

* Put the flour and cinnamon in a bowl and mix well,
* Cut the cold butter into small cubes, add to the mixture and rub it in with your fingertips until the mixture is the texture of breadcrumbs.
* Then stir in the sugar and the oats.
* Lay the crumble mixture on top of the fruit.
* Bake the crumble for about 40 minutes.
* Serve with custard, cream or vanilla ice cream.

#### Top Cooking Tools Tip - Stainless Steel Apple Corer and Cutter.

Cost: Around 4 pounds

This is a tool made from plastic and steel. It is about 2 cm high and 15cm in diameter. It has a plastic apple shaped rim and sharp steel blades in the centre which produce eight evenly sized slices of apple and a core.

To use, you place the peeled apple with the hairy end facing upwards (stalk down) on the chopping board, place the cutter over the top with the hairy end in the centre of the core section and press down evenly.

### == Craft

### Making a Friendship Bracelet

By Lydia Beech and Hannah Beech

#### Instructions

1. Cut out a circle of cardboard. Coaster size (around 10cm) works well.
2. Cut 8 little slits (about half a centimeter deep) into the circle. Start by cutting at 12 o’clock, 3 o’clock, 6 o’clock and 9 o’clock. After doing those, cut four more, one between each slit you have already made.
3. Make a hole in the centre. You can do this by putting a pencil through the middle.
4. Once this is done get 7 strands of friendship band thread (embroidery thread works well) about 1 foot long,
5. Tie a knot in one end of the bundle of threads, leaving about 4cm of thread after the knot.
6. Poke the knot through the hole and select a single thread and pull it over to one of the slits, so that it sits inside it. Do that with all the thread, one in each slit. This will leave you with one slit free. You need to continually make sure the knot doesn’t pop back through the hole.
7. Find the free slit and count back three strands of thread. Pull it out of its slit and put it in the empty one. Find the new free slit, and count back three strands of thread, and move it to the new free slot. Repeat this process, continually pulling the knot down to keep the threads tight.
8. This creates a cylindrical woven friendship bracelet.
9. When it is long enough, take the threads off and tie another knot.
10. It takes a good 50 moves before you feel like you are making progress, but it then flies by!

“I found this way of making friendship bands really easy and totally accessible. It doesn’t take too much brain power, so you can do it whilst watching TV, chatting etc.” Lydia Beech, age 14

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## 3. Fun things we did

### My Experience with Rádio Clásica

By Lexy Ryan

#### What is rádio clásica

Rádio clásica is a spanish radio station that plays classical music which is analysed in Spanish by Spanish presenters. It has no adverts or news, so you can just enjoy the classical music and analysis.

#### What I like about rádio clásica

I really like rádio clásica because it helps me gain confidence with both my musical and Spanish skills. It analyses the pieces in depth, playing parts of the piece and naming them in Spanish. For example in a sonata you have three main sections la exposición (the exposition) which is the opening theme that is the most memorable part of the piece, el desarrolle (the development) which develops the piece which is often in a different key to the first part and sounds very different, and finally (la reexposición) the recapitulation which is a repetition of the exposition with embellishments. Any ideas in the piece that sounded unfinished or in a different key are resolved in the tone or main key.

The piece I requested for rádio clásica

After listening to rádio clásica, I noticed they did a programme called crescendo where children are able to request pieces of music to be played on rádio clásica and to either write or send a voice message introducing themselves and saying why they liked the piece that they chose. I decided to take the opportunity to do the same. So one day when I heard one of presenters reading out the email address to contact them, I took note of it and decided to write a message saying thank you for all the wonderful music they were playing, explain I was learning my grade 7 piano pieces, and that I was using rádio clásica to improve my Spanish. They got back to me and suggested that I send a recording of me playing one of my grade 7 pieces. I said I couldn't do this as I can't send voice messages or recordings on my BrailleNote touch, and asked if I could request a piece instead and write a word document introducing myself and explaining why I liked the piece. They got back to me again and said they would be happy for me to do it this way, and told me they would play the piece on Saturday 20th June.

So I waited until 20 June feeling very excited, as I counted down the days hours and minutes to that special moment. They left my piece until last so I had something to look forward to throughout the entire programme. They played some nice pieces up until when they played my piece. When it was time, Clara, one of the presenters, read out my document correcting the mistakes I had made and then played the piece I had requested Recuerdos de la alhambra by Francisco Tárrega. Crescendo, a child who sounded about four or five even did a long trill because I explained who much I loved the Spanish r which transitioned perfectly into the trills of the piece. Then to finish, the presenters played a piece that was related to that, the 3rd movement of Rodrigo's guitar concerto where the programme ended.

#### How learning a language gives you lots of opportunities

I am so happy I put in the effort to learn Spanish as without this, my request on rádio clásica would not have been possible. I think learning languages opens many doors and gives you opportunities that would not be possible otherwise. So if you're thinking about learning a second language, don't hesitate to start.

Written by Lexy age 16

### == Lydia's experience of The Voice kids

Hi, I'm Lydia, and I'm 14 years old. Last year I auditioned for The Voice Kids UK, and my audition and battle were both on TV a few weeks ago.

Being on The Voice Kids was a really great experience. The team there were really helpful, supportive and they ensured that all my needs were met. The only thing I found hard was some of the filming. I was asked to do some unusual things like walk down a very brightly lit corridor lots of times, whilst the camera-men filmed me from all different angles, and I was also asked to do some weird dance type moves in front of other camera's; the crew were lovely however and understood when I struggled with things. The other experiences such as being helped by a professional vocal coach, singing in front of loads of people, meeting lots of other lovely people backstage and meeting Danny, Pixy, Paloma and Wil more than made up for the few more difficult moments. If you are between the ages of 7 and 14, love singing and want to just have a go, I would highly recommend auditioning for the show!

You can find the piece to go with this article at [is.gd/ttnradiolexy](https://is.gd/ttnradiolexy)

### == Sight and Sound Webinar Wednesdays, a Review

By Theo, 13.

I have attended quite a lot of Sight and Sound's webinar Wednesday's during lockdown. I have always found that the webinars taught me new stuff that I didn't know before, and I have always got good answers to the questions I've asked.

#### What is a Webinar Wednesday?

Sight and Sound have been doing a webinar nearly every Wednesday and I have always looked forward to them. The webinars are sometimes about products they sell, and sometimes about other things (like social distancing discussions or a fitness discussion).

#### How do the webinars work?

Most of the webinars are held on Zoom. (You can find our guide to Zoom at the end of Issue 2). Before the webinar, you need to register using the registration link that you are sent. The link is in the weekly Sight and Sound newsletter and on their website, and will look something like: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\_xxxxxxxx (where XXXXX is replaced with a unique registration code)

After you have got the link, you will need to enter your name and email on the form that appears and click the "Register" button. After this, you receive an email with the meeting login and you can add it to your calendar.

I think Sight and Sound have designed the registration process well, as I have found it very straightforward to use.

#### The best webinars I attended

* An Introduction to the ElBraille - This covered all the basics of the ElBraille, and made me understand what it is capable of.
* Jaws Gems - Sight and Sound discussed some hidden features of JAWS which are very useful.
* Accessibility of Microsoft Teams - As I use Teams for coding lessons, and for chatting with some of my friends, this webinar was useful and gave me tips on accessibility of Teams and some useful shortcuts.

I think Sight and Sound's webinars have been a success and that anyone who's interested should listen to recorded past webinars or register for upcoming live ones at sightandsound.co.uk

### == Mindfulness during lockdown

By Theo, 13.

I think that mindfulness is very important, as it is a way for us to have a break from the busyness of the world and to unwind. Particularly during lockdown, it is especially important as it gives your brain a break from everything that it might be thinking about at that time.

#### Look-UK Mindfulness group

In March, I took part in a Look-UK mindfulness group. There was one session on Zoom every Tuesday morning for 4 weeks. I found that it was very helpful as it took my mind off all the things that were happening with remote school.

I also really enjoyed it because I was able to meet new children there, which took my mind off school as well.

####  Smiling Mind app

I have also been using an app called Smiling Mind to practice mindfulness. The app has lots of different sessions, which normally have a person guiding through what to do. When I end up quite stressed, the person's voice often seems quite calming.

####  Accessibility

The app is just about useable for a blind person, although all sessions are just called "session\_cell" so you would have to rename them by doing a double-tap and hold with two fingers until the "Label element" box appears.

I have also been using Smiling Mind on my Touch, so that I can do mindfulness in rest times at school. It is a helpful way to calm down, and can be really useful if you only have 7 or 8 minutes to spare before you have to go to your next lesson. It is also more accessible on the Touch as it displays the actual session names.

#### Downloading sessions

Downloading sessions is a great way to be able to use the app in school or on a trip, even if the device with the app installed cannot access the school network.

 You can also save sessions as favourites to your account so you can quickly find them again when you only have a short amount of time available. If you have more than one device, you can sync your favourites between devices by using the same account on both devices.

You can download the app from www.smilingmind.com.au

### == Summer Break! Self Advocate.

By Derrick Quiatot, San Diego, California, U.S.A.

My visual impairment is unique amongst my classmates, but I also share many similar challenges with them. I continually seeks ways to break barriers and stigmas, so that all students can relate more and treat one another with common courtesy.

On June 25, I joined with fellow students from the San Diego Unified School District to speak to a virtual audience of over 600 teachers and administrators. I advocated on behalf of the blind and visually impaired community, sharing my at-school experiences about how isolating it can feel to be ignored or seen as an outsider, even when walking down the hallway.

So I would like to share the following message with the readers of the Tactile Times:

“Just because we’re blind, doesn’t mean we can’t do anything! For we stand united, a force like no other that anyone has ever seen! No one should have to tell us what we can’t do, for ‘We as a community, can, do, anything!’ I hope this story inspires you improve your community and be an advocate or ally for those with visual impairments!”

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## 4. Technology

### == DuoLingo app review

By Theo, 13.

Rating: 4/5 stars

DuoLingo is a well-known free language learning app.

#### App Store description:

Learn Spanish, French, German, Italian, English and more languages for free.

Learn a new language with the world’s most-downloaded education app! Duolingo is the fun, free app for learning 35+ languages through quick, bite-sized lessons.

Apple Download link: [apple.co/Duolingo](https://apple.co/Duolingo)

Android Download link: [bit.ly/duolingo-android](https://bit.ly/duolingo-android)

#### My review:

I have been using Duolingo during lockdown to revise and learn languages. It is mostly accessible, with the odd bug.

I have really enjoyed being able to keep up my languages as well as learn new words. It is amazing that the Duolingo app was 90% accessible. VoiceOver had the buttons clearly labelled so I was able to complete my first lesson.

The gems you can collect are really motivating and you can even spend them on things like a boost for your points. Once you have completed your first lesson and created a profile, the screen you arrive on may at first seem confusing and could put you off. Don't be put off by this, as you will get to know all the different types of points and gems you can earn over time. The most confusing thing is there are tabs at the top and bottom of the screen. The top tabs are "Course", "Crowns", "Streak" and "Hearts" I have also written out some [definitions](#_Definitions:) below to help you. It is strange that some of these tabs open a temporary pop-up that has no way to be manually closed and will auto-close after you swipe away from it to do something else.

There are also tabs along the bottom to move around different sections of the app. These tabs have names that you would find more normal like "Profile" and "Shop" (where you spend gems you earn, not money) After I worked out what some of these things meant, I could quite quickly start to navigate the app and start my 2nd lesson, as well as do a practice.

I find it really motivating, as you can compare your progress with friends. You can also follow people and then compare progress with them.

#### Definitions:

As some of the things Duolingo refers to are difficult to understand, here are some common definitions that might help you.

* XP - Points you can earn for completing a lesson or practice.
* Gems - Duolingo's virtual currency, which you can earn in various ways.
* Hearts - Lives which you lose when you make mistakes on the free plan. You start off with 5 hearts on your account when you get the app for the first time (the maximum you can have at one time), and you can earn more by practicing or waiting 24 hours to get 5 hearts again. You can also pay 350 Gems to get your hearts set to 5. Although this seems like a lot of gems to me, you might use it if you were desperate.
* If you run out of hearts during a lesson, you can either re-start the lesson later or pay gems.
* Level - A level is a block of 3-5 lessons normally of the same difficulty.
* Crowns - You earn 1 crown each time you finish a level.
* Lesson - A 5-10 minute session of language learning that normally involves multiple choice, typing, listening and speaking exercises (if you're on the app).

Also check out Lexy's article on [the accessibility of this app on a Touch](#_The_general_accessibility)

### Accessibility of DuoLingo on the touch

By Lexy age 16

I've recently been using a language app to learn Italian called DuoLingo. I found out about it as I read an article on the internet about what language learning apps are accessible for blind people, and DuoLingo was recommended. So I decided to give it a go. I managed to find it and I had to write my username and password and after that I could start learning.

#### The different levels on DuoLingo

On DuoLingo there are 5 different crown levels. These have different exercises ranging from multiple choice questions, translations where you have to click buttons on words to translate a sentence, sentences where you have to write the missing word in a search box, translations you have to write in a search box and listening exercises. However there are no speaking exercises that I've come across. Theo says if you have the app, it records your voice from time to time but I've not come across that yet.

Also check out Theo's definition of a level [above](#_Definitions:).

#### The general accessibility of the website on the Touch

I find that generally, it is very accessible, although my BrailleNote freezes on it from time to time or the voice will turn off which makes the listening exercises impossible. However, it's quick to sort out and I find it quite addictive. I also really love the positive feed back you get when you do it.

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## 5. Sports

### == Skiing championships March 2020

By Hester and Benjie Pool

#### GETTING THE CALL UP TO SKI RACE FOR GB,

I have been working at my ski racing since I was 7 years old in the hope one day of getting the call to represent GB at the Paralympics. Even though I had been hoping for this moment it felt surprising and almost shocking to get the invitation to go and race at my first international competition. We had a week training in Austria already booked which was good so my Guide (brother Benjie) and I could do some race practice together before we went. It was great to get some race time on my new Giant Slalom skis because I have not been able to do much before as we usually train indoors at Milton Keynes.  Unfortunately, Benjie and I had a crash mid-way through our training week which knocked our confidence a bit. Even so, we knew we had to carry on and make the best of our training together so we could be proud of ourselves when we represented GB for the first time.

#### ARRIVING AT CAMP,

After a tiring week of training and a long day of travel we arrived into Wroclaw (Poland) and transferred to our hotel to get some sleep. Walking into breakfast on that first morning knowing that the dining room was full of experienced international competitors and our new team mates felt like the first day of secondary school all over again: you don’t know who to sit with; you feel awkward and shy.  Luckily my fellow team mates, almost all ex-armed forces, kindly took me under their wings and showed me the ropes. This helpfulness could not extend to the slopes as they were all Nordic skiers and snowboarders so Benjie and I, as Alpine skiers, had to head up the mountain on our own! In fact, much to our surprise, my brother and I made up the entire Great British alpine team at this event, as the elite team with all the coaches and support staff, were in Russia at the World Cup.  As a result of this my mother was now self-appointed as our personal trainer, which mainly consisted of her carrying our skis and standing at the bottom of the piste with mars bars in hand. But the real training was left up to Benjie and me.

#### RACE DAY,

After two training days it was time to race GS and then Slalom. Day one was a bit of a shambles. Waiting in the gate in snowy conditions, poor visibility (for Benjie) and wearing only our skin-tight race suits we were shivering with cold and nerves. We were counted in and set off at speed determined to put down a safe time for our first run. Infuriatingly we had been sent too soon and the previous racer had not completed the course. As we were bearing down on them Benjie realised what had happened and skied us out of the gates to avoid what could have been a very serious highspeed crash. We had to re-run. As we headed up the seemingly slowest lift in the world – still in only our skimpy race suits – we were frozen. By the top I could not feel anything except my body shaking and Benjie’s lungs were screamingly painful. We were not in a good state. Luckily the French coach scooped us up and insisted we were sent down the course again immediately, so we did not freeze. We loved the French coach! In the end we made a good race but were pipped into 4th place by a narrow margin.

#### BENJIE’S POINT OF VIEW,

 After a slightly disappointing 4th place in the GS the previous day, we woke up and walked down to breakfast with a mixture of nerves and pure concentration on the race we had lying ahead of us. It had snowed heavily throughout the night and as we got to the race piste, we got quite a shock when we realised that the piste bashers had not prepared the side of the slope where we had to warm up and it was minefield of devastating powdery moguls.  Our training slalom runs were messy and exhausting. This caused our morale to begin to break down and while I was furious that we had nowhere to properly prepare for the race, Hester struggled with the harsh conditions and went silent. As communication is the single most important thing in Visually Impaired skiing this was a possible disaster. After a couple more difficult runs on the deeply rutted lumpy powder I realised that I had to get Hester enthusiastic and positive again or we wouldn’t have the energy to get the podium finish we were striving for.

We started back up the mountain on the chairlift and I started building back up both our lines of communication and Hester’s confidence. I reminded her about how hard we had worked for the past 2 weeks and how much we both wanted this. This reanimated the competitive nature (which I believe every athlete has) in Hester and soon we were enthusiastically planning out how we were going to attack the course. I split the course into 2 sections in my explanation, in order to help Hester visualise it.  I formed a strategy where we would work our outside skis much harder in the icier first half of the course and as we reached the point where the snow became crunchy, but not icy, I would urge Hester to put 100% effort into every turn to regain all the speed we had lost on the ice. Then we had our course inspections where I tried my best to memorise every turn and tried to help Hester paint a mental image of certain areas, so she knew where I was going to give certain commands. The emphasis was on focussing on how your body moves as you make the turn and how to use weight distribution in a way to let you really be ready to attack the next gate.

We reached the top of the slope and performed a satisfying first run. After listening to our time over the loudspeaker, we headed straight into the warmth of the café. We were sitting in 4th (just behind Poland) by 0.3 seconds. There we would have to wait for the next hour. With hands and feet being warmed beside the fire, we drank hot chocolates and I mentally prepared for how we were to ski the new course well enough to come away with the podium finish we wanted so much. That hour was probably the most stressful of my life so far. We had felt the pain and disappointment of just missing out on bronze the day before and I knew that I really couldn’t feel that way again. I continued to try my best to keep Hester in a talkative, happy headspace because I knew that’s when we ski at our best. Finally, it was time to climb back onto the chairlift and go inspect the new course. During the course inspections I realised just how icy the top half of the course had become. I made sure we were going to perform our best skiing possible on the ice so that we wouldn’t lose speed. Again, we had to wait at the top for our second run of the day. Then, we were off.

Our start felt quick, communication was on point, we pushed through the ice and by the end of the course my mouth was dry, and my legs were screaming but I knew we had done it. Almost collapsing as we passed through the finish gate, we listened eagerly for our time to be announced. 1:04.13 was our time, we had beaten the Pole! Later the Austrians finished their runs and claimed both gold and silver with impressive times, but we didn’t mind. We had the pure elation of a medal at our first competition.

#### MEDAL CEREMONY,

Getting to stand on the podium with our National Flag behind us felt like a huge honour and now seems rather unreal. As we listened to the Austrian National Anthem (not for the first time that evening) and shook hands with all the officials and the Austrian pairs who had taken Gold and Silver we imagined what it would be like to be listening to the British anthem and how that must feel for those who have had that experience. We hope, one day, that we will be those proud athletes and so look forward to our next race.

### == Fantasy Football league

If you like football you might be interested in joining an online Fantasy Football league we set up for Tactile Times readers in the Summer. You would need to set up your own team for this year’s Premier league to join.

You can do this using a free, accessible app and [website](https://fantasy.premierleague.com). To join the Tactile Times Newspaper league you would need to register or log in to a premierleague.com account, pick your fantasy football team and then join the league at <https://fantasy.tactiletimes.org>

For more details about this league visit the link above, or [get in touch](#_8._Get_in).

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## 6. Story section

### Fake back story of Billy Bones from [Treasure Island](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/120/120-h/120-h.htm)

By Chloe Ring

As billy bones picked up the book he had just retrieved from the safe, dreading reading it again. This book held his past. Every person he killed, all the money he stole, but on this occasion he wonted to read about one particular time and one particular person.

His feud with the other sailor of the seven seas had been going on for a wile you sea they both wanted the jewels belonging to Lady Liquot for they were very expensive. Lady Liquot was one of the richest lady's around. Then one day the big chants came for billy.

He found on the open deck of his ship a news paper. The top story of this news paper was this. Lady on the lake.

Lady Liquot has left her home and is now sailing on the see with the navy and her great grandson who just happens to be in the navy. They are going to collect some special medicine because her ladyship is rather unwell.

Billy had read enough now the plan was perfect but then his bitter rival's ship pulled up next to his and the head of the other pirate popped up.

"Just thought you should know that I am going to get what I want!" He yelled across to billy waving the same news paper in the air.

meanwhile, on Lady Liquot's ship.

"We must enforce extra security." Said lady Liquot's great grandson sitting in the lounge of the boat. "Don't you agree grandmamar!"

"Very much so dear." Replied Lady liquot after coughing into a white hanky.

"Would you like some more tea milady?" Asked a butler poking his head through the doorway.

"No thank you Mr Andrues." Replied Lady Liquot.

"So I'm thinking boys that we put guards here, here and here!" Said the Great grandson commandingly pointing to a map of the ship on the wall.

"And perhaps we should put a guard in Lady Liquot's room just to be safe!" Said one of the other people looking at the map.

"That won't be necessary!" Said Lady Liquot putting her hand up to get their attention. "I think guards at my door is quite enough!" She said firmly.

"Of course grandmamar." Said her great grandson hesitantly.

"Now I think I've had quite enough excitement for one day!" She said holding up her arm.

"Of course marm." said one of her guards walking out from where he had been silently standing.

"Come on Cedric we must escort her ladyship to her room!" He said gesturing to another guard.

That night billy was lowering his sale so that he would not be seen from the huge boat. As he clambered on every sense told him that his enemy was doing the same thing on the other side of the bote.

They both stuck to the shadows, making there way to Lady Liquot's bedroom! Billy's enemy found a shortcut to her room but as he approached the door to her room in the dark he was seized by 6 men wearing uniforms who were evidently guarding the door to her room.

"I'll get you lady liquoooootttt!" He yelled so everyone could hear.

On the other side of the boat billy was wondering what on earth he should do. He lent back on the wall.

"WO! What in the world?" He cried because suddenly there was no more wall. It was a secret passage. He red out loud what it said on the floor of the passage.

"Emergency passage to her lady's Bedroom." He red.

"Hows my luck!"

He got down on his knees and crawl through the passage. It was a tight squeeze but he made it to a large bedroom with a huge comfy looking bed in the centre. He could just sea the gray head of Lady Liquot asleep on the pillows, and there on the chest of draws not far from the bed was a jewellery box full of necklaces made of priceless Jules. Billy quickly but quietly ran over to the box and grabbed as many as he could hold. As he prepped back to the door of the open door of the passage something destroyed his plans.

"I don't thing you should be doing that young man!" Said a voice coming from behind him. He turned around to sea lady liquot sitting up in her bed. Billy froze.

"You can't do any thing to me." Said Billy with both fear and anger in his voice.

"I might be ill but I can still get you arrested for attempted purl theft." She said before coughing yet again into a hanky. She was quite right one false move and it would be bye-bye freedom.

"On the other hand, you've done me no physical harm." She continued looking him up and down.

"I would like you to put them back pleas young man!" She said sternly.

"But keep one to help you form a decent life for yourself."

Billy stared at her as he put the purls back in the box.

"This may seam a shock to you, but I have my reasons." She said lying back in her bed before coughing yet again into her hanky. Just then they both herd footsteps coming along the corridor.

"That's my great grandson! Quick hide under my bed!" She whispered hurriedly. Billy had no time to argue he scrambled under the bed as quick as a wink and just in time to. LADY Liquots grandson opened the bedroom door.

"Is everything OK Grandmamar?" He asked leaning into the room. "I herd you talking to someone!"

"Oh I was purely talking to myself! I'm old dear." Said lady liquot sounding incredibly calm.

"Of course Grandmamar. Sorry for disturbing you!" He said evidently very embarrassed. He shut the door quietly.

Billy prepped out from under the bed. He turned to look at the lady who had saved him from Jael.

"What are you waiting for dear! Leave wile you still can!" She hist in a much louder voice than billy thought she could ever muster. Billy terned and sped down the passage back to the safety of his own boat. But if he had looked behind him once more he would have seen Lady Liquot gazing at a photo on her bedside table. It was of her as a young woman, she was playing with a boy of about 3, who look just like Billy Bones!

## 7. Joke section

- What English word retains the same pronunciation, even after you take away four of its five letters?

- Queue

* How many times can you subtract the number 5 from 25?
* Once, because after you subtract it’s not 25 anymore.

- What has a bed but never sleeps, and has a mouth but never eats?

- A river.

- What has wheels and flies, but is not an aircraft?

- A rubbish truck.

- What can you hold in your right hand but not in your left hand?

- Your left hand.

## 7. Games

### == C-race

This is a game using a Perkins brailler where the aim is to see how quickly you can do a line of c’s across a portrait page of A4 (32 braille cells). You do three attempts and take an average of your time. The current record is 6.4 seconds. If you beat the record, send your time in and you will become the champion….until someone beats you!

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## 8. Get in touch and website

If you would like to send in a short article, joke or game, or if you have not subscribed yet and would like to subscribe, please do get in touch using the details below.

Email: info@tactiletimes.org

Website: [tactiletimes.org](https://tactiletimes.org)

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## Likely to be included in the next edition...

* Moo – An accessible game world that you can code.
* Become a tube driver from your computer
* Article about buddy dogs
* Competition coming up, watch our website.
* Braille displays – Reviewed and compared

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