

Using Audio Books in the Classroom

There are still some people who fail to take advantage of one of the most entertaining and simple to use interactive performances of modern times. That is, until they pick up their first audio book.

Transferring the mundane to the wonderful, audio books can make images unfold like a blossoming flower. The combination of mental and audio imagery, paired with a fertile imagination brings characters and plots to life. Listening to dialogue with all its nuances and reflections allows a reader of audio books to step over the threshold of joy more than traditional readers can attain through the printed word.

Although originally designed for entertainment or motivational purposes, audio books are now used by many educators who have discovered the advantages of providing audio content to students who struggle with learning for various reasons. Many teachers are using them as part of their regular curriculum because they have discovered that the combination of audio perception coupled with individual mental imagery can make short stories, plays and other literary devices more interesting, thus easier to retain.

Audio books are excellent resources for students. They not only promote active listening skills but also serve as an introduction to the various literary works required by the curriculum. In addition, they help to close the learning gap between students with reading difficulties and others as through active listening, students can increase their reading levels and articulate better. Additional learning modules, such as vocabulary, spelling and phonics can be more readily identified by employing audio imagery.

As a learning tool, they provide a perfect module for students wanting to learn another language. Easier than trying to absorb new words from the printed page, they also provide the opportunity to pick up on the many subtle reflections in a new language dialogue that can often alter word meanings. Although not entirely suited to all students, especially visual or tactile learners who may find them frustratingly slow, audio books have been a boon to teachers of special needs children and adults alike. They have also been a godsend for anyone afflicted with vision impairment or other learning challenges such as dyslexia.

Immigrants, educators and special needs readers are all slowly recognizing that audio books offer considerable benefit for instruction. The positive implications of coordinating audio modules with mental-visionary interpretation are overwhelming.

Audio books are slowly attaining mainstream acceptance. They offer an excellent medium for anyone to capture and enjoy the written word while still maintaining their busy, multi-tasking lifestyles. As entertainment they can be wondrous, as instructional modules they can be simply wonderful.

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