



Braille Readers Are Leaders 2011-2012 29th Annual Contest for Blind Youth Rules Packet



Ahbee Orton, captain of the Chinese Phoenix Readers, poses with the plaque her team received after winning the 2010-2011 Braille Readers Are Leaders Team of the Year Award. The three other girls on the team were: Rosanna Scott, Jenna Scott, and Calli Bowman-Tomlinson.



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General Contest Information

SPONSORS: National Association to Promote the Use of Braille (NAPUB), National Organization of Parents of Blind Children (NOPBC), National Federation of the Blind (NFB) Jernigan Institute

PURPOSE: to promote the joy of reading for pleasure; to promote a pride in Braille as a viable literacy medium equal to print; and to demonstrate the importance of independent reading in the development of Braille literacy skills.

ELIGIBILITY: blind and low vision Braille-reading students who are enrolled in an educational program for students from grades kindergarten through twelfth grade, in the United States and Canada, are eligible to compete in the contest.

REGISTRATION: registration is open from October 1, 2011, through the end of the contest (January 4, 2012). Registration is available online, or may be mailed and/or faxed to:

National Federation of the Blind
Braille Readers Are Leaders Contest
200 East Wells Street at Jernigan Place, Baltimore, MD 21230
Fax: (410) 659-5129 • Web: www.nfb.org/BRAL

IMPORTANT DATES

- **October 1, 2011:** Registration for the contest opens and continues until the end of the contest.
- **November 1, 2011:** Contest begins and participants start tracking their reading.
- **January 4, 2012:** Louis Braille's birthday marks the end of the contest and the last day participants can count their pages.
- **January 18, 2012:** All final entry documentation for the regular contest and special awards must be submitted to the NFB Jernigan Institute by midnight. This includes reading logs, letters of nomination, and final entry forms.
- **March, 2012:** Prizes are mailed out. NOTE: Prizes will be mailed "free matter for the blind" and thus delivery of packages may be delayed and may vary greatly depending on the package's destination.



Breaking Down the Contest

1) Regular Contest: Everyone participates in the main contest where contestants compete against their same-grade peers to read the most Braille pages during the two month reading period. There are five categories in the regular competition: grades K-1; 2-3; 4-5; 6-8 (middle school); and 9-12 (high school). Every contestant will be automatically considered for an award in his/her age-appropriate grade category.

NOTE: Students classified as "un-graded," or those who have reading delays, should register in the same category as their same-age peers. For example, an eighteen-year-old student who reads at a third grade level should register in the high school category, however, he or she may read third grade materials. We have found that when students read material appropriate for their reading level they are able to be competitive with their same-age peers.

2) Leader Board: Throughout the two month reading period participants have the opportunity to update their "pages read" at www.nfb.org/BRAL as often as they wish for a chance to get their name on the Leader Board. The Leader Board will be updated at four secret dates throughout the contest.

3) Special Awards: Participants may opt to compete for a special award in addition to competing in the regular contest. All of the special awards require a letter of nomination and can be awarded to as many as five participants with the exception of the Braille Readers Are Leaders Team of the Year Award.

A. Braille Readers Community Service Award: This award most closely reflects the ultimate mission of the contest. Braille literacy enhances the ability of blind children to demonstrate leadership through service to others. For example, a blind teen may use Braille to read to lonely residents in a nursing home, or use his or her Braille skills to organize and conduct a food drive for a school project. If you are literate the opportunities for service are endless. The goal of this award is to encourage contestants who have developed good Braille skills to reach out into the community and use those skills for the good of others. This award is restricted to students in grades six through twelve.

B. Twin Vision® Award: This award is for dual print-and-Braille readers. Funded by the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults, this award is given to students who continue to use some combination of print and Braille in their academic and/or leisure reading activities. Students eligible for this award might be elementary school students who have learned both print and Braille at an early age, or older students who were print readers and are now in the process of learning to read and use Braille.

C. 2012 Jennifer Baker Award: This award is named after Jennifer Baker, a young woman from Maryland who overcame many severe additional disabilities to become Braille literate and was a frequent national winner in the Braille Readers Are Leaders program. She died of kidney failure shortly before her twenty-first birthday. This award is given in her honor to one or more students who submit a letter of nomination with information documenting the obstacles the student has overcome to become Braille literate. Examples of those eligible for this award might be students with cognitive and/or physical disabilities, English as second language learners, students with brain injuries, or students who have been otherwise educationally disadvantaged.

D. Braille Readers Are Leaders Team of the Year Award: This award is given to the team who demonstrates the best combination of pages read and team spirit. A team may consist of as many as five and as few as two participants. Teams may demonstrate team spirit in any of the following ways: keeping a blog to encourage each other; creating a Facebook group in which members discuss their progress; creating a Twitter account for the team through which the team announces its progress; announcing team progress at NFB chapter meetings; holding a “read-a-thon;” putting up posters or bulletin boards at school

to share how the team is doing; or any other creative means. All members of a given team must participate in the regular competition and comply with contest deadlines for the team to be considered for this award. If one team member fails to complete the regular contest, the entire team will be disqualified. No more than two teams may be given this award.

4) Essay Contest: Category winners in the regular contest, winners of the 2012 Jennifer Baker Award, and winners of the Twin Vision® Award will be eligible to enter the Braille Readers Are Leaders Essay Contest to compete for an eight-day, seven-night trip for themselves and a parent or guardian to the 2012 National Federation of the Blind Convention in Dallas, Texas. Winners of the Braille Readers Community Service Award will automatically win a trip if they choose to accept it. A grand total of twelve trips will be awarded.

Prizes

EVERYONE

- Certificate of Participation
- T-Shirt

TOP READERS

- Wooden Medallion: awarded to participants whose names appear on the Leader Board during the two month reading period
- Honor Roll Ribbons: awarded to participants who reach 500, 1,000, 2,000, 4,000, 8,000, and 12,000 pages read
- Cash: Checks in the amount of \$50 will be awarded to the winners (first through third place) in each category of the regular contest, and all winners of special awards, excluding the Team of the Year Award.

TEAMS

- Plaque: A plaque will be given to the one or two teams that win the Team of the Year Award
- National Recognition: The team(s) that wins the Team of the Year Award will become the spokes-team for next year's contest.

TWELVE LUCKY WINNERS

- Trip: Winners of the Braille Readers Community Service Award and winners of the Braille Readers Are Leaders Essay Contest will receive an eight-day, seven-night trip for themselves and a parent or guardian to the 2012 National Federation of the Blind National Convention in Dallas, Texas. They may be given the opportunity to speak briefly at the meetings of the NOBPC and/or NAPUB. This convention is the largest gathering of blind people anywhere in the world, with

about three thousand blind people and two hundred families of blind children attending every year. It is packed with informational programs and fun-filled events for all ages. Descriptions of previous years' events are available on the NFB Web site, in the *Braille Monitor*, and in *Future Reflections*, the NFB magazine for parents and teachers of blind children.

SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND RECOGNITION

- Residential or day schools for the blind that enroll a significant percentage of their students in the contest and in other ways promote Braille literacy and the Braille Readers Are Leaders program during the contest period receive a special certificate suitable for framing and public display.

RULES FOR THE CONTEST

- Contestants must meet the eligibility criteria.
- All materials read for the contest must meet the contest criteria for acceptable materials (see below).
- All materials must be read from November 1, 2011, through January 4, 2012.
- Each entry must have the name and contact information of a certifying authority.
- Incomplete information on the registration and entry forms may disqualify a contestant for prizes or awards.
- All decisions of the judges are final.

Certifying Authority: The certifying authority is responsible for: (1) registering the student for the contest; (2) assisting the student in finding suitable extracurricular Braille books and other materials to read for the contest; (3) verifying that the student read the Braille material listed and that the material was read between November 1 and January 4; and (4) submitting the contest entry form and reading list in an accurate, complete, and timely fashion.

Who is eligible to be a Certifying Authority?: Teachers, librarians, and parents may serve as certifying authorities. Each participant only needs one certifying authority.

Interviews: The contestant, certifying authority, and/or parent may be contacted for an interview if the contest judges have questions or need additional information about an entry. Judges may, based upon the information available to them, adjust the number of pages or disqualify a contestant. **All decisions of the judges are final.**

Reading Material Guidelines

The overall purpose is to encourage extracurricular reading for pleasure, so the following lists of acceptable and unacceptable contest reading materials follow this general guideline. The lists also take into account the fact that most of what students in kindergarten, first, and second grades learn in school is connected to reading and therefore there is not always a clear distinction between required reading and recreational reading.

Acceptable—recreational or independent reading. All material must have identifiable source information that can be checked for verification, such as author, publisher, or sponsoring organization

- Books: fiction or nonfiction, hardback or paperback, Braille only or print-and-Braille format, mass-produced or individually transcribed
- Magazines
- Stand-alone articles or tracts with identifiable authors and/or publishers; for example, NFB Braille literature (such as banquet speeches), or reprints of articles that originally appeared in the *Braille Monitor*
- Manuals for club activities: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Blue Birds, 4-H Club, etc.
- Religious publications: portions of the *Bible*, *Koran*, *Torah*, Sunday school lessons, meditations, etc.
- Materials read in school during free-reading time, in the library, or under any circumstance where students are allowed freedom to choose what they read, but may be required to read “something”
- Supplemental reading books to beginning reading series, such as those that come with the *Patterns* reading series from APH
- Books from the Accelerated Reading Program list
- Cookbooks, but only if an attempt is made to read the book in its entirety, not recipe by recipe (children’s cookbooks are often designed so that they are easily read from cover to cover)

Not Acceptable—materials required for school assignments, reference materials, and other reading material not designed to be read in its entirety

- Textbooks and related materials assigned as required reading by the student’s teacher or educational program
- Dictionary
- Encyclopedia
- Menus
- Cookbooks (see exception above)
- Items without identifiable source information that can be checked for verification, such as author, publisher, or sponsoring organization

Recording Your Reading

Visit www.nfb.org/BRAL and download the official Braille Readers Are Leaders Reading Log. The reading log is available in three file formats: PDF, Microsoft Word, and Microsoft Excel. The PDF reading log is designed specifically to be printed. The reading logs in Excel and Word formats are designed to be completed electronically.

After Downloading the reading log please rename the file according to the following rule, "BRALK12_last name_first name_readinglog." For example, a reading log for the contestant Bob Smith would have a file name of "BRALK12_Smith_Bob_readinglog." By renaming your reading log you aid the judges in identifying your reading log after you upload it at the end of the contest.

To receive full credit for the pages read during the contest it is crucial that the material read is recorded accurately. Before the contest begins, look over the reading log and instructions to ensure that you understand what information you will be required to provide.

FILLING OUT YOUR READING LOG

This information will be clearer if you reference the reading log while reading the instructions.

Excel Reading Log

The spreadsheet will be referenced by columns, as explained here:

1. Reading Material Citation columns: Provide the title and author for all material. In addition, please provide the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) if it is available. This ten- or thirteen-digit number aids us in tracking down books and verifying their page length. In Braille books, the ISBN is generally listed in the first few pages of the book with the other bibliographical information. (We are aware that some Braille books do not have ISBNs; if you cannot find the ISBN for a book you may leave this field blank.)
2. Material Transcribed By columns: Please tell us where you acquired the Braille reading material:
 - a. Bookshare: If you downloaded a .brf file from www.Bookshare.org, please place an "x" in the "Bookshare" column for that entry.
 - b. WEB-BRAILLE: If you downloaded a .brf file of a book transcribed by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) at www.loc.gov/nls, please place an "x" in the "WEB-BRAILLE" column for that entry.

c. Home/School: If the material was transcribed by school district personnel or at the contestant's home, please place an "x" in the "Home/School" column for that entry.

d. Agency: If you received the material in hard copy Braille from an organization/agency outside the school, please place an "x" in the "Agency" column for that entry.

3. Type of Material columns: Place an "x" in the appropriate column identifying whether the material read was a book, magazine, article, or other.

4. Did the Contestant Complete this Book? column: Please indicate if the contestant completed the book with a "yes" or "no."

5. Date Completed or Stopped Reading column: Please indicate the date the contestant completed the book or stopped reading the book. If the contestant begins a book, takes a break from reading it, and then picks the book back up to finish it, you only need to record the final date.

6. Pages Read columns: We are interested in the total number of pages read by the contestant in each entry during the contest.

a. Number of Pages: Record the number of Braille pages read in the book. (See the Common Questions section of the contest rules for more details.) If the contestant only read 200 pages of a 400-page book then you should record "200" in the "Number of Pages" column.

b. Times Read: Contestants in grades K-5 are permitted to read books up to three times. (See the Common Questions section of the contest rules for more details.) All contestants should record the number of times they read each entry. *NOTE:* In order for the formulas in the spreadsheet to work, you must enter a value in the "Times Read" column. If the contestant is in grade 6-12 and/or only read the book once, please enter a "1" in this column.

c. Total Pages: The spreadsheet will calculate the total pages read for each entry and automatically insert the correct value in this field.

7. Notes columns: The last page of the spreadsheet provides a space where you can supply any other relevant information about an entry. Please list the entry number to which each note pertains.

Switching Sheets within a Workbook: If you are using the Excel format reading log you may need to switch between the "Instructions" sheet and the "Reading Log" sheet. There are two ways to do this. In the bottom left corner of the window you should

see two tabs, "Instructions" and "Reading Log"; click on the sheet you want to view. Alternatively you can navigate between sheets by pushing control and page-up or control and page-down.

Word Reading Log

Please provide as much information as possible for each entry in your reading log.

1. Material Title: Please provide the title of the book, magazine, etc.
2. Author: Please list the author
3. ISBN (if available): This ten- or thirteen-digit number aids us in tracking down books and verifying their page length. In Braille books, the ISBN is generally listed in the first few pages of the book with the other bibliographical information. (We are aware that some Braille books do not have ISBNs; if you cannot find the ISBN for a book you may leave this field blank.)
4. Material Transcribed by: Please tell us where you acquired the Braille reading material:
 - a. Bookshare: If you downloaded a .brf file from www.Bookshare.org, please place an "x" next to "Bookshare."
 - b. WEB-BRAILLE: If you downloaded a .brf file of a book transcribed by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) at www.loc.gov/nls, please place an "x" next to "WEB-BRAILLE" for that entry.
 - c. Home/School: If the material was transcribed by school district personnel or at the contestant's home, please place an "x" next to "Home/School" for that entry.
 - d. Agency: If you received the material in hard copy Braille from an organization/agency outside the school, please place an "x" next to "Agency" for that entry.
5. Type of Material: Place an "x" next to the appropriate choice identifying whether the material read was a book, magazine, article, or other.
6. Did the Contestant Complete this Book?: Please indicate if the contestant completed the book with a "yes" or "no."
7. Date Completed or Stopped Reading: Please indicate the date the contestant completed the book or stopped reading the book. If the contestant begins a book, takes a break from reading it, and then picks the book back up to finish it, you only need to record the final date.

8. Number of Pages: Record the number of Braille pages read in the book. (See the Common Questions section of the contest rules for more details.) If the contestant only read 200 pages of a 400-page book then you should record “200” next to “Number of Pages.”

9. Times Read: Contestants in grades K-5 are permitted to read books up to three times. (See the Common Questions section of the contest rules for more details.) All contestants should record the number of times they read each entry.

10. Total Pages: Please calculate the total pages read for each entry by multiplying the value next to “number of pages” by the value next to “times read.” Record the product next to total pages for each entry.

11. Notes: Space is provided for you to supply any other relevant information about an entry.

PDF Reading Log

NOTE: this reading log is specifically designed to be printed and used as a hard copy reading log. If you wish to fill out the reading log electronically please use the Excel or Word reading log formats. The spreadsheet will be referenced by columns, as explained here:

1. Reading Material Citation columns: Provide the title and author for all material. In addition, please provide the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) if it is available. This ten- or thirteen-digit number aides us in tracking down books and verifying their page length. In Braille books, the ISBN is generally listed in the first few pages of the book with the other bibliographical information. (We are aware that some Braille books do not have ISBNs; if you cannot find the ISBN for a book you may leave that field blank.)
2. Material Transcribed By columns: Please tell us where you acquired the Braille reading material:
 - a. Bookshare: If you downloaded a .brf file from www.Bookshare.org, please place an “x” in the “Bookshare” column for that entry.
 - b. WEB-BRAILLE: If you downloaded a .brf file of a book transcribed by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) at www.loc.gov/nls, please place an “x” in the “WEB-BRAILLE” column for that entry.
 - c. Home/School: If the material was transcribed by school district personnel or at the contestant’s home, please place an “x” in the “Home/School” column for that entry.

d. Agency: If you received the material in hard copy Braille from an organization/agency outside the school, please place an “x” in the “agency” column for that entry.

3. Type of Material columns: Place an “x” in the appropriate column identifying whether the material read was a book, magazine, article, or other.

4. Did the Contestant Complete this Book? column: Please indicate if the contestant completed the book with a “yes” or “no.”

5. Date Completed or Stopped Reading column: Please indicate the date the contestant completed the book or stopped reading the book. If the contestant begins a book, takes a break from reading it, and then picks the book back up to finish it, you only need to record the final date.

6. Pages Read Columns: We are interested in the total number of pages read by the contestant in each entry during the contest.

a. Number of Pages: Record the number of Braille pages read in the book. (See the Common Questions section of the contest rules for more details.) If the contestant only read 200 pages of a 400-page book then you should record “200” in the “Number of Pages” column.

b. Number of Times Read: Contestants in grades K-5 are permitted to read books up to three times. (See the Common Questions section of the contest rules for more details.) All contestants should record the number of times they read each entry.

c. Total Pages: Please calculate the total pages read for each entry by multiplying the value in the “number of pages” column by the value in the “times read” column. Record the product in the “total pages” column for each entry.

7. Notes columns: The last page of the reading log provides a space where you can supply any other relevant information about an entry. Please list the entry number to which each note pertains.

Hard Copy vs. Electronic Reading Logs: We encourage you to fill out the reading log electronically. Electronic logs can be uploaded to the Web site at the end of the contest, which will save you time. If you prefer to keep a hard copy log please print the PDF reading log. Please write legibly, double check your math, and ensure that you fill out the first six rows of the spreadsheet with the contestant and certifying authority’s information. Reading logs must reach the NFB Jernigan Institute by **January 18, 2012**. If you are mailing a hard copy log be sure to get it in the mail immediately after the contest ends to ensure that it arrives in time.

Common Questions

1. What if I didn't know about the contest until after it began? Can I still enter? *YES.*
2. If I enter late, can I still count the Braille pages I have read since November 1? *YES, but only if your certifying authority can verify that you read those pages.*
3. What constitutes a Braille page? *Each side of an embossed piece of paper is considered one page. If you read both sides, then you have read two pages. This is true even if there are only two Braille lines on one side.*
4. Can I count title pages, tables of contents, Brailled descriptions of illustrations, etc.? *YES.*
5. What if I don't finish reading a book? Can I count the pages that I did read? *YES.*
6. Can I read the same book more than once? *YES, but only under the following conditions: the student must be at an elementary (5th grade or below) reading level; no book may be read more than three times; and the certifying authority must list or otherwise clearly identify which titles have been read more than once, how many times read (two or three), and indicate the number of Braille pages read in each reading. Example: Frog and Toad, 3x20 pages = 60 pages.*
7. How do I count pages if I read material from the Bible? *You must give a reference to the book(s) of the Bible you read (i.e. Proverbs, Matthew, etc.), AND you must read whole pages. Please do not give chapters and verses read. Acceptable—Bible, Book of Job: 20 pages. Not acceptable—Psalms 8, 24, and 32.*
8. I have to transcribe books for my beginning reader. Most of these books have only a few words on a page. If the print book has more pages than my Braille transcription, how do I count pages for the contest? *For the purposes of this contest, the number of Braille pages counted per children's picture book should never be less than the number of print pages in that book. This is so even if the teacher has transcribed the entire book onto one Braille page. To avoid confusion, we suggest that the books be transcribed page for page, one Braille page for each print page, whenever possible.*
9. My student reads a lot of electronic books with a refreshable Braille display. Are these eligible? *MAYBE.* If so, how do we count Braille pages? *Formatted files with a .brf extension—for example, files from Bookshare.org and NLS WEB-BRAILLE—will have Braille page numbers in the file. These are acceptable. If you wish to use other scanned or non-.brf formatted files for the contest, you must contact the contest officials in advance for*

guidance and approval in how to determine the Braille page count. PLEASE NOTE: IF USING A REFRESHABLE DISPLAY, ANY SPEECH ACCESS ASSOCIATED WITH THE BRAILLE DISPLAY MUST BE TURNED OFF AT ALL TIMES DURING THE READING OF PAGES FOR THIS CONTEST.

10. I have trouble finding enough Braille material for my older students. Do you have any suggestions? YES. *The National Federation of the Blind has free Braille materials suitable for blind youth, including recent issues of the Braille Monitor magazine and Braille copies of our Kernel Book series. To request a literature list (large print or Braille) contact: National Federation of the Blind, Independence Market, 200 East Wells Street at Jernigan Place, Baltimore, Maryland 21230; (410) 659-9314, extension 2216; or eringlein@nfb.org. You may also find appropriate reading material on NFB ShareBraille, visit www.nfbsharebraille.org.*

11. Are the contest forms available on the Web site so that I can print out more copies? YES, www.nfb.org/BRAL.

Do you still have questions? Contact us at:



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