

Accessible Reading

National Year of Reading 2026



Department
for Education



**National
Literacy
Trust**

Change your story





Introductions

**Barking &
Dagenham**

R N I B

See differently

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RNIB

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Barking and Dagenham

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Reading Quiz

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1. If you listen to a book, are you still "reading" it?
 - ☐ True
 - ☐ False

2. How many print disabled people (including blind and partially sighted) live in the UK?
 - ☐ 590,000
 - ☐ 3 million
 - ☐ 10 million

3. What font point size does Giant Print start at?
 - ☐ 16
 - ☐ 18
 - ☐ Anything over 18

Reading Quiz

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4. How many years has braille existed?
 - ☐ 90
 - ☐ 200
 - ☐ 500

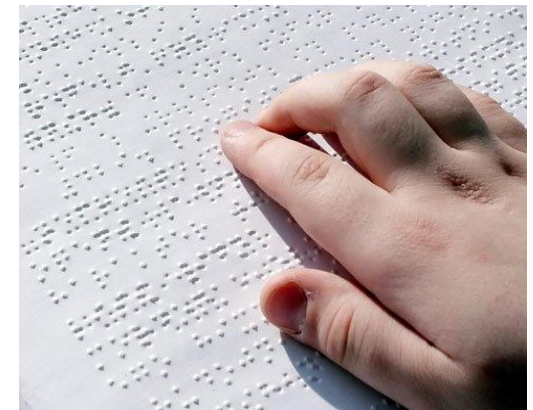
5. Under VPIPP what formats of books should public libraries stock?
 - ☐ Print, audio, LP and braille
 - ☐ Print, audio, LP
 - ☐ Print, audio, LP and GP

6. Reading books in different formats makes you smarter?
 - ☐ True
 - ☐ False

Accessible literacy refers to the way someone learns to read or keeps reading in a format that works for them and which they can understand.

- A print disability is a disability that prevents or inhibits a person from reading a literary, musical, dramatic or artistic work in its original format.
 - Examples of print disabilities:
 - learning disability: an impairment relating to comprehension
 - physical disability: the inability to hold or manipulate a book
 - visual disability: severe or total impairment of sight or the inability to focus or move one's eyes
- 

- **Print – Large, Giant Print, Easy Read or ePub**
- **Audio – Digital, CD/USB or Text-To-Speech**
- **Tactile – Braille, either hardcopy or digital (Sensory Stories)**



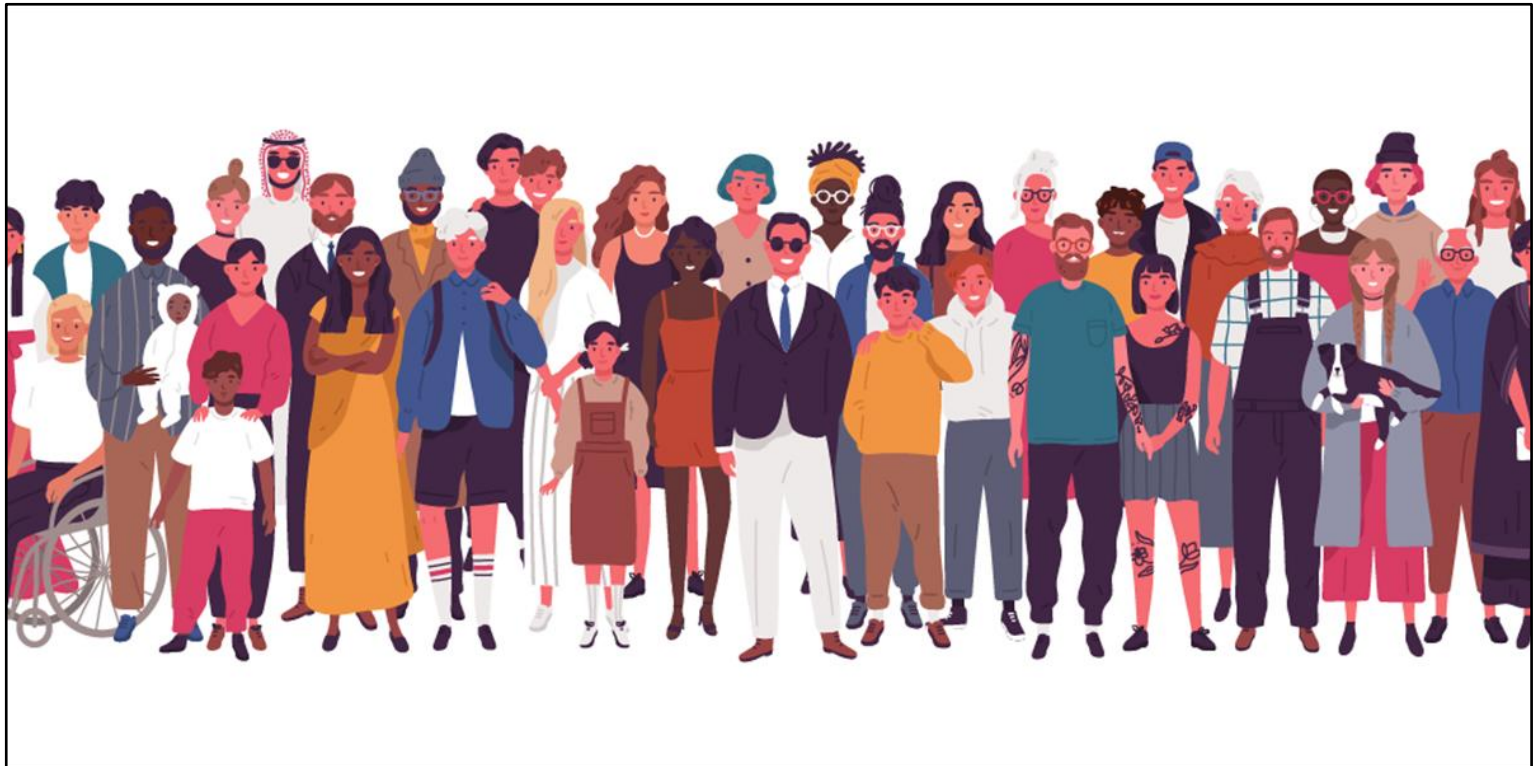
Who Benefits?

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Everyone



Rethinking How We See Disability



Rethinking How We See Disability

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<https://www.flexyfoot.com/products/flexyfoot-shock-absorbing-walking-sticks/flexyfoot-childrens-walking-sticks/flexyfoot-childrens-walking-stick>

Rethinking How We See Disability

Scenario 1: Wheelchair in the Playground

A parent arrives in a wheelchair, then stands and plays with their children.



Scenario 2: Mobility Scooter in the Playground

A parent uses a mobility scooter, then walks unaided.



Scenario 3: Parent Walking Aided



Rethinking How We See Disability

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Introducing Perception Impaired

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Perception Impaired (PI): Rethinking How We See Disability

In a world shaped by visual cues and assumptions, disability is often misunderstood. The term “**Perception Impaired**” introduces a new lens — not to describe the disabled individual, but the observer whose understanding is clouded by bias, stereotypes, or limited awareness.

I came up with the term 'Perception Impaired' and started using it after reflecting on my own experiences.



Origin of “Perception Impaired”

“Perception Impaired” is a term I coined based on my personal experiences as a disabled individual navigating public spaces, services, and even medical environments.

I began using it to describe a recurring pattern I observed - where people, including medical professionals, made assumptions about my abilities or authenticity based solely on how I looked or moved. These assumptions often led to judgment, disbelief, or even accusations of deception.

The term shifts the focus from the disabled person to the observer, highlighting how societal perceptions - even those informed by professional training - can be flawed, biased, or incomplete.

It’s not the disability that’s hidden - it’s the understanding that’s impaired.



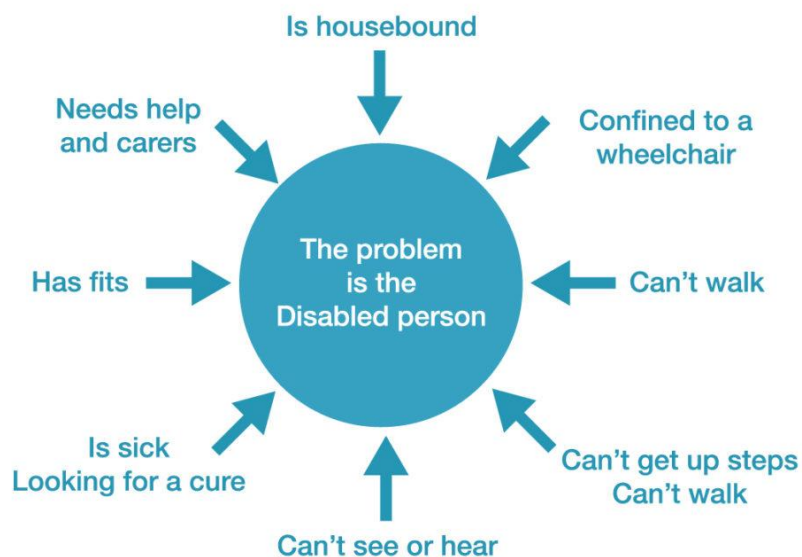
Model of Disability

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The Medical Model of Disability



This is a diagram of the traditional Medical Model of Disability, which the Social Model was developed to challenge.

The Social Model of Disability



The Social Model of Disability states that the oppression and exclusion people with impairments face is caused by the way society is run and organised.

Libraries for Everyone

Physical Access: Better layouts, high contrast signage, comfortable lighting.

Digital Inclusion: Screen-reader compatibility, large-text website, accessible e-resources.

Staff Skills: Disability awareness & assistive technology training.

Inclusive Events: Tech drop-ins, audiobook clubs, storytelling, braille-buddies

Digital Champion: Digital champions, the volunteers, help you get online.

Partnership: Build relationships with local partner organisations.

Building Confidence: Welcoming patrons and supporting them.



Inclusive Digital Zones

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The zones are equipped with cutting-edge technology, including screen readers, magnification software, and speech recognition tools. They have been carefully designed to include features such as accessible seating and adjustable desks, as well as volunteer digital champions who can offer support to those who need help getting online.

[Full Details and Booklet can be viewed here](#)



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ClearReader+ Portable Reader

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In collaboration with our Sensory Team, we lend the Optelec ClearReader+ device to visually impaired residents, enabling them to listen to books, letters, and other printed materials read aloud by this remarkable device.

The Sensory Team conducts home visits to assess individual needs, provides training, and lends the device accordingly. Thanks to this innovative approach, we are bringing library services directly into the homes of residents who may otherwise be unable to visit the library or access the reading materials they love.





The RNIB Library and Newsagent Service

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RNIB Library has over 50,000 unabridged audiobooks and over 15,000 titles in braille. It is the largest library of its kind in the UK and the full catalogue of titles can be searched online at www.rniblibrary.com.

Specialist music library with the largest selection of accessible music outside the USA.

Library has 50,000 talking book customers and 10,000 braille customers across UK.

RNIB Newsagent delivers more than 200 popular and best-selling publications, in a format to suit the customer.

- USB
 - Daisy CD
 - PDF emailed
 - Braille
 - Giant Print
- 

RNIB Bookshare supports learners with a print disability to access the curriculum.

Providing accessible textbooks and resources for learners with sight loss, dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism and qualifying physical disabilities under [The Copyright and Related Rights \(Marrakesh Treaty etc.\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#).

- Over 1.2 million accessible curriculum and leisure titles and over 3,000 accessible large print and tactile images for the curriculum and general interest
 - Support over 15,000 schools, colleges, universities and sensory support services across the UK
 - Working with over 1300 publishers & imprints
 - Learners can read electronically or adapt into various accessible formats (PDF, Word, DAISY, audio, BRF)
- 



Alternative Free Libraries

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- [ClearVision](#) – free for personal use
 - [Living Paintings](#) - free for personal use
 - [Calibre Audio](#) – free for those who only use USB's or are under 25.
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Activities at LBBD

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Activities	Description	Time and Day	Location
Macular Society Support Group	Welcoming group for those with sight loss caused by macular disease	10.30am – 12.30pm First Monday of every month	Barking Learning Centre Community & Family Hub
Digital Ability Inclusion Drop-in	For those with hearing loss, or sight loss, or both. Learn how to use accessibility tools and Apps on your mobile, tablet, or laptop with guidance from the sensory team.	10:30am - 12:30pm Second and Fourth Thursday of every month	Dagenham Library and Family Hub
Braille Buddies	Friendly Braille learning group	10:30am – 12:30pm Every Friday, except the last Friday of the month	Dagenham Library and Family Hub
Vipers	For those with sight loss. Have fun, chat, organise events and outings and have tea/coffee	10:30am – 12:30pm Last Friday of the month	Dagenham Library and Family Hub
Inclusive Digital Zones	Accessible computers and IT equipment plus adjustable furniture. Digital Champions to help	During the Opening Hours	Barking Learning Centre Community & Family Hub and Dagenham Library & Family Hub
Home Library Service	Deliver collections of books, audio books or music to anyone who is home-restricted because of age or disability (long or short term).		
Class Visits	Creating awareness about the Accessibilities during the visits by the School Children		



Accessible Reading Resources at LBBD

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1. BorrowBox by Bolinda
2. Libby by Overdrive
3. Pressreader
4. ReadOn by London Libraries
5. Large Print Books
6. Family Toy Library

<https://libraries.lbld.gov.uk/digital-content/libraries-for-all>





Project Ideas for libraries – Link into Year of Reading

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- Audiobook Reading Group
- Event around accessible formats
- Class visits around braille and sensory stories



Any Questions?

Reach out to

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RNIB Helpline 0303 123 9999

<https://libraries.lbdd.gov.uk/digital-content/libraries-for-all>

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/>

