



Using Audio Books to Promote Critical Literacy

**A Workshop
by
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Temple
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Overview of Activities

1. Understanding the Audio Book Industry and the Growth of Online Services
2. Modeling Instructional Strategies
3. Review of Research on Teachers' Use of Audio Books in K-6
4. Research Questions/Issues for the Future

http://mediaeducationlab.com

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people they care about and who, they know, care about them."

- Barbara Carson



WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS: Using Audio Books to Promote Critical Literacy

Workshop by Renee Hobbs

International Reading Association, May 17, 2007

Toronto Ontario

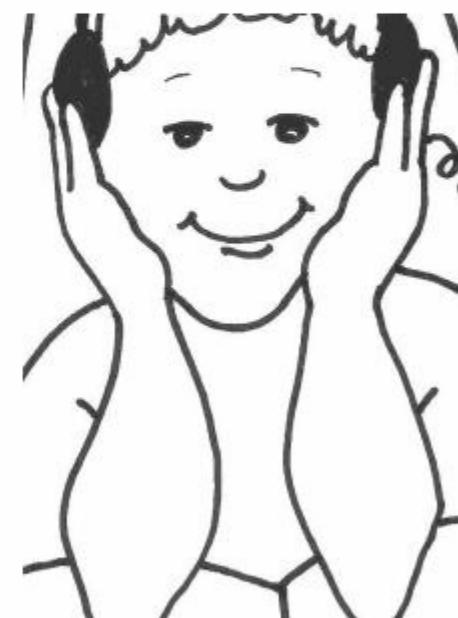
Learning Objectives

Participants will:

1. become familiar with the variety of audio books available for K-12 learners and the advantages and disadvantages of various online resources for downloading audio books;
2. understand how to apply principles from read-alouds in the use of audio books in the classroom;
3. gain knowledge of how questioning techniques can promote critical literacy skills;
4. gain knowledge about research on first-time users of audio books in the elementary classroom to discover the challenges and opportunities for the use of this technology for teachers who are less familiar with computer technology.

Evidence Base

Audio books have been used in schools since the first talking records were created in the 1960s, but now they are becoming more and more popular with general audiences, a phenomenon which has increased the scope and availability of titles. In 2005, JK Rowling's book, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, smashed all previous records set by audio books, selling 165,000 copies in its first two days (National Public Radio, 2005). At Apple's iTunes online store, over 9,000 different audio books are available. Book publishers are offering an increasing number of audio books in bookstores and as computer downloads. The growing popularity of downloading books is perhaps best displayed by Audible.com's reports of a 300 percent increase in sales, from 5.1 million sales in 2001 to 18.4 million in 2003. Despite the growth in the marketplace, there is little evidence in the scholarly or professional literature in elementary education that shows whether (or how) audio books are being used in elementary classrooms.



Audio Books & Literacy part 1

Audio Books & Literacy part 2



Elementary Teachers Use Audio Books

Exploratory research was conducted to discover the patterns of instructional practices that urban and suburban elementary school teachers use when given their first opportunity to use audio books in their classrooms. A sample of less-technologically sophisticated teachers downloaded audio books, then designed and implemented a lesson using this technology in the classroom.



Elementary Teachers Use Audio Books

Method: Teachers selected some potential audio books for use with their students. They designed and implemented a lesson for students. A research assistant was available to troubleshoot technology problems. Researchers observed classroom lessons and interviewed teachers about their perceptions of the activity.



listen + learn

How young people are building literacy skills
and a love for reading with audio books.

Audible.com Helps Migrant Students Use Audio Content to Learn

May 16th, 2007 by techmobile

Teacher: Marty Jacobson

Students: Junior High through High School, ages 12-18

Audio Content: *Latino USA*, and *Maestro: Greenspan's Fed and the American Boom* by Bob Woodward

Introduction:

In the summer of 2006, the Montana Migrant Education Program received a grant from Audible.com to provide a unique opportunity to migrant students to learn even as they were helping their families earn a living in the sugar beet fields and cherry orchards of Montana. I work with migrant students in a 24 foot mobile computer lab that travels all over Montana during the summer. The junior high and high school students travel here from Texas and Washington to work in the sugar beet fields and cherry orchards, and they attend school in the evening. Many are working on finishing up credits because they had to move before the

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- » K - Grade 2
- » Grades 3 - 5
- » Grades 6 - 8
- » High School

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<http://listenandlearn.wordpress.com/>

Findings

- (1) Teachers perceived their students to be actively learning from listening.
- (2) A wide range of students were intellectually and emotionally engaged with the story content.
- (3) Teachers emphasized vocabulary and language development.
- (4) Teachers struggled with mastering the process of downloading digital audio content.
- (5) Teachers used instructional strategies based on their experience with read-alouds to make audio learning more effective for their students.
- (6) The most significant instructional strategy was pausing to discuss the story every five to fifteen minutes to promote active listening.

Findings

Teachers typically paused to discuss the story every five to fifteen minutes to promote active listening.

Many teachers used specific and pointed questioning to prompt predictions by students.

Because teachers did not have to focus on the oral performance dimensions of the text, many teachers felt that they could be more effective in their use of questioning.

Findings

“The most rewarding part has been seeing that the kids enjoy as much as I do... and to get them to love listening!”

“Many of my students have auditory processing issues and it was difficult for them to understand parts the story. Even so, I believe that hearing the dialect, along with guided visualization, helps to bring the story to life and strengthen the students’ listening skills and comprehension.”

“I am most surprised by how genuinely concerned students are with the issues. My students are from the New York area, have no experience with agricultural life and little awareness of how they rely on rivers, even though they are surrounded by them. Hearing the voices of farmers explain how a simple change to the river could affect their lives so dramatically had a powerful impact and made the issue real to my students.”



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