

The following is a professional, thorough example for number 3. Louis Braille accomplished most of his life's work in his youth and teen years. He died very young. Therefore, number 3 for a person like Braille will be longer than number 5.

Special note: The marks on the pages are braille. The braille symbols did not copy well.

3. One particular incident in Louis Braille's childhood made him the inventor that he was. If young Louis hadn't adored watching his father, Simon-Rene, the town saddle maker, and wasn't a curious little rascal, he never would have the injury which caused his blindness which led to inventing Braille (Freedman 5). One afternoon when Simon was outside attending to a customer about a bridle, Louis thought he would try to work like daddy. He climbed up on the work bench and set off to work. Even though he had been told numerous times that the sharp tools in the workshop were not for little boys to play with, Louis still defied his father and did it. He imitated his father taking a sharp awl and wanted to prod the leather like his Dad. Louis encountered a problem, in his father's hands the awl always went precisely into the leather, in Louis' small grubby hands the awl slipped and punctured his eyes (Freedman 6). Louis cried out in anguish with blood gushing out of his eye. His father scooped him up and sprinted to the house for help from his wife, Monique. There was no doctor in the town so a local lady, who used herbal remedies, soaked linen in lily water and covered the now infected eye. There wasn't anything they could really do, the damage was done. Only one eye was injured but the infection from that one eye spread to the other, causing blindness in the other as well. The infection ruined the cornea of both eyes, leaving no hope for Louis to ever regain sight (Freedman 9-10). Once this realization had set in for the Braille family they set forth to preventing their youngest child of four from becoming a beggar, like many blind individuals had to do to survive. His father whittled out a wooden cane for his son to feel where things in front of him were. Since Louis, like any boy his age, was growing his father was always making another one. Louis went through bumping his shins on furniture in the attempt to acquaint himself with this new world. He had to figure out how many taps it took to get to all different locations in town (Freedman 11-12). As he grew older he started to forget what a tree looked like, what his family looked like and everything around him, he started to only know sounds, textures, and smells (Freedman 13).

Since France had been going through wars for years and the French army was finally defeated, the retreating army needed supplies. They demanded bushels of hay, oats, cows, horses, bread and everything else to support an army. The army even demanded that citizens house soldiers in their houses. Louis' village of Coupvray was picked to house soldiers (Birch15). These soldiers were not kind to Louis and this in turn may have helped in the development of him shying away from strangers in his early childhood.

Louis' father had always said that Louis would study books instead of becoming a saddle maker like he was. He was always exploring as a toddler so when Louis blinded himself they didn't know what he would become. When a new priest in town, Jacques Palluy, offered to teach Louis lessons they gladly accepted. Father Palluy realized that Louis was extremely smart and insisted that he attend public school with the other children. Louis loved school and had an extraordinary memory so that he

could recite back the lesson from yesterday without hesitating. One problem hindered him from being able to fully participate; he couldn't read or write (Freedman 14-15). Father Palluy noticed this and contacted a school in Paris for blind boys. Father persuaded Louis' parents to consider this school. Then they went to see if an estate owner would write a letter of recommendation to the school. The Braille's received a letter saying that Louis had been accepted and had received a scholarship (Freedman 18-19). "At the tender age of 10, in 1819, 35 years after it was first opened by Valentine Hauy, Louis went off to the Royal Institute for Blind Youth" (Freedman 24). At the Royal Institute there were strict rules and harsh punishments. If one was to misbehave they were put on a diet of bread and water only or locked up in a room by themselves (Freedman 25).

At this new school Louis found what had always wanted, books that he could actually read. He and the other students were able to read it through a system called embossing. They were able to feel the letters and slowly read it. It was very slow to do, difficult and extremely expensive. The school only had fourteen books. One page included a couple of sentences, and writing could only be on one side of the paper (Freedman 26-27). The school didn't offer only academics. It offered classes in slipper making, chair repair, and other trades that would prepare them for life once they left the school. The school also offered music to their students and Louis quickly found out that he was a natural at it (Freedman 32).

When Charles Barbier invented a dotted and dash system for the military, called night writing, he presented it to the institute. The students loved it at first and then realized its drawbacks. It was based on syllables and was too long to figure out. Louis, now about twelve, started to reinvent this to be easier and quicker to use (Freedman 38-40). Louis began to perfect it. For three years he kept refining it and finally achieved a final product that we still use today, he was fifteen (Freedman 47). Louis made it so that it could be felt within a fingertip width. Each letter was made up with a combination of six dots. There are 63 characters, including every letter, number, punctuation, contractions, common words, music, and math (Freedman 51-52). He accomplished more in those three years than most do in a lifetime