

## Lesson 4

## READ THIS STORY #2, Basic

**Louis Braille**

Louis Braille is buried with other French heroes in the Pantheon in Paris. He was only forty-three when he died of tuberculosis. He is acclaimed for inventing a system of reading and writing that incorporates raised dots that represent letters, numbers, and even punctuation marks.

After a childhood accident, Louis became blind. He developed his system while attending the Royal Institute for the Blind. When he was fifteen, he demonstrated his unique system to the teachers and the director of the school. Because the Braille system provided an easier way for blind students to read and write, it became popular among the students at the institute. Despite the Braille system's success, it was officially considered experimental.

When he graduated in 1828, Louis was offered a teaching position at the school. For years, Louis and the Director of the Royal Institute for the Blind tried to have the Braille system adopted by the government agency in charge of education. Not only did they fail, but in 1840, the director was dismissed because his policies were too liberal. The new school administrator banned the use of Braille.

However, blind students recognized its value and continued to use it clandestinely. Eventually, the Braille system was approved by the French government. Now it is used in nearly every country in the world.