



AUDIOBOOKS



Provide access to rich, grade-level texts through listening so students can engage with vocabulary, comprehension, discussion, and higher-level thinking without unnecessary decoding barriers.

WHAT IS IT?

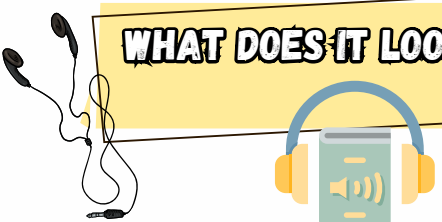
Audiobooks are professionally narrated versions of printed texts that allow students to access the same books and content as their peers. **Listening to an audiobook is a form of reading** when the instructional target is comprehension. It supports access to complex ideas while reducing barriers caused by decoding or reading fluency.

WHAT BARRIERS DOES IT REMOVE?

- Reduces barriers related to decoding, fluency, and print disabilities.
- Provides **access to grade-level texts** and richer vocabulary.
- Shifts the cognitive load from decoding to comprehension and critical thinking.
- Models fluent reading with expression and prosody.
- Increases independence and participation in discussions which boost confidence.
- Supports multilingual learners when paired with print and instructional supports.



WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?



In an **elementary** classroom, students listen to a read-aloud while following along in the printed book.

In **middle/junior high** English language arts, students access a grade-level novel through an audiobook while annotating key passages.

In **high school** social studies, students listen to primary source documents or historical accounts before participating in evidence-based discussion and writing.



WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR...

Audiobooks provide **access** to grade-level content: they do not replace explicit reading instruction or decoding intervention. Encourage students to follow along with the printed text whenever appropriate to strengthen word recognition and vocabulary. Pause for discussion, annotation, and comprehension checks to promote active thinking rather than passive listening.

Match the support to the learning target. If the goal is decoding or fluency practice, students should still have opportunities to read independently.

Ask yourself: Is **decoding** the target or **comprehension**?

LEARN MORE ⇨



- Learning Ally- free for eligible students (TX)
- HMH Rigby Readers: pull up PDF and listen
- Sora
- Check with your librarian!
- Libby/Hoopla (check out local library for home)



If the goal is comprehension, audiobooks provide access to grade- level texts and information.



If the goal is to improve basic reading skills, students still need explicit instruction and opportunities to read independently.

