

# Sensing Helen



Education Resource Pack  
Key Stage 2 (7 – 11 years)

**Persuasion Arts**  
creating persuasive stories through drama



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# Welcome

Welcome to the Sensing Helen Education Resource Pack. We have structured our content and activities to cover subjects across the Key Stage 2 curriculum, suitable for 7-11 year-olds.

## Our Project

Funded by Heritage Lottery, Sensing Helen is a project about women and sensory communication through history. Led by myself, Tam Gilbert, a Dorset based visually impaired artist, it was inspired by the story of Helen Keller, the first Deafblind person to graduate in the U.S in 1904 and her experiences of learning to communicate. I was fascinated to discover what life was like in Victorian Dorset in the same period and compare with my own (and others') experiences of growing up visually impaired in the 20th and 21st Centuries. At a time when many disabled people are facing challenging cuts to benefits and services, it seems an auspicious time to look back. The Sensing Helen project explored three areas of visual impairment heritage:

- Histories of women growing up in Victorian Dorset before the time when there was understanding around disability. We discovered how far they were enabled, or disabled by Society.
- The obtaining and compiling of a collection of oral histories from visually impaired women from three local groups run by Dorset Blind Association. These focused on people's memories of growing up visually impaired or blind and contrasting with their experiences of navigating life today.
- Working with students at Victoria Education Centre (SEN) and a Home Education group, we discovered how young people today, who are facing disabling barriers, are learning and discovering accessible ways to communicate. We shared the communication challenges from Victorian Dorset and compared against technology young people are using now.

## The Social Model

Sensing Helen is designed around The Social Model of Disability which is the model preferred by most disabled people. Unlike the Medical or Charity Model, which views disabled people as having an illness or a 'problem' which needs to be 'cured,' the Social Model is all about removing physical barriers and improving attitudes. This means that it is Society's lack of access and information which disables someone, rather than their impairment. We would encourage that it is best practice not to use blindfolds for practical exercises, but instead simply close the eyes if necessary. This is because each blind/visually impaired person has a different level of sight and can see varying shades of light and dark.

# How to use this Resource Pack

We have based our Resource Pack on the lives of Helen Keller and Sophia Ridout (one of the young women we found in our Research). The Resource Pack covers Key Stage 2 curriculum areas of Design Technology, English, Geography, History, Maths, Music and Drama. There is a Pupil Led learning section where we ask young people to research using the internet.

Each subject has tiered levels of learning to suit age and groups of mixed abilities:

Level A – Beginner

Level B – Intermediate

Level C – Advanced

Some subjects have additional Fact Sheets and Worksheets to support the learning experience.

## Accompanying Resources

This Educational Resource Pack explores all the different aspects of Sophia's story.

Accompanying Resources such as photographs, census and school admission papers are provided to assist young learners in discovering more about Sophia and her life story. You can also access our documentary film and read about Sensing Helen as a whole on our website.

<http://persuasionarts.co.uk>

We hope you find this Resource Pack useful. We would love your feedback - if you would like to share anything with us or ask further questions please contact:

Tam Gilbert [tam@persuasionarts.co.uk](mailto:tam@persuasionarts.co.uk)

Persuasion Arts are also available within Dorset and Hampshire to deliver drama and research workshops on the story of Sophia. To find out more, please drop us an email.

Tam Gilbert  
July 2018

This Resource Pack is based on the story of Sophia Ridout, researched in 2017-18 by Tam Gilbert, Michele O'Brien, Jen Gordon and Alastair Nisbet. Funded by The Heritage Lottery. Researched with Dorset History Centre, Priest's House Museum, Wimborne and Bristol Archives. The research was part of the Sensing Helen Project led by Persuasion Arts with The Arts Development Company.





# Sophia's Story

## 'Who am I?

My name is Sophia Ridout. The year is 1851 and I am 9 years old. I live at Gots Corner in Sturminster Newton, Dorset. I was born in 1842 and I do not see the world, for I was born blind. My da died when I was small, so I just live with Ma (me mother) Sarah, and her Ma Sarah, and my little sister Ann who's 4, as well as my two Aunts. I'm a scholar! I go to the local school in Sturminster Newton. It's a small school beside the church.



Photograph: A Victorian Schoolroom, pupils sit in neat rows at wooden desks whilst the teacher stands at the back of the room



Photograph: St Mary's Parish Church, Sturminster Newton. A stone church with a tall central square spire surrounded by trees

The Parish at St Mary's Church have said they'll pay for me to go off to a new school so I can learn a trade and pay my way in the world. I'd like to be a Glover like Ma. They say I can go when I'm ten years old!

It's a lot of money to pay every half year in advance; five pounds and five shillings for up to seven years! The school is in somewhere called Bristol, which is a long way away from here! I will need a lot of new clothes including four petticoats, stockings and also a box with a lock and key!

## A fortnight later...

A fortnight has now passed and I am so happy to be ten years old! I am waiting for the coach driver Mr Stevens, to take me to Bristol! I am going to the Bristol School of Industry for the Blind, on account of me eyes. I am to sit up top with Mr Stevens while the other passengers sit in the warm. It will take a whole day to travel fifty miles! It was sad to say goodbye to Ma and Ann and the others, but it's going to be an adventure - I've never been out of the village before. I'm going out into the world!



Photograph: The Bristol School of Industry for the Blind. A large brick building with thin gothic windows and two turrets. Children are playing and sitting on the grass at the front of the building along with staff. There is a large church building next to it

# Sensing Helen - Sophia's Story

## At School...

We have a long day at Bristol School of Industry for the Blind (or Bristol Asylum as it is also called) and we don't go home very often. We are only allowed visitors very occasionally, on a Sunday, if Matron says we can. But I don't mind, I'm learning a trade so I can help Ma back home.

We learn Geography, Music, English and Maths. Mostly we are learning a trade. We can learn basketry, knitting, brush making and machine knitting. I am learning to knit. Everything we make in the school gets sold in the sale shop on the ground floor.

We have to do morning drill; exercises in the front yard every day.



Photograph: Morning drill at Bristol School of Industry for the Blind. Around 40 children are doing their exercises in a back courtyard area with five members of staff



Photograph: The hand knitting shop. Around 20 young women are sitting learning to hand knit in a pleasant room with wallpapered walls. The teacher sits at her desk with a book

Our long day starts when we get up at 6 o'clock, or half past 6 o'clock in the winter months. We wash and dress and start work from 7-8am. Then it is breakfast at 8 o'clock followed by prayers at half past 8, then back at work from 9am - 1pm and dinner. Then more work, and supper at half past 6 o'clock. We have more prayers at 7 o'clock with the Chaplain coming each Wednesday when the whole school attends!

I, and the other younger pupils are to be in bed by 9 o'clock with the older pupils over 14 years of age, at quarter to the 10 o'clock.

It is such a long day but I look forward to being allowed a later bed-time!



# Sensing Helen - Sophia's Story

## Some years later...

The year is 1919, and I'm now 77. I feel my days are drawing to a close, so let me tell you a little about my life...

I've been living at the Union Workhouse in Sturminster Newton for almost twenty years but I've had a good life despite the Great War! All those young men, fighting for their country – so very brave, weren't they? When I was their age, after seven years in Bristol, at the age of 17, I went back home to Gots Corner, where I lived with Ma and my younger sister Ann. This would have been 1861. I was a Knitter! Ma was a Glover!



Photograph: Union Workhouse, Sturminster Newton. A large stone building with a painted front in cream. It has three floors and lower outbuildings to either side. A small chapel is on the right hand side of the building

By 1871, when I was 29, we had moved to Church Yard. Ann wasn't living with us now Ma remarried and changed her surname from Ridout to Cluett. Sadly Mr. Cluett died a few years later. I finally became a Glover at 39 whilst we were still living at Churchyard! Ma died when I was this age but I'm glad she got to see me earn my living!

By the 1880s, I was living with my step-father's mother and I stayed there until she too passed away. With nowhere else to live, I then went into the workhouse and, as I have no husband or family of my own, I will live out my final days here.

I will always be grateful to the Parish at St Mary's and to The Bristol School of Industry for giving me the opportunity to learn a trade. I got to be a Glover; making gloves with my mother and I have lived a long life.

*Sophia Ridout died in 1919 at the age of 77, although her cause of death is not known. It was around the time of the great flu epidemic and it is possible that she died of flu. There are no marked graves for the inmates of the workhouse. So here is where Sophia's story ends.*

# Factsheet: Helen Keller (1880-1968)

## Who was Helen Keller?

Helen Adams Keller was born in 1880 in Tuscumbia, Alabama.

In 1887, her companion and teacher, Anne Sullivan, helped her to develop a way to communicate, which enabled her to go on to College. She was the first Deafblind woman to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree in America in 1904. Helen became one of the 20th Century's most famous political activists, also becoming an established lecturer and author, receiving many honours in recognition of her accomplishments.



Photograph: Helen with her dog

## Early Life

Helen Keller was the first born of two daughters. The family was not particularly wealthy and earned income from their cotton plantation. Helen was born with her senses of sight and hearing, and started speaking when she was just 6 months old. She started walking at the age of 1.

## Helen's Sight and Hearing

In 1882, when she was 19 months old, Helen was ill with, what the family doctor called, "brain fever." It is unclear as to how Helen became ill, though some experts believe it might have been scarlet fever or meningitis.

Following the fever, Helen could no longer see or hear, as she had done before. As Helen grew up she developed a method of communication with her companion, Martha Washington, the young daughter of the family cook. The two girls created a type of sign language, and by the time Helen was 7, they had invented more than 60 signs to communicate with each other. It seemed to Helen's family that she had become quite distressed at this time, often kicking and screaming when angry, and giggling uncontrollably when happy. Many family relatives felt she should be institutionalised but her family wanted her to remain living at home.



# Sensing Helen - Factsheet - Helen Keller

## Discovering Language with Anne Sullivan

Helen's mother travelled to the Perkins Institute for the Blind in Boston, Massachusetts and met with recent graduate, Anne Sullivan. She employed Anne to work at the family home, and Helen and Anne's 49-year relationship began!



Photograph: Helen as a young girl holding a doll, with companion and teacher Anne Sullivan by her side

Anne began by teaching Helen finger spelling, starting with the word 'doll,' to help her understand the gift of a doll she had brought along. Other words would follow. At first, Helen was curious, then defiant, refusing to cooperate with Anne's instruction. When Helen did cooperate, Anne could tell that she wasn't making the connection between the objects and the letters spelled out in her hand. Anne continued to help Helen. As Helen's frustration grew, the tantrums increased. Finally, Anne demanded that she and Helen be isolated from the rest of the family for a time, so that Helen could concentrate only on Anne's instruction. They moved to a cottage on the plantation.

In a famous 'dramatic struggle,' she taught Helen the word 'water;' she helped her make the connection between the object and the letters by taking Helen out to the water pump, and placing her hand under the spout. While Anne moved the lever to flush cool water over Helen's hand, she spelled out the word w-a-t-e-r on Helen's other hand. Helen understood and repeated the word in Anne's hand. She then pounded the ground, and Anne spelled out the word g-r-o-u-n-d onto her hand. Helen moved to other objects with Anne in tow. By nightfall, she had learned 30 words!

# Sensing Helen - Factsheet - Helen Keller

## A Formal Education

Helen became determined to attend college. In 1896, she attended the Cambridge School for Young Ladies, a preparatory school for women. As her story became known to the general public, Helen began to meet famous and influential people. One of them was the writer Mark Twain, who was very impressed with her. They became friends.

Twain introduced her to his friend Henry H. Rogers, a Standard Oil executive. Rogers was so impressed with Helen's talent, drive and determination that he agreed to pay for her to attend Radcliffe College. There, she was accompanied by Anne, who sat by her side to interpret lectures and texts.



Photograph: Helen Keller wearing her Graduation Mortarboard and Gown

By this time, Helen had mastered several methods of communication, including touch-lip reading, Braille, speech, typing and finger-spelling. With the help of Anne and Anne's future husband, John Macy, Helen wrote her first book, *The Story of My Life*. It covered her transformation from childhood to 21-year-old college student. Helen graduated from Radcliffe in 1904, at the age of 24.

## Death and Legacy

Helen died in her sleep on June 1, 1968, just a few weeks before her 88th birthday.

During her remarkable life, Helen stood as a powerful example of how determination, hard work, and imagination can allow an individual to triumph.

She grew into a respected and world-renowned activist.



Photograph: Helen Keller in her later years

## Videos

Helen Keller speaks out  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ch\\_H8pt9M8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ch_H8pt9M8)

How Helen Keller learned to talk  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLqyKeMQfmY>

# Pupil Led Learning

1

## Level A

Using Google, You Tube or another search engine, find out what you can about the life of Helen Keller. Present your research visually like the example shown to the right.

Or use Worksheet 1A to record your findings.



Image: Example of research

### BRAILLE Alphabet

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
.	,	?	!	'	-	CAPITAL	#	0
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Image: The Braille Alphabet with punctuation and numbers

## Level B

Research the history of Braille, the raised alphabet used by people who are visually impaired. Who invented it and why? Is it still used today?

Present your facts visually or in writing using Worksheet 1B.

## Level C

Research what life was like in a Victorian Workhouse and write down ten facts about life in the Workhouse.

Can you find out if there was a workhouse near where you lived? What was it called?



Image: Example of a Workhouse

Edwin Heller, N.Y.

Date of Birth .....

Place of Birth .....

Date of Death . . . . .

Famous for: .....

[illegible][illegible]



# Sensing Helen - Pupil Led Learning

Name: .....

## The History of Braille

### BRaille Alphabet

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
.	,	?	!	'	-	CAPITAL	#	0
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Who invented Braille?

Date of Birth .....

Place of Birth .....

Date of Death .....

Tell us about Braille and how it works:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Fascinating facts about Braille:

1. ....  
.....  
2. ....  
.....  
3. ....  
.....  
4. ....  
.....  
5. ....  
.....

Is Braille still used today? Can you research what books are available in Braille?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

# Design Technology

2

## Level A

Create your name written in a raised Braille alphabet. You can use any materials you like.  
Braille Info Sheet 2A.

1. Use baking trays or egg boxes to practice creating Braille letters using up to six dots.
2. Once you have practised your letters you can create your name in Braille using Sticker dots, PVA glue dots or pompoms.



Image: Templates of Braille with hand-made raised dots

## Level B



Image: Three 'Glove Monsters' made from different coloured gloves and buttons

Sophia Ridout dreamed all her life of becoming a glover (someone who makes gloves). Why not make your own glove monster? Using an old pair of gloves, some sewing thread, a needle, stuffing and some felt.

1. Cut the wrist band off the top of the glove and turn your glove inside out.
2. Using a needle and thread stitch across the top leaving a hole 2cm wide.
3. Turn the glove the right way out and stuff.
4. Stitch up the hole and add eyes and a mouth to your glove monster.

## Level C

Victorian women and girls used to wear a mop cap to keep their hair clean whilst doing chores or work.













































Use the instructions provided to cut out and sew a girls Victorian mop cap.

See Worksheet 2C.



Image: Example of a mop cap modelled by a young girl in Victorian costume

## BRAILLE Alphabet

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
								
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
								
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
								
.	,	?	!	'	-	CAPITAL	#	0
								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
								

# Sensing Helen - Design & Technology

## How to make a Victorian Mop Cap

Things you'll need:

- A square of white fabric
- Pencil
- Measuring tape or ruler
- Scissors
- Hand sewing needle and thread
- Lace (optional)
- Large needlepoint needle
- Narrow ribbon, cord or yarn



1. Cut a square of fabric 50cm x 50cm and find the centre by folding it in half and then in half again, it is now a 25cm square.
2. Set a large dinner plate on a corner to get a curve and draw around the plate with a pencil.
3. Cut out along the curve and open out flat, you should now have circle.
4. Using a small neat running stitch, hem the outer edge with a small hem so it will look nicely finished. You can add a ribbon trim or a lacy edge but a plain hem works fine too.
5. 5cm in from the edge mark out another circle. This is your guide for the elastic.
6. Either stitch a tacking stitch with elastic thread or stitch on a bias binding along the inner line to make a casing which can be threaded with elastic. Check your elastic fits the head of the wearer before making your final stitches.
7. A lace edge gives a mob cap a fancy touch.





# English

# 3

## Level A

Complete the Wordsearch which contains words from Sophia's story.

Sophia was served 'cocoa nibs' for breakfast when she was at school in Bristol. Cocoa Nibs are raw cocoa beans chopped up and are basically the raw chocolate bean before any sugar or milk is added. They taste a little bitter and nutty. It was believed they were full of vitamins. Perhaps you could get some in the health food shop to try?

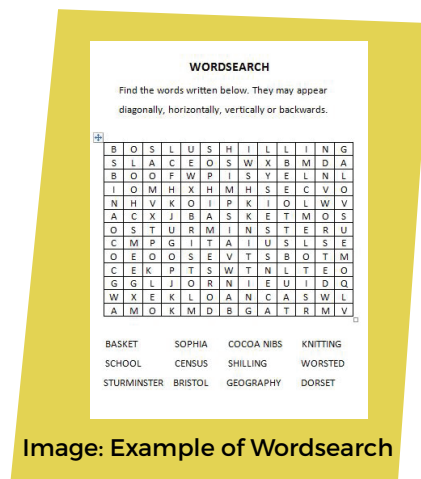


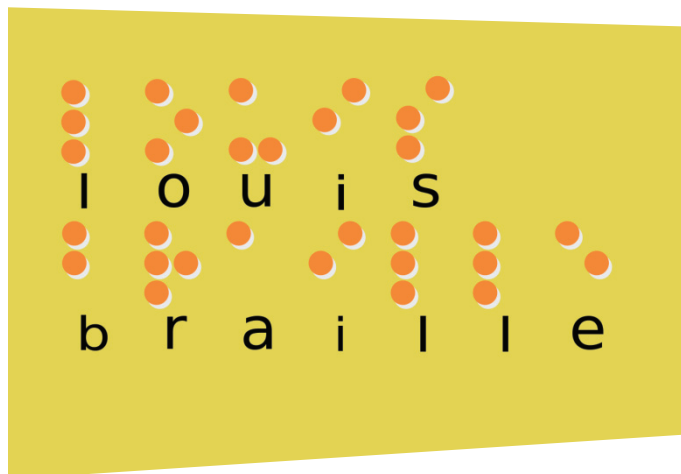
Image: Example of Wordsearch

## Worksheet 3A

## Level B

Code Breaking - Using **Worksheet 2A - Braille** see if you can crack the code in **Worksheet 3B** to reveal the fascinating fact about Sophia's life.

When you have cracked the code, can you write a message back to Sophia in Braille dots.



## Level C

Writing Challenge - Using these two documents and one image, imagine you are Sophia Ridout and write a letter home to your mother that describes life at school in The Bristol School of Industry for the Blind. Use **Factsheet 3H** to find all these documents.

- The school kit list
- The school rules and menu
- Photo of inmates doing exercises outside in the school yard

# Sensing Helen - English

## Wordsearch

Find the words written below.  
They may appear diagonally, horizontally,  
vertically or backwards.

B	O	S	L	U	S	H	I	L	L	I	N	G
S	L	A	C	E	O	S	W	X	B	M	D	A
B	O	O	F	W	P	I	S	Y	E	L	N	L
I	O	M	H	X	H	M	H	S	E	C	V	O
N	H	V	K	O	I	P	K	I	O	L	W	V
A	C	X	J	B	A	S	K	E	T	M	O	S
O	S	T	U	R	M	I	N	S	T	E	R	U
C	M	P	G	I	T	A	I	U	S	L	S	E
O	E	O	O	S	E	V	T	S	B	O	T	M
C	E	K	P	T	S	W	T	N	L	T	E	O
G	G	L	J	O	R	N	I	E	U	I	D	Q
W	X	E	K	L	O	A	N	C	A	S	W	L
A	M	O	K	M	D	B	G	A	T	R	M	V

BASKET

SOPHIA

COCOA NIBS

KNITTING

SCHOOL

CENSUS

SHILLING

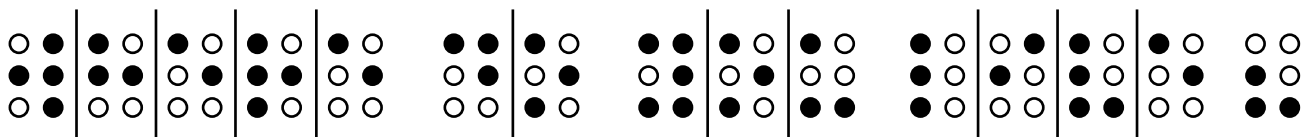
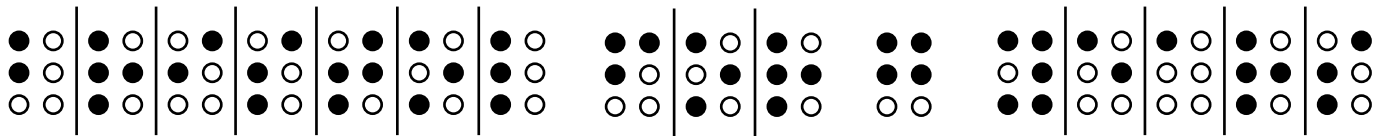
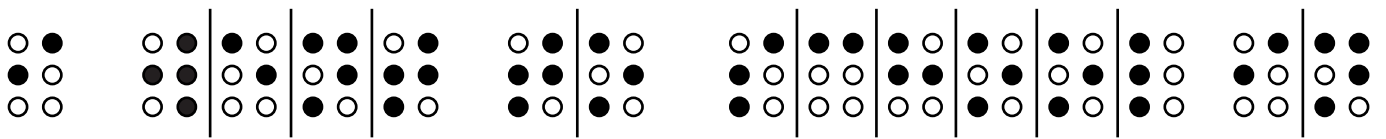
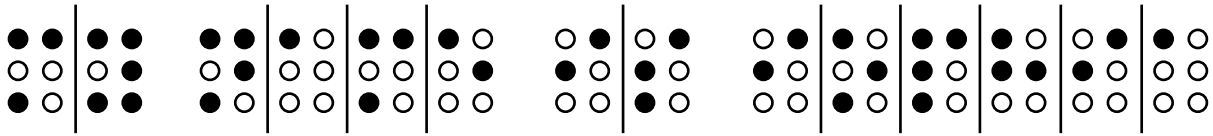
WORSTED

STURMINSTER

BRISTOL

GEOGRAPHY

DORSET



# Geography

4

## Level A

Sophia Ridout lived in Sturminster Newton from 1842 until 1851 and she returned there in 1858 where she stayed for the rest of her life. In those days travel was very expensive so many people would have only known their own village and perhaps the neighbouring town. When Sophia left for Bristol in 1852 to go to school it would have been the first time she had travelled outside Sturminster Newton.

Using a map of Dorset can you plot where Sturminster Newton is?



Image: Blank map of Dorset

## Level B



Helen Keller (1880-1968) was an American author, political activist and lecturer. Helen was the first Deafblind person to obtain a bachelor degree at an American University. She is famous for learning to communicate with her teacher Anne Sullivan using a finger alphabet and learning to speak by feeling vibrations on Anne's face and throat to learn to speak. Helen then went on to learn to read Braille and study at University. Helen Keller lived in Alabama, USA and was born almost 30 years after Sophia Ridout. **Factsheet: Helen Keller**

Can you plot on the map where Alabama is and find out five interesting facts about the state of Alabama, USA?

## Level C

On a map of the South West, plot where Bristol and Sturminster Newton are. Then research online:

- What the distance is between the two places in miles?
- How fast would a horse and carriage have travelled?
- Estimate how long the journey would have taken from Sturminster Newton in 1852? Where might they have stopped along the way?



# History

5

## Level A

To get a flavour of what life was like in Victorian times collect or borrow Victorian artefacts and objects – explore the objects and find out what they are and what they were used for?

Did you know that your local museum can lend you a Loans Box full of Victorian items? They may also have costumes. This service is usually free. We borrowed ours from the Priest's House Museum, Wimborne.

[www.priest-house.co.uk](http://www.priest-house.co.uk)



Image: Young girl wearing a Victorian Costume

## Level B

I know,  
I think  
I wonder

little researchers.

Read the fact sheets about Helen and Sophia and in small groups study the photographs of the Bristol School of Industry for the Blind. Using **Worksheet 5B** put under 'I know' the facts you know. Then under 'I think' put what you think about their lives. Under 'I wonder' write down what you are curious to research and discover more about their lives. You can use the following resources:

- **Factsheet on Sophia**
- **Factsheet on Helen**
- **Photographs of The Bristol School of Industry for the Blind**

## Level C

- Find out what a census is. Then looking at the Census folder for Sophia Ridout see if you can find out the following information, you may need to work together to do this:
- Can you find Sophia's name?
- Who was she living with at age 2?
- How old is she in each census?
- Did Sophia have any siblings, if so who and what age are they?
- Does Sophia live with her parents?
- What was the occupation of her mother?
- In the disability column can you see where she is listed as blind?

# Sensing Helen - History

Helen Keller

## I know

- I Know Helen was blind and deaf



## I think

- I think it must have been very difficult to learn to communicate

## I wonder

- I wonder how long it takes to learn how to read Braille?

## Sophia Ridout

### I know

- I know Sophia lived in Dorset with her mum and sister



### I think

- I think it must have been scary to go so far away from home to go to school

### I wonder

- I wonder if her family visited Sophia in her school in Bristol?

# Maths

6

## Level A

Sophia Ridout was born on the 26th September 1841. Today we live in 2018.  
Sophia was born in the 19th Century. We live in the 21st Century.

100 years = 1 Century  
10 years = 1 decade  
12 months = 1 year

Can you make and plot on a large timeline when Sophia was born and work out how many years ago she was born?

**Sensing Helen - Maths** **6B**

**Timeline**  
Cut out the fact cards and plot these main events in Sophia's life onto a timeline.

Sophia is born on 26th September 1841	Sophia leaves to go to school in 1852
Sophia returns home to Sturminster Newton in 1859.	Sophia is living with her mother Sarah and working as a knitter in 1861 Age 17.
Sophia is living at Gots Corner in 1871, her mum is working as a Glover.	In 1871 Sophia is Age 29 living at 45 Church Yard with mum, Sarah Cluett.
Sophia is now 39 in 1881. She is working as a glover living at 85 Church Yard.	1901 Sophia admitted to Sturminster Workhouse Age 60
Sophia's mother Sarah dies in 1881	Sophia dies in 1909 in the workhouse Aged 77

## Level B

Using your timeline again, print off the fact cards about Sophia's life and plot the dated fact cards onto your timeline.

You may like to work in groups to do this.

**Worksheet 6B.**

## Level C

When Sophia was alive in the 19th Century the county was using Imperial currency. The British Imperial System, a traditional system of weights and measures, was used officially in Great Britain from 1824, until the Metric System was adopted in 1965.

Using **Worksheet 6C**, look at the value of a Shilling, Farthing, Sixpence, Penny and Halfpenny.

The Parish Church agreed to pay for Sophia to go to school in Bristol as her family were poor. Looking at Sophia's **School Admission Paper** see if you can find the answers to the following questions?

1. How much did it cost the Parish to send Sophia to school per week?
2. The school wanted the payments made half yearly, so how much did the Parish have to pay the school every 6 months?
3. How much did it cost the Parish to send her for the full 7 years?
4. Can you find out what that would approximately be in today's money?

# Sensing Helen - Maths

## Timeline

Cut out the fact cards and plot these main events in Sophia's life onto a timeline

**Sophia is born on 26th  
September 1841**

**Sophia leaves to go to  
school in 1852**

**Sophia returns home to  
Sturminster Newton  
in 1859**

**Sophia is living with her  
mother Sarah and working  
as a knitter in 1861 Age 17**

**Sophia is living at Gots  
Corner in 1851, her mum is  
working as a Glover**

**In 1871 Sophia is Age 29  
living at 45 Church Yard  
with mum, Sarah Cluett**

**Sophia is now 39 in 1881.  
She is working as a glover  
living at 85 Church Yard**

**1901 Sophia admitted to  
Sturminster Workhouse  
Age 60**

**Sophia's mother Sarah  
dies in 1881**

**Sophia dies in 1919 in the  
workhouse  
Aged 77**



# Sensing Helen - Maths

## Imperial Currency



A farthing (1/4 penny)



A half penny or ha'penny



A penny written as 1d



A shilling written as 1s



1 Florin or 2 shillings



1/2 Crown



1 Crown



1 Pound

## Value Guide

Imperial	Value	Value now
1/2 Penny or 1/2 d	A Halfpenny or Ha'penny	
1 Penny or 1d	1 Penny	
1 Sixpence	6 Pennies	
1 Shilling	12 Pennies	5 new pence
1 Florin	2 Shillings	10 new pence
Half Crown	2 Shillings and a sixpence	
1 Crown	5 Shillings	25 new pence
1 pound	20 Shillings or 240 pennies	£1 or 100 new pence

# Music

# 7

## Level A

Sophia was taught only a limited range of subjects at school. Geography, Music, English and Maths. Audiation/Listening – take some time to relax/lay down and listen to some classical piano. Music was used a lot at The Bristol School of Industry for the Blind and there was a piano in the school room. Close your eyes and imagine you are there. These pieces were all popular in Victorian times, The Maidens Prayer was played by most young women learning the piano.

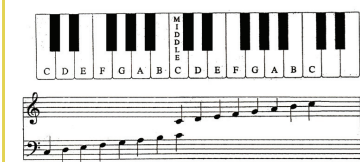
Music suggestions:

1. "The Dying Poet" by Louis Moreau Gottschalk
2. "The Maiden's Prayer" by Tekla Badarczewska.
3. "The Scarf Dance" by Chaminade



Photograph: Inside the school room at The Bristol School of Industry for the blind. A large high room where pupils or all ages are being taught a mixture of school work and practical skills

## Level B



Listening Activity: Many visually impaired boys were taught music at the school and were trained to become church organists. Using a keyboard, chimes or piano, listen and play a five note piano scale.

Starting at Middle C, D, E, F, G – this is a five note scale also known as a pentatonic scale. Listen and learn the sound of the major notes.

‘Using only your listening skills get someone to play them in sequence and then out of sequence, can you guess which notes are being played?’

## Level C

Helen Keller was both deaf and blind, she had to feel vibrations to learn how to form words. Helen used to put her fingers on her teacher Anne Sullivan's neck so she could feel the vibrations in her neck and use this to help her learn to form words and sounds to ultimately speak.

Can you try this? Watch this You Tube link to see how Helen learnt to talk  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLqyKeMQfmY>

Why not try the vibration experiments in **Worksheet 7C**?

# Drama

8

## Level A

### Exercise: Victorian Greetings

Play some piano music.

We used 'The London Piano School Volume 3 - Early Victorian Masters by Ian Hobson or A Victorian Parlour Evening (Album).

Imagine you are at a Victorian ball. Are you a Lord or Lady, Rich or Poor? How would your character move and what gestures would they make? (Eg. bow, curtsy etc.))

Move around the room as your character. When you meet someone, make eye-contact and greet each other without words.

NB: After a time, once everyone has met each other introduce language if suitable.



Photograph: Two girls dressed as a Victorian couple taking part in a drama workshop

### Exercise: Master/Servant

Find a partner. Decide who is A and who is B. A is the Master and B is the Servant. A must ask B to complete different tasks as quickly as possible. If you think your servant is being too slow, get them to work faster!

(Examples of tasks: wash the floor, cook dinner, brush hair, etc.)

A & B swap over.

NB: This exercise can be non-verbal

# Sensing Helen - Drama

## Level B

Exercise: Guided journey

Find a partner and decide who is A and who is B. A is the Visitor and B is the Tour Guide.

The Visitor shuts their eyes as the Tour Guide shows them around the room, explaining what can be seen and highlighting obstacles (people, chairs, tables etc.)

Step 1: Describe the actual room you are in, and take your partner all around it, asking them to touch different items/surfaces as you find them.

Step 2: The room is no longer your classroom or hall. It is somewhere unfamiliar – perhaps a Victorian street or shop. Use your imagination and take your partner on a tour of this new place, remembering to tell them what you see and asking them to feel/smell what you find!

A & B swap over.

Step 3: Talk about how it felt to be the Visitor and Tour Guide. Which did you prefer? Why?

NB: Obstacles and props can be added to make the room less familiar and influence the stories.

## Level C

Exercise: Meeting Sophia

Step 1: Choose someone to play the role of Sophia. Read the Story aloud. Only read the sections which relate to her childhood.

Step 2: Hot-seat Sophia to discover more about her life. Ask Sophia questions about her time at Bristol School of Industry for the Blind. (Encourage the group to think about transport, daily school life, meals, family etc.)

How does the group think Sophia feels about her situation? Collect a few ideas at a time and ask Sophia to repeat them back in the first person.

Step 3: Finish the exercise by asking Sophia to read the last part of the Story.

**Factsheet: 'Sophia's Story'** and the **Factsheet: 'Dietary list'** are resources for this exercise.