

**STEP UP!
A BETTER INSIGHT**



Lifelong
Learning
Programme

IS IT TRUE THAT...?

1. PEOPLE WHO ARE BLiND SEE NOTHING!

Most people who are blind have some degree of sight. Only about four per cent of people registered blind have no vision whatsoever. Some sight, even just perception of light, can be very helpful for getting around.

In a similar way, don't assume that people who are blind have no idea about colours. Many people lose their vision overtime so they may well remember colours. People who are blind from birth might develop other ways of thinking about colours – red is hot, blue is cold, green is the feel of grass. A really interesting book about this is 'The Black Book of Colour' by Mene-na Cottin.

And remember, not every person who is blind wears dark sunglasses! This can help some people whose visual impairment causes difficulty with glare or bright lights. It might help some people who are self-conscious about damaged eyes, but a good pair of Ray-bans also looks pretty cool!

IS IT TRUE THAT...?

PEOPLE WHO ARE BLiND NEED HELP WiTH EVERYTHING!

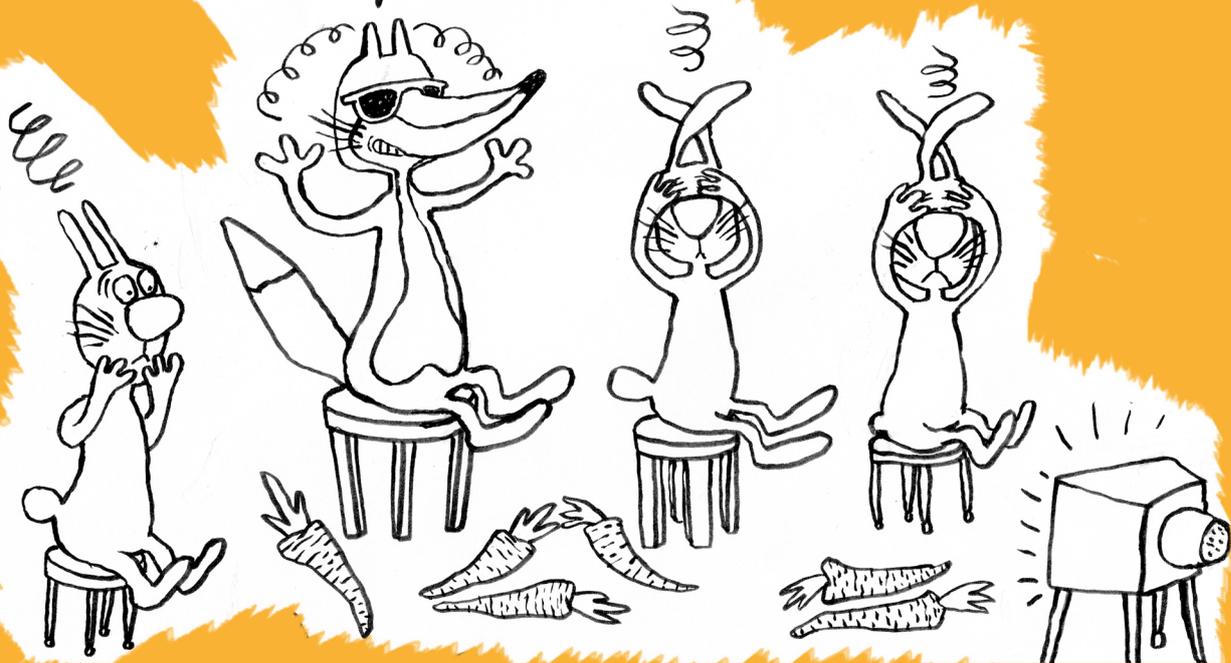
Don't assume that a person with a visual impairment can't answer for themselves. You don't need to speak to him/her in simple terms. If you're making a cup of tea for a group, ask the person who is blind what they want. That goes for everyone! Note how I am writing, I say person who is blind not 'blind person' because I emphasise the person first, not the disability.

SOMEBODY HELP ME, PLEASE!

MY JUICE IS WARM.



JUST LISTENING!



IS IT TRUE THAT...?

PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND 'LISTEN' TO THE TELEVISION!

What sounds stranger to you? 'Did you watch TV last night?' or, 'Did you listen to the TV last night?'

Use language as it is meant to be used otherwise you may only embarrass yourself and emphasise that you are seeing the disability first and not the person. If the person who is blind says they can't watch TV, only listen to it, they are probably pulling your leg or just being awkward!

Just because a person has a disability doesn't mean that they don't have a sense of humour.

IS IT TRUE THAT...?

PIANO TUNING AND BASKET WEAVING ARE THE ONLY SUITABLE JOBS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND!

Goodness, what century are we in?

Some are piano tuners and some do even enjoy basket weaving. However, there are people with a visual impairment who are computer programmers, work in offices, are lawyers and bankers.

Many people who are blind do, however, struggle to find employment and this is a very real problem.

IS IT TRUE THAT...?

PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND WANT TO FEEL YOUR FACE!

Pure Hollywood! You can find out a lot more by talking to someone than you can by feeling his/her face! If you're asked, feel free to refuse.

IS IT TRUE THAT...?

PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND HAVE SUPER HEARING!

Not true! It's all about how well you use your hearing. Most of us use our sight to gain most of our information, but when we close our eyes and really listen hard we can hear so much more.

Some schools for the visually impaired have programmes to help students with a sight loss learn to use their remaining senses more efficiently. Super hearing, I am afraid not!

LET ME SAY... YOU ARE TALL, BLOND,
INTELLIGENT... LONG NOSE, SPORTY...
SHY...





IS IT TRUE THAT...?

GUIDE DOGS KNOW WHERE THE PERSON WANTS TO GO!

Guide dogs aren't super intelligent. You won't see one winning a TV quiz show soon! They are highly trained and know to stop at crossings, avoid lamp posts and get on and off buses. However, the person still needs to know where they are going, that is, the route they want to take. Okay, if it's a very regular route, the dog will know the way, but it won't understand when to press the button to make the bus stop! Not every person who is visually impaired wants a guide dog. They may not want the responsibility and prefer to use a cane instead.

IS IT TRUE THAT...?

ALL PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND WISH THEY COULD SEE!

Many people believe that their disability is part of what defines them. It is who they are. As such many people who are blind are comfortable that they cannot see and don't sit around feeling sorry for themselves. It would be wrong to say that some wouldn't like to see or have better eyesight, after all that's just being human. But rather than being despondent they just get on with their lives.

IS IT TRUE THAT...?

EVERY PERSON WHO IS BLIND READS BRAILLE!

To be able to read Braille requires sensitive finger tips. Not everyone has the degree of sensitivity needed. Some people who go blind in later life struggle to learn Braille. But there are alternatives such as Moon as well as talking newspapers and computers which provide voice output. Oh, by the way, people who are blind don't know sign language! That's for people who are deaf but you knew that, didn't you. Okay some do. There are communication systems for learners who are blind with intellectual disabilities which are delivered 'on-body' and not forgetting how people who are profoundly deaf-blind communicate.

IS IT TRUE THAT...?

PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND DREAM IN SOUNDS NOT PICTURES!

Good question, research findings are mixed. Researchers have found that people who have had vision do dream in pictures. People who have been blind from a very early age do tend to have dreams richer in sounds. But we don't have a definitive answer to this question! Some of life's questions still need to find an answer and that's a good thing!

DOLBY SURROUND SOUND





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