

## Weekly Dose Why is a Braille Transcriber Important?

*"The way we teach is beginning to change, offering more online resources, less paperwork. A very common question asked, why do we need Braille?" Or can we have the software to create the braille, then why do we need Braille Transcribers?"*

Braille Transcribers are very important for ensuring literacy, independence, and equal access to information for people who are blind or low vision.

### **Here are the key reasons why Braille transcribers are so important:**

- **Highly Specialized Skill:** Braille transcription is not a simple one-to-one letter exchange. Transcribers learn Braille codes, formatting rules, to ensure the final work is accurate.
- **Tactile Graphics:** They are responsible for creating tactile graphics, charts, maps, and diagrams that translate visual information into a meaningful tactile format.
- **Quality Control:** They proofread and edit the Braille documents to comply with national standards (like those set by the Library of Congress or Braille Authority of North America), guaranteeing high quality and usability.

### **Why do we need Braille?**

**Note:** For a person who is blind, reading Braille is the equivalent of a sighted person reading print, it is the direct path to a fully literate life.

- **Understanding Language Structure:** Unlike passively listening to audio, reading Braille allows a student to directly engage with the mechanics of language: spelling, grammar, and punctuation. This is critical for developing strong writing and communication skills.
- **Academic Success:** Braille provides the necessary format for complex, structured information. Transcribers use specialized codes like the Nemeth Code for Math and Science to present equations, charts, and technical symbols with perfect clarity, enabling students to pursue higher education and careers in STEM fields.
- **Higher Outcomes:** Studies consistently show that Braille literacy is directly linked to higher educational attainment and better employment rates for people who are blind.
- **Daily Life:** Transcribers make everyday items accessible, including restaurant menus, medication labels, public signs, and emergency information, allowing for greater independence and travel.
- **Privacy:** Unlike audio readers, Braille allows individuals to read sensitive or confidential documents like bank statements, medical records, or legal contracts privately.

*"To sum it up, the world is full of print, access to reading, Braille is a tactile way of reading, again access to reading, therefore, Braille transcribers ensure that the written word is available accurately to Braille readers and Braille equals success and literacy!"*

**Source:** Career Explorer, Braille Formats, AFB for the Blind, RNIB