

Braille Music Resources

Objective/Mission Statement:

In order for braille music instruction to align with the music area of the [Minnesota Arts Standards](#), this resource for teachers and parents defines the why, when, and who with respect to braille music for students who are blind/visually impaired (BVI).

Why teach Braille Music?

- Literacy – braille music is a form of literacy.
- Equal Access – when sighted students are learning to read music, students who are BVI should be as well.
- Accuracy – braille music allows students who are BVI to know exactly what the composer intended.
- Collaboration – braille music supports collaboration between all students.
- Future Study – braille music should be taught at the same time as sighted peer music instruction, to equally prepare students who are BVI that may want to pursue music in their future studies.
- Composition – braille music enables students who are BVI an accurate way to compose their own music.

When to teach Braille Music?

Braille music code shall be taught to every student who is BVI, who is a braille reader, whenever music is delivered as part of the elementary, middle school, and high school curriculum. It is paramount that Braille music be viewed by teachers, administrators, staff, and parents/guardians as a form of Braille literacy analogous to literary or Nemeth braille codes.

Who teaches Braille Music?

Braille music should be taught in collaboration with the TBVI, home room teacher (if applicable), and general education music teacher. At a minimum, they should collaborate before the school year, to review lessons and activities that will be taught during the school year. This collaboration will assist with coordination of the music instruction and production plan for the braille music to ensure the braille music is provided to the student who is BVI at the same time as their sighted peers.

Braille Music Resources:

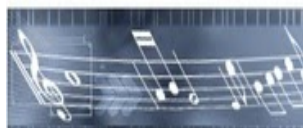


The music braille code is used internationally. Copies of the music code are available for purchase in hardcopy print and braille from the [American Printing House for the Blind \(APH\)](#) or can be downloaded from the [Braille Authority of North America \(BANA\)](#).



[BRL: Braille Through Remote Learning](#) offers a very detailed [“Specialized Code Course”](#).

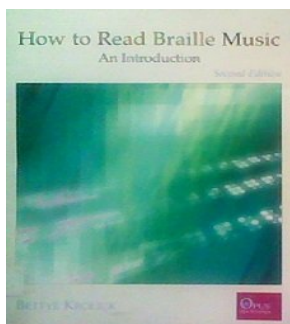
Dancing Dots



[Dancing Dots](#) offers technology, educational resources and training to assist blind and low vision individuals to read, write, and record their music. Their products and services foster inclusion, literacy and independence for visually impaired musicians and audio producers engaged in educational, leisure, and professional pursuits.



[Feel the Beat](#) is a curriculum with lessons that teach Music Braille Code, and focus on reading, playing, and memorizing measures through the use of a soprano recorder. [Feel the Beat of Braille Music](#) is a recorded webinar where you can learn the basics of braille music: what it looks like, where to find it and create it, and why and how to teach it to your students. Instructor: Linda Washburn, TSVI from Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District, Texas.



[How to Read Braille Music](#) by Bettye Krolick provides the basics in clear terms with an emphasis on accessibility. The examples are short, fun and to the point. The book identifies music symbols frequently encountered in elementary to intermediate music with an index for identifying new symbols as they are found. Access Bettye's [Dictionary of Braille Music Signs](#) for free on the internet archive!



[Opus Technologies](#) offers software, print, and braille materials for learning and using braille, especially braille music. Products include books and software for music braille, and popular braille sheet music.

Braille Music Research Articles:

["It's Just the Way I Learn!"](#) Inclusion from the Perspective of a Student with Visual Impairment is an article that describes the inclusive experience of a student with visual impairment in secondary band settings, written by Danni Gilbert, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, danni.gilbert@unl.edu

[Resources for Helping Music Students who are Blind](#) is a research article by Mary A. Smallgo that provides a variety of resources to help educators teach students who are blind how to read music and become a part of the music classroom. Mary notes the perceived obstacles below:

- Playing by ear is easier
- How can you play an instrument and read braille at the same time?
- Braille music is confusing and hard to learn
- Obtaining braille music is difficult