Using Audio Books to Promote Critical Literacy

A Workshop by Renee Hobbs Temple University IRA Toronto May 17, 2007
Goals for this Session

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 instructional strategies for using audio books in the classroom;

3. practice questioning techniques that 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 related to the use of this technology among teachers who are less familiar with computer technology.
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
Audio Books are Hot

Audio books have been used in schools since the first talking records were created in the 1960s.

Audio books 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.

At Apple’s iTunes online store, over 9,000 different audio books are available.

Audible.com reports a 300% increase in sales, from 5.1 million sales in 2001 to 18.4 million in 2003.
Why Educators Love Audio Books

- Introduce students to books above their reading level
- Model good interpretive reading
- Teach critical listening
- Highlight the humor in books
- Introduce new genres that students might not otherwise consider
- Introduce new vocabulary or difficult proper names or locales
- Provide a bridge to important topics of discussion for parents and children who can listen together
- Recapture the essence and the delights of hearing stories beautifully told by extraordinarily talented storytellers

Why Educators Don’t Use Audio Books in the Classroom
Types of Online Audio Book Services

1. Librivox.org
2. Loudlit.org
3. Audible.com
4. I-Tunes
Welcome to LoudLit.org.

LoudLit.org is committed to delivering public domain literature paired with high quality audio performances. We pair together great literature and accompanying audio.

Putting the text and audio together, readers can learn spelling, punctuation and paragraph structure by listening and reading masterpieces of the written word. Read and listen via your web browser or on your mp3 player.

Heart of Darkness is now available!

A co-production of LiteralSystems and LoudLit.org, David Kirkwood performs and Tom Franks narrates this Joseph Conrad masterpiece. Thanks to Warren Smith of LiteralSystems for directing and editing; thanks also Gordon W. Draper for underwriting the production. [Download Heart of Darkness.]

New! New! New!

Recently added works:

Find Out About Dyslexia

If you find the audio books on this site useful, you may be one of the millions dyslexics who are undiagnosed. According to Sally Shaywitz, M.D., approximately 20% of the population has some form of dyslexia. Dr. Shaywitz is a clinical researcher at Yale University. Her excellent book, Overcoming Dyslexia, is available from Amazon.com in paperback, audio CD and audio cassette. The audio book is also available via digital download from Audible.com. See links below.

Help support LoudLit.org by buying books or audiobooks about dyslexia:
### Collection

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"The Gettysburg Address"
by Abraham Lincoln

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now, we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they have thus far so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us - that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion - that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain - that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom - and that this government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.

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Flash mp3 player by Jeroen Wijering, (cc) some rights reserved.
Web page presentation by LoudLit.org.
Kids

One and Only Shrek

Before Shrek made it on the silver screen, there was this book by William Steig, about an ordinary ogre who leaves his swampy childhood home to go out and see the world.

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Customer Picks
Titles picked by customers just like you.
The Cat in the Hat and Other Dr. Seuss Favorites (Unabridged)

By: Dr. Seuss

Regular Price: $13.95
Member Price: $9.79 / 1 Credit

Product Summary

Av. Customer Rating: ★★★★★ (4.37 based on 62 ratings)
Program Type: Audiobook (Fiction); Unabridged
Narrator: Kelsey Grammer, John Cleese, John Lithgow, Billy Crystal, and more
Publisher: Listening Library, 2006
Length: 2 hours and 1 min.

Audio Format: 1 2 3 4 5

What the Critics Say:

Sample

Add to Cart

Buy for a friend
Suggest for a friend
Add to Wish List
How the Grinch Stole Christmas (Unabridged)

Audio Description:
The Grinch, whose heart is two sizes too small, hates Who-ville's holiday celebrations, and plans to steal all the presents to prevent Christmas from coming. To his amazement, Christmas comes anyway, and the Grinch discovers the true meaning of the holiday.

Customer Reviews:
Average Rating: ★★★★½

Such a Classic ★★★★★ by Snappy
Such a great story and told by a great guy. I miss Walter Matthau, but he still brings me joy when I watch his movies.

Awesome ★★★★★ by sTaNdByMe
This is so cool. I think this is amazing for kids. I have a 4 year brother and he is going to love this. Thank you iTunes. This is so awesome for him.

GREAT!!!!!!!! ★★★★★ by 567
This is a great book for any kid. Read it, it is a great book.
General Process of Downloading Audio Books

1. Select titles and pay
2. Download audio software
3. Download audio titles to a file on your computer
4. Copy to a device (I-pod, mp3) or burn a disk
Overview of Activities

Renee Hobbs
Director, Media Education Lab
Temple University
School of Communications and Theater
College of Education
Email: renee.hobbs@temple.edu
Web: http://mediaeducationlab.com