WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS:

How Audisee® eBooks with Audio Encourage Remedial and Reluctant Readers with a Supportive Multimodal Approach

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WHITE PAPER

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS: HOW AUDISEE® EBOOKS WITH AUDIO ENCOURAGE REMEDIAL AND RELUCTANT READERS WITH A SUPPORTIVE MULTIMODAL APPROACH

The instructional value of reading to children has long been understood. In today's classrooms, however, time for such reading is limited and often takes place only in a group context or not at all in the upper elementary grades and beyond. This in turn limits the benefits that students—particularly struggling and remedial readers—might be able to gain from an interactive reading experience.

Audisee eBooks with Audio represents one solution to this dilemma. Lerner's best-selling titles—including curriculum-oriented nonfiction, picture books, high-interest graphic novels, middle grade chapter books, high-low fiction, and award-winning young adult fiction books for grades PreK–12—have now been released as Audisee eBooks with Audio. These eBooks add professional narration and text highlighting enhancements that allow students to read on computers or mobile devices while listening and tracking the narrated text.

The purpose of this white paper is to describe some of the research-supported instructional benefits related to reading comprehension and content knowledge acquisition that can come from using this interactive format.

WHAT ARE AUDISEE EBOOKS WITH AUDIO?

Audisee eBooks with Audio are enhanced eBooks featuring audio support and text highlighting to promote learning. Key features include the following:

Professional voice narration that can be turned on or off by students

Text that is highlighted as it is read aloud

Grade-level reading pace for grade K-6 readers and fluent reading pace for grades 4-12 readers

Appropriate illustrations and photography to support content knowledge development for emerging younger readers

High-interest content to engage reluctant older readers

COMMON MODELS FOR USING AUDISEE EBOOKS WITH AUDIO

Common instructional models for using Audisee eBooks with Audio include the following:

Students read Audisee eBooks independently on computer screen or mobile device.

Struggling readers read Audisee eBooks individually on a computer screen or mobile device under the supervision or guidance of a teacher, special education instructor, librarian, or aide.

A teacher, librarian, or aide guides a small group of students through an Audisee eBook using a computer, set of computers, or interactive whiteboard while the rest of the class completes another activity.

A teacher or librarian uses an Audisee eBook as a resource for large-group or whole-class instruction, using a computer projection system or interactive whiteboard.

Students read Audisee eBooks on a computer screen or mobile device at home with family members.

ABOUT THIS WHITE PAPER

This white paper includes the following informative sections:

An executive summary presenting key findings from the body of research

Separate sections describing the research-based advantages of Audisee eBooks with Audio as a resource for:

— Reengaging struggling and remedial readers

— Learning through sight and sound

— Overcoming decoding barriers to acquire content

— Adaptating and appealing to various types of learners

— Improving fluency with audio narration

Conclusion

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY—KEY FINDINGS

Research presented in the sections that follow support the following findings:

Students that do not achieve grade-level reading proficiency by the upper elementary grades are at risk because around the fourth grade, the "shift from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' typically occurs" (Wanzek et al., 2010, p. 890). The introduction of eBooks with audio at any grade level can bring struggling and remedial readers up to level.

Research has supported that the multiple means of representation eBooks with audio narration and text highlighting provide can increase reading, vocabulary and comprehension levels (Dalton 2014; Ertem, 2011; Forgrave, 2002; Morgan, 2013; Wolfson, 2008).

eBooks with audio have been successful in serving the needs of struggling readers to acquire grade-level content despite their difficulties in decoding, as removing "the restraints of a student's word recognition and decoding skills provides a very positive approach to focusing on the meaning behind an author's words" (Wolfson, 2008, p. 107).

Struggling students often feel defeated, resulting in them becoming resistant to remediation. Enhanced eBooks with audio appeal to these readers. They provide individualized instruction requiring minimal supervision, empowering students to become independent readers and self-directed learners (McCoy et al., 2007, p. 2).

Researchers have observed how a fluent narration model improved early readers' fluency, as students were better able to pronounce words correctly after listening to fluent narration (Dalton, 2014; Wood, Pilinger & Jackson, 2010; Whittingham et al., 2013).

REENGAGING STRUGGLING AND REMEDIAL READERS WITH EBOOKS WITH AUDIO

From early education through secondary grades, some students excel as readers while others fall further and further behind. This gap continues to widen without intervention. The struggle to catch up compounds for remedial readers in the upper elementary grades, when the "shift from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' typically occurs" (Wanzek et al., 2010, p. 890). The National Center for Educational Statistics has estimated that 69% of fourth grade students do not read at proficient levels, while 36% read below basic levels of understanding (2005). Wanzek et al. (2010) explain this phenomenon:

> With the decreased emphasis on learning to read in the upper elementary grades, students who do not read proficiently by the end of the early elementary grades (K-3) may face serious consequences. Chall and Jacobs (1983) noted that many low income third graders reading at grade level experience a sudden drop in normative reading scores by the fourth grade, referring to this phenomenon as the "fourth grade slump", indicating not that students go "backwards" in reading, but instead that they fail to thrive and cannot meet grade-level expectations. The increased demands placed on students beginning in fourth grade may cause a slowing of reading growth relative to expected growth for some students who previously seemed on track in their reading growth. (p. 890)

Merton's concept of the Matthew effect (1968) has long been adopted and applied within literacy research and theory to explain how the "gap between good and poor readers often widens because good readers tend to read more and gain skills and confidence through additional practice, while poor readers continue to be unsuccessful because they tend to avoid reading" (Morgan, 2013, p. 478). Beginning in elementary school, students continually faced with failure are more likely to become disengaged from school and are at increased risk for eventually dropping out during the secondary grades (Dynarski et al., 2008). The Matthew effect only compounds when students have learning disabilities, and this demographic is already at considerable risk for reading problems.

Over half of students with various learning disabilities struggle with reading (Lerner, 2003; Garguilo, 2006), while Heward (2006) estimates that as high as 90% of this student population have reading problems. Boyle (2003) explains further:

> Secondary students with high-incidence disabilities (e.g., learning disabilities, emotional disorders) often struggle to meet the demands of the general education curriculum due to poor reading skills and a lack of effective learning strategies (. . .) there is an urgent need to intervene with students with reading disabilities, for by the time they reach high school their reading failure has affected other aspects of their academic and social life. At the secondary level, instructional goals shift from mastering reading skills to mastering high-level content material. Without effective reading skills in areas such as decoding, fluency, and comprehension, students are ill equipped to meet the demands of the curriculum. Not surprisingly, the gap between expected performance and actual achievement for students with learning disabilities (LD) increases at the secondary level, often resulting in frustration and withdrawal from school (Deshler et al., 2001). (p. 203-204)

The Students who struggle in reading *frequently dislike reading, associate reading with failure, and may sidestep this important process in order to avoid poor performance*

Morgan and other contemporary researchers (Dalton 2014; Ertem, 2011) have endorsed enhanced eBooks that provide audio narration and text highlighting to reinvigorate struggling readers and get them back on track to becoming confident, successful readers:

> Students who struggle in reading frequently dislike reading, associate reading with failure, and may sidestep this important process in order to avoid poor performance (Rasinski et al. 2010). Low literacy levels surely will prevent children from doing their best work in many academic subjects in later years. To deter this, teachers and parents can use strategies and resources that make reading easier and more enjoyable for young students. One of these strategies is to utilize well-designed multimodal e-books when teaching reading. (. . .) When teachers implement these resources effectively, they create more opportunities for children to derive meaning from text by offering young learners many formats to perceive content, and using these multiple resources makes reading easier. Furthermore, children are more motivated when teachers use these types of electronic books. (. . .) [E]ducational researchers, such as Rasinski et al. (2010), believe that instructional activities must first be enjoyable in order for children to persist at academic tasks. (Morgan, 2013, pp. 482-483)

Students that struggle with decoding are more engaged with multimodal audiobooks that provide them a bridge to texts "well beyond their independent reading levels [so they] can comprehend more complex literature" (Serafini, 2004, p. 5).

Sue Fellerer (2009) observed an audiobook reading program that resulted in excited students checking out more challenging books and "actually mak[ing] it through to the end" (p. 52). The use of technology in the classroom is more appealing to students that have grown up immersed within digital information, and digital literacy is an important educational goal in itself, especially for those lacking access at home. Using eBooks with audio and highlighting enhancements can be effective and engaging at any age or reading level. They can even prevent later reading problems from developing in the first place when given to early readers. Later intervention with eBooks with audio is effective, but Dalton (2014) insists:

> Every child should be reading e-books as part of his or her literacy curriculum. As literacy researchers and educators, we should be collaborating with one another and with digital designers, programmers, students, and publishers to advance the theory and practice of e-book/e-text design so that eventually the construct of "struggling reader" disappears. (p. 43)

HOW AUDISEE EBOOKS WITH AUDIO RENGAGED STRUGGLING READERS

Lerner's Audisee eBooks with Audio are a multimodal solution for reluctant and struggling readers in grades K-12. The platform support students whether they are just starting to learn to read or have not achieved grade-level proficiency. Sentence highlighting and professional narration bring these eBooks to life, and students are drawn to the wide selection of titles—including curriculum-oriented and high-interest nonfiction, picture books, graphic novels, middle grade chapter books, high-low fiction, and award-winning young adult fiction. Even the most reluctant student cannot resist participating in the reading process.

LEARNING THROUGH SIGHT AND SOUND WITH EBOOKS WITH AUDIO

> ***Multimodal eBooks with audio narration and text highlighting*** *have been supported as effective learning tools by researchers*

Studies support that exposure to multiple means of representation speeds up the acquisition of new content for students of all ages and reading levels. Researchers have observed multimodal instruction to lead to higher performance than unimodal (Gellevij et al., 2002; Korat, 2010; Montali and Lewandowski, 1996), and "studies in cognition show that learning [is] enhanced by the dual mode of visual and auditory inputs, as well as by images-supported texts" (Gregorius, 2011 citing Mayer, 2001; Paivio, 1986; Sweller, 1999).

Multimodal eBooks with audio narration and text highlighting have been supported as effective learning tools by researchers (Dalton 2014; Ertem, 2011; Morgan, 2013), and they can increase reading and comprehension levels (Forgrave, 2002; Wolfson, 2008). They provide readers the ability to adapt the eBook to their "own preferred learning style," and though all students can learn with multimodal, "the literature indicates that multimodal learning may be of greater benefit to lower-achieving students" (Sankey et al., 2010). King-Sears and Evmenova 8(2007) noted that when struggling learners, especially those with reading disabilities, could select to hear difficult words pronounced or passages narrated as they read, "[they] answered more questions correctly and read at higher levels" (p. 4 citing Higgins & Raskind, 2005). Whittingham et al. (2013) explains the benefits of sight and sound:

> [A]udiobooks can help with vocabulary acquisition no matter what the reading level. By following along while listening to text containing vocabulary from higher reading and speaking levels, a struggling reader both hears and sees new words, making them more likely to be retained. Reading along with an audiobook on a higher reading level gives a struggling reader the correct spelling, context, and pronunciation, helping the reader determine meaning. This act of reading along with the audiobook forms a bridge for vocabulary development. (p. 4)

Barger and Notwell (2013), a doctoral student and fourth-grade teacher, worked together to develop and implement a nonfiction reading unit with eBooks and print to compare the potential of multimodal approach to traditional print based methods (p. 31). Since 50% of their fourth-grade students started out the year with below-grade-level scores on the beginning-of-the-year reading assessment, Barger and Notwell made a point that the nonfiction unit include an emphasis on "working on literacy skills" (p. 34):

> The read-aloud feature helped students pull out information from the nonfiction, which had been a struggle for students in the past. (. . .) They seemed to have better recall and make more connections than in previous years. These students were hooked into science by the use of eBooks. (p. 34)

Reading along with an audiobook *on a higher reading level gives a struggling reader the correct spelling, context, and pronunciation, helping the reader determine meaning.*

In the student surveys, Barger and Notwell observed the students' enthusiasm for learning with the eBooks that had audio narration, as one student explained, "I think eBooks are nice and some of them are really nice because they can read to you and that's why I like them because I'm not a good reader" (p. 35). Another student said, "Let's say I was stuck on a word in a book, well, if I had the eBook, it'd read that word for me" (p. 36). The success of the multimodal eBooks resulted in using them in the next science unit as well (p. 36). Barger and Notwell felt strongly that the use of multimodal eBooks had a significant effect on the class, resulting in "88% of the class [making] gains from the beginning-of-the-year reading assessment to the end-of-the-year assessment" (p. 37).

HOW AUDISEE EBOOKS HELP STUDENTS LEARN THROUGH SIGHT AND SOUND

By simultaneously providing written text to look at and spoken narration for students to listen to, Audisee eBooks with Audio support multimodal learning for students in grades K-12. Comprehension, vocabulary, and reading levels improve for students of all levels, especially struggling readers. Text highlighting as the words are spoken draws the reader's attention to the sound-symbol correspondence. These audio and visual features can be paused for convenience if desired.

OVERCOMING DECODING BARRIERS TO ACQUIRE CONTENT

Struggling readers moving into the upper elementary and secondary grades face not only the challenges of decoding but also the mounting demands of "mastering high-level content material" (Boyle, 2003, p. 203). By the upper grades, students "have developed patterns of interactions with school and, if those patterns are negative, a teacher faces a formidable challenge in reversing them"

> (Dreher, 2003, p. 51). Wolfson (2008) explains the difficulty in teaching remedial readers: Teachers in middle and high schools have so many demands on their teaching that there is little time to focus on the numerous literacy skills required for students (. . .) Students need to be able to decode unfamiliar words, comprehend narrative and expository text, understand new vocabulary, prepare various forms of writing, and participate in discussions in each of the content areas. (p. 105)

Decoding barriers stagnant the growth of "these students [that] possess their own thoughts, ideas, feelings, and opinions to share, their participation in speaking or writing is limited by their ability or inability to read" (Wolfson, 2008, p. 106). Wanzek et al. (2010) explain how poor decoding skills can become a barrier to learning content, as students transition into the upper grades where "learning to read" switches to "reading to learn":

> [I]n addition to expectations that students have adequately mastered the basic reading skills such as decoding accurately and fluently, there are also expectations that students understand word meanings and are able to read text with comprehension (Chall, 1983). The focus on these comprehension skills may be difficult for struggling readers who may still be learning to accurately and fluently decode grade-level text. (p. 890)

Multimodal eBooks have been successful *in serving the needs of struggling readers to overcome their difficulties in decoding and acquire grade-level content*

Multimodal eBooks have been successful in serving the needs of struggling readers to overcome their difficulties in decoding and acquire grade-level content, as removing "the restraints of a student's word recognition and decoding skills provides a very positive approach to focusing on the meaning behind an author's words" (Wolfson, 2008, p. 107). The use of audiobooks allows these students to access texts that "they are unable to read on their own or that they might not choose for themselves" (Serafini, 2004, p. 4). Barger and Notwell (2013) observed that their fourth-grade students using nonfiction eBooks—especially those struggling to read at grade level—could acquire content knowledge easier:

> One of the perks of the read-aloud feature is that it makes academic content accessible for struggling readers. Francis agreed with Christina, saying, "Sometimes I get more information from the book if people read it to me instead of me reading." Many of these students were aware of their learning styles and how eBooks helped them learn. (. . .) The shift in font size, especially making it bigger, was also important to Anthony because "if you're really tired, that's really helpful." They enjoyed the slide bar at the bottom to move to certain locations or the tapping on a link to go to a specific chapter from the table of contents. Many readers talked about how they liked how some eBooks would highlight the words while it was reading, helping them to stay on track. (. . .) Maria believed she could better understand because she could hear words that she could not pronounce. Students also enjoyed the dictionary feature of the books, which made Daniel think, "You can learn new words easier." (pp. 35-36)

Boyle et al. (2003) conducted a study of 67 secondary school students with at least one of the following mild learning disabilities, "learning disability, emotional disturbance, speech/language impairment, or other health impairments such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder" (p. 205). Researchers divided the students into a control group receiving "regular teacher-based instruction for support" and two experimental groups using CD-ROM audiobooks alone or with "in conjunction with an organizational strategy [SLiCK]" (p. 208). The goal was to see if students with mild disabilities and decoding barriers could acquire more content knowledge with the support of multimodal eBooks over traditional methods:

> The results of this investigation indicate that, compared to independent textbook reading, an audio textbook can be an effective tool for increasing content acquisition of high-level academic content over time. Thus, students in the two groups using the audio textbook demonstrated greater improvement in their knowledge-acquisition test scores than students in the group who read the textbook independent of the technology. These findings demonstrate the value of audio textbooks as an assistive device for students with mild cognitive disabilities. As a result of the intervention, students in the two experimental groups were able to access high-level content material and achieve higher quiz and cumulative test scores as a result. However, there was no significant difference in scores between the group using the accompanying SLiCK strategy with the audio textbook and the group using the audio textbook only. (p. 212)

Interestingly, the audiobooks proved effective regardless of whether the additional organizational strategy (SLiCK) was used with these students. This may suggest that multimodal eBooks can be effective without additional support, as they provide many avenues to acquire content that can be adapted by a variety of learning styles including autodidacticism.

HOW AUDISEE EBOOKS WITH AUDIO SUPPORT HELP STUDENTS OVERCOME DECODING BARRIES AND ACQUIRE CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Audisee eBooks with Audio's spoken narration supports students in grades K-12 in learning even when their decoding skills are below their grade level. Audisee eBooks present important age-appropriate nonfiction content that helps support students' acquisition of content knowledge. These students are better able to manage large amounts of content in upper elementary grades and beyond while improving their reading proficiency. Younger readers also benefit by being able to decode in the moment, preparing them for the increasing literacy demands of secondary education. The implementation of eBooks with audio supports the needs of students but without the expenditure of teacher time to prepare the materials.

ADAPTING AND APPEALING TO VARIOUS TYPES OF LEARNERS

> ***The audio and narrative speech*** *offer[s] multiple approaches to connect students' diverse learning styles with core subject knowledge*

It has long been established that not all students learn the same way, and educators have realized that "modifying classroom practice so that it reflects the diversity of intelligences in the classroom enriches teacher practice, curriculum, and student engagement" (Dreher, 2003, p. 50). Enhanced eBooks are not a panacea for every student, but the vast majority find they can adjust the support features like audio narration and text highlighting to fit their needs:

> Julie Kara-Soteriou (2009) has written that audiobooks allow teachers to meet the needs of various learning styles by differentiating instruction for struggling students who might encounter a difficult text and believe it to be boring and unreachable. While audio recordings have in the past been used primarily with struggling readers, audiobooks also allow for the learning styles of average to high-achieving students wishing to read beyond their own level to access more difficult text, explore new genres for literature, or improve fluency. (Whittingham et al., 2013, p. 4)

Diana Hardenstein, a special education teacher, has observed that struggling students often feel defeated and lack confidence resulting in them becoming "resistant to remediation", but when Hardenstein started offering multimodal eBooks, she exclaimed, "[they] allowed me to provide individualized instruction with minimal supervision. These books empower students to become independent readers and self-directed learners" (McCoy et al., 2007, p. 2).

Students are able to utilize the multimodal eBook features that serve their learning needs, as McCoy (2007) explained, "The audio and narrative speech offer[s] multiple approaches to connect students' diverse learning styles with core subject knowledge" (p. 2). Barger and Notwell (2013) observed their students enjoyed how eBooks with audio could complement their learning styles:

> Aubrey said, "You learn, like, more, you can use your hands more and you learn more stuff when you're using your hands, so it makes it better when you're using your hands." eBooks appeal to various types of learners: kinesthetic, auditory, and visual learners, in particular. (p. 35)

Zascavage and Winterman (2009) tell the story of an auditory learner that was struggling to read at his grade level during his transition into middle school:

> Timothy read several grade levels below his classmates, despite extensive private tutoring. Timothy was struggling to keep up academically, but he was adamant about being a "regular kid." He would not do any work that made him look different. (. . .) Because the teachers understood the importance of Universal Learning Design, several classrooms in Timothy's sixth grade created a learning center based on auditory input. (. . .) Students using text-to-speech could download books from the Internet and click on unfamiliar words as they read. In content areas in which technical vocabulary can be difficult to pronounce, this software took the guesswork out of decoding complex vocabulary, leaving more time for understanding new concepts. Students who had visual impairments or who needed to use auditory enhancement also found the Auditory Center very useful. (p. 48)

To appeal to auditory learners, Dreher (2003) had his eleventh grade reading classes choose between three groups, "They could be read to, they could join a group that shared reading aloud or, if they preferred, they could read silently" (p. 51). The heterogeneous class had students with "reading levels rang[ing] from fourth grade to well beyond grade level" (p. 50). Dreher found listening to be a great success. Struggling students "typically blocked by a reading difficulty were suddenly discussing ideas in complex literature" (p. 51). Students of all ages and levels learn differently, and eBooks with audio can support a multitude of learning styles.

HOW AUDISEE EBOOKS ADAPT AND APPEAL TO DIVERSE LEARNING STYLES

Audisee eBooks with Audio offer audio and visual support features that fit the learning styles of students in grades K-12 that do not do well with traditional instruction and print. Kinesthetic, auditory, and visual learners can blossom with Audisee eBooks as they are drawn to reading with computers, tablets and other eReaders. These students can gain the support they need whether they are just beginning their literacy journey, struggling later down the line or even help high-achievers excel. Audisee eBooks with Audio give students with diverse learning styles the chance to access higher-level content, so they can express themselves on the same level as their peers.

IMPROVING FLUENCY WITH AUDIO NARRATION

> ***audio recordings help students*** *"to integrate the rate, rhythm, and natural flow of language necessary for good comprehension"*

Audiobooks that model a fluent reading of a text benefit struggling readers by improving their fluency and teaching critical listening skills, as well as fostering their interest and appreciation of literature (Wolfson, 2008). Audiobooks do not replace but complement print, as they can "improve vocabulary, encourage oral language usage, and increase comprehension" (Wolfson, 2008, p. 106). Marie Carbo observed that audio recordings help students "to integrate the rate, rhythm, and natural flow of language necessary for good comprehension" (1978, p. 267). All readers, especially those struggling, benefit from reading while listening to a fluent model as "they learn to match the sounds of oral language to their written counterparts" (Serafini, 2004, p. 5).

Though text-to-speech software has improved, some publishers record live voice talent "although it is more expensive and time-consuming to produce. This not only provides a fluent reading model but adds an emotional overlay that can further entice a reader into the world of stories, poetry, and nonfiction" (Dalton, 2014, p. 40). In their study of interactive texts with narration, Wood, Pilinger & Jackson (2010) observed how a fluent model improved early readers' fluency:

> [Y]ounger children in the talking books group appeared to change their approach to word reading. This was evidenced in the nature of the reading errors that they made, with the five-year-old children in particular showing a decreased tendency to mispronounce words they were attempting to read. Moreover, use of the 'read the page' function of the software was associated with a decrease in both mispronunciations and refusals to read an unknown word, and an increased likelihood to make word substitutions. (p. 191)

Esteves and Whitten (2011) hypothesized that audiobooks could be more effective in improving fluency than the widely used practice of sustain silent reading (SSR) which "lacks sufficient evidence of effectiveness for students who struggle with reading" (p. 22 citing The National Reading Panel, 2000). Esteves and Whitten conducted a study comparing the two methods with 20 struggling upper elementary students using audiobooks accompanied by the printed version to replace SSR time (p. 25) and found that "both groups showed improvement in number of words read correctly per minute between the pretest and posttest periods; however, the treatment group demonstrated larger gains" (p. 30).

Whittingham et al. (2013) reviewed the literature and found strong support of recorded narration aiding struggling readers to improve their fluency as well as their comprehension:

> These readers often read in a disconnected and non-rhythmic manner, a circumstance that creates a barrier to comprehension (Hudson, Lane, and Pullen 2005; Hasbrouck 2006). Marie Carbo has told us that fluent readers read, "rapidly, accurately, and with good expression" (2005, 48). The ability to read at the appropriate rate with reasonable accuracy, expression, and phrasing is a significant part of understanding and enjoying text (Ekstrand 2011). The skill of reading fluently is often difficult for struggling readers because they are dealing with text on a word-by-word basis and never move to reading in a fluid manner. One of the cornerstones of fluency instruction is a solid, fluent model. Marie Carbo (2005) has suggested that good fluency instruction provides fluid models, uses a variety of assisted readings—including recorded books—and provides high-level reading materials in both text and audio formats. (pp. 3-4)

*"**All students can advance** their fluency, listening, and speaking skills with audio narration that provides the correct pronunciation, rhythm, and dramatic tone by fluent model."*

Whittingham et al. (2013) conducted a reading while listening audiobook study of 21 fourth and fifth grade students. They were "recruited for the study by their teachers, based upon the students' being a minimum of two grade levels below placement according to the results of the STAR exam and upon the teachers' classroom observations to identify participants lacking the motivation to read" (p. 6). The goal was to determine if the implementation of an audiobook reading program would impact reluctant readers' interest and performance. The results revealed that the "number of students scoring "Below Basic" and "Basic" decreased, while students scoring "Proficient" and "Advanced" increased." (p. 10). Whittingham et al. (2013) concluded:

> The analysis of Arkansas Reading Benchmark Exam scores revealed a significant increase. Additionally, the quantitative analysis, and qualitative feedback from students, parents, and teachers revealed that the use of audiobooks embedded within a book club that was a school library program made a difference in the lives of the student involved in the study. Thus, both research questions led the researchers to proclaim the use of audiobooks with struggling readers a success. (p. 15)

HOW AUDISEE EBOOKS IMPROVE FLUENCY WITH MODEL NARRATORS

Audisee eBooks with Audio provide a fluent model for struggling to advanced readers. All students can advance their fluency, listening, and speaking skills with audio narration that provides the correct pronunciation, rhythm, and dramatic tone by fluent model.

CONCLUSION

Audisee eBooks with Audio are an effective intervention for struggling readers that have not achieved reading proficiency in the early elementary grades. Researchers have observed that reading problems can remain improperly addressed well into high school, and unsurprisingly, "literacy problems unresolved by high school continue into adulthood" (Coles, 1998, p. 20). The simultaneous presentation of text visually and audibly can aid comprehension, especially among struggling students and auditory leaners. Multimodal presentations of text help students overcome difficulties in decoding text, thereby allowing them to more easily acquire age-appropriate content knowledge. Exposure to multimodal learning even helps advanced students push themselves farther. Research-informed expert opinion also suggests a value in helping students develop fluency by supporting student reading with the availability of spoken narration. Audisee eBooks with Audio can reengage students that have developed an aversion to reading due to past failures. Furthermore, Audisee eBooks with Audio also prepare early readers of all levels and learning styles to become successful readers, and their implementation into the curriculum can prevent reading problems that only compound in later grades.

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