



## Audiobooks: Legitimate “Reading” Material for Adolescents?

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### Abstract

*Several decades of research have established that time spent reading has a positive impact on the cognitive development and academic success of school-aged children and adolescents. Yet, reading among adolescents has been in decline in recent years while engagement with audiobooks has increased. Professionals in librarianship, children’s literature, and literacy education have long promoted the educational benefits of transacting with audiobooks. Critics, however, contest the idea that listening to an audiobook can serve as a legitimate form of reading. This paper reviews the literature on audio delivery of content to three distinct participant groups: adolescents with visual impairments or learning disabilities, adolescent second language learners, and typically developing adolescents. Findings from the studies of audio delivery of content are mixed, and great variability in outcomes have been reported, depending on the characteristics of the groups studied. Numerous gaps exist in the research surrounding adolescents’ use of audiobooks, including examinations of the effectiveness of commercially produced audiobooks and explorations of adolescents’ listening preferences. This review points to the need for much more research in this line of study and raises questions about librarians’ promotion of audiobooks for use with adolescents.*

### Introduction

School library standards and guidelines (AASL 2009; ALA and AASL 2010; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards 2012; Schultz-Jones and Oberg 2015) call for school librarians to employ evidence-based practice (EBP), sometimes referred to as evidence-based librarianship (EBL). Jonathan Eldredge has defined evidence-based librarianship as “a process for integrating the best available scientifically generated evidence into making important decisions. EBL seeks

to combine the use of the best available research evidence with a pragmatic perspective developed from working experiences in librarianship” (2006, 342).

In the school library context, EBP involves knowing stakeholders’ needs, finding existing evidence to address those needs, applying best practices based on evidence, collecting data to evaluate the practice as applied to the local situation, and analyzing, communicating, and planning based on the local evidence and stakeholders’ needs (Cahill and Richey 2012). Thus, for school librarians to fully implement EBP, they must have access to and be able to interpret existing research to inform their programming and practices.

This paper explores existing evidence relating to literacy development, audiobooks, and adolescents; our goal is to make this evidence readily available to school librarians. We begin with an overview of the benefits of reading and the rise of audiobook use among adolescents. We then summarize claims imparted by professionals across disciplines regarding the benefits of audiobook use and position benefits in relation to the Component Model of Reading (Aaron et al. 2008). Next, we provide a review of the existing research related to the use of audiobooks with adolescents, and then discuss how the existing research supports or fails to support claims made about the benefits of audiobooks for adolescents. Finally, we conclude with implications for practicing school librarians and for researchers.

It is well recognized that engagement in reading is important for the cognitive and academic growth of children and adolescents. Since the 1990s researchers have been investigating the relationship between time spent reading and positive outcomes. Students who read for enjoyment and those who spend more time reading in and out of school typically have better reading abilities and general academic success than students who spend little time reading (Anderson, Wilson, and Fielding 1988; Cunningham and Stanovich 1997, 1998; Mol and Jolles 2014; Scarborough 2001; Sullivan and Brown 2013).

More recently, literacy scholars have examined adolescents’ literacy behaviors and the relationship between reading in and out of school and social and emotional outcomes. Elizabeth Birr Moje and colleagues (2008) explored the reading practices of adolescents in an urban community in the United States and found that those practices affect more than just cognitive domains. Engagement in literacy activities for and beyond school-based purposes impacts adolescents’ social capital as well as their own identity formation and self-improvement practices. Gay Ivey and Peter H. Johnston’s investigation of young adults’ engagement with literature found that the youths’ interactions with the texts transformed their self-identities, sense of agency, and emotional and moral states (2013).

Clearly, the cognitive and social benefits of reading point to the efficacy of promoting reading engagement among early adolescents and teens. Yet, many young adults dislike reading, choose not to read, or engage in other activities that limit the time available to read. One possible remedy for overcoming these barriers is listening to audiobooks. Despite declining engagement with reading among young adults (Egmont 2013), adolescents’ use of audiobooks has increased (Audio Publishers Association 2013), as has the availability of young adult audiobook titles (Bowker 2013).

## **Adolescents’ Use of Audiobooks for Leisure**

Younger Americans tend to use audiobooks more frequently than do older readers (Audio Publishers Association 2010; Zickuhr et al. 2012). While adolescents do purchase audiobooks, as evidenced by a 22 percent increase in sales in the United States (American Booksellers

Association 2013), most young adult audiobook consumers prefer to borrow them from the library (Zickuhr et al. 2012). Interestingly, while the number of print materials available in public libraries has decreased, the number of audiobooks, in either physical or downloadable format, has nearly doubled in recent years (Chute and Kroe 2007; Grimes et al. 2013).

While it is clear that adolescents do indeed use audiobooks, no studies have explored exactly how adolescents do so nor what their listening preferences are. While adult audiobook listeners tend to be avid readers, it is unclear whether the same holds true for adolescents (Aron 1992).

## **Library and Educational Professionals’ Claims about the Benefits of Audiobooks**

Listening skills’ contributions to literacy have long been recognized by education scholars (Pearson and Fielding 1982), and the necessity of listening proficiency among adolescents and young adults has regained prominence in schools in the United States because of the recent implementation of the Common Core State Standards (2010). The professional literature in literacy education, librarianship, and children’s literature claims numerous educational advantages of children’s and young adults’ transacting (Rosenblatt 2005)<sup>1</sup> with audiobooks (Neuman 2005; Serafini 2006). In textbook packages for teachers, publishers often include audio versions of their print texts or portions of their print texts. Numerous entities, including professional library associations, commercial publishing associations, review sources, and even the Recording Academy (issuer of the Grammy Awards), bestow awards and recognitions for outstanding audiobooks and narrators. NoveList, a readers’ advisory tool, recently added audiobook recommendations and listen-alikes to its services (EBSCO 2014). Even respondents to the Audio Publishers Association’s 2010 survey on audiobook usage have cited multiple benefits of audiobooks for children and young adults. These benefits include encouraging reading, introducing topics and titles unfamiliar to the readers, and developing a love of reading.

## **Reading with the Ears versus Reading with the Eyes**

Listening to books is a valued activity that is encouraged for young children. An often-quoted statement by the United States National Academy of Education’s Commission on Reading attests to this emphasis on listening to text: “The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children” (Anderson et al. 1985, 23). However, scholars and educators argue about the usefulness of the activity and the value of this educational practice for older children, adolescents, and adults (Johnson 2003). In fact, Elfrieda H. Hiebert has asserted, “Children can learn a great deal about the language and content of texts through listening to experienced readers read texts aloud; however, unless children’s eyes are making contact with print and translating print into meaning, they can’t be described as reading” (2009, 1).

Thus, despite the claims among professionals that audiobooks are educationally beneficial for children and young adults, critics challenge the idea that listening to audiobooks constitutes a legitimate form of reading (Cooper 1993). Though similar to reading, transacting with an

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<sup>1</sup> For additional information about Transactional Theory, please consult [“Writing and Reading: The Transactional Theory”](#) (Rosenblatt 1988).

audiobook differs from reading a print-based book. Naturally, print book reading primarily involves the eyes while audiobook use involves the ears, but the similarities and differences are much more nuanced than simple consideration of the organs involved. Frank Serafini contended that listening to an audiobook “deepens readers’ interpretations and develops their ability to comprehend and analyze literature” (2006, 91). He further asserted that audiobook listening can introduce readers to new literature and different genres, provide exposure to materials beyond their independent reading abilities, develop vocabulary, provide models of fluent reading, and promote struggling readers’ literacy development (if they listen while reading).

Pamela Varley (2002), mentioning but not citing a Carnegie Mellon brain study comparing reading and listening, pointed to the physiological variances that occur in the brain when reading compared to those when listening: different areas work harder in the brain depending on the mode of the activity, but the language-comprehension system works similarly during both. Gene Wolfson further contended, “Audiobooks can model reading, teach critical listening, build on prior knowledge, improve vocabulary, encourage oral language usage, and increase comprehension. Essentially, reading audiobooks supports the development of all four language systems: phonological, semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic” (2008, 106). Nancy Frey and Douglas Fisher (2006) also pointed to the utility of using audiobooks with adolescents as a means to strengthen the link between oral and written literacies.

Reading has often been characterized according to a Simple View (Gogh and Tunmer 1986), in which comprehension is thought to be a product of decoding ability and linguistic comprehension. Under this model, it would follow that audiobooks would facilitate comprehension for students who struggle to decode and that rich listening experiences would contribute to linguistic comprehension skills that would, in turn, support further reading comprehension skills.

However, most classroom teachers and school librarians recognize the nuanced nature of reading comprehension and the influences of many other elements that support or hinder reading proficiency, and research supports this perspective. Both motivation (Guthrie et al. 2007) and executive skills, specifically cognitive flexibility and working memory, that are requisite for any complex task (Cartwright, Marshall, and Wray 2016) also impact reading comprehension. Similarly, the learning context and environment also factor into successful reading performance (Berninger et al. 2004).

The Component Model of Reading (Aaron et al. 2008) posits that multiple components, organized under the three domains of cognitive, psychological, and ecological components, influence reading proficiency, and that any deficit in any component can interfere with successful reading. Cognitive components include decoding, linguistic comprehension, and executive-function skills. Psychological components include factors such as motivation and interest, gender, learning styles, and task purpose. Finally, ecological components include culture and other factors of the home environment and classroom environment, dialect, and second language learner status.

## **Audiobook Contributions to Adolescent Listeners’ Literacy Development and Content Knowledge**

Research exploring audiobooks is necessary for determining if or how engagement with audiobooks really does affect adolescent users in meaningful ways. While some studies have been conducted with commercially produced audiobooks, much of the research in this area draws

on more-general studies of audio delivery of content: written texts that are read aloud, teacher- and/or researcher-produced recordings of read alouds, and commercially produced audio recordings of texts that fall beyond the realm of a traditional audiobook production (e.g., an audio recording of a textbook passage).

Naturally, for students with sight limitations, audiobooks facilitate independent learning. Aydin Ziya Ozgur and Huseyin Selcuk Kiray (2007) randomly selected thirty Turkish college students diagnosed as legally blind to participate in a structured interview of ten questions following improvements to a resource that made more audiobooks available to the students. These students responded that their learning improved because they were able to be more independent.

Beyond this one study focused on students with visual impairments, the research investigating audio delivery of content falls into three general categories of student groups: students with learning disabilities, second language learners, and typically developing adolescents. In the sections below we review each group of studies.

## **Adolescents Who Struggle to Read and Adolescents with Learning Disabilities**

Much of the research exploring listening to books, listening while reading, and audio delivery with adolescent populations focuses on students who are struggling readers or who have been diagnosed with one or more disabilities. Though it is common practice for schools to regard most struggling adolescent readers as having specific word-recognition deficits (Spear-Swerling 2004) or decoding problems, it is important to note that adolescent struggling readers tend to exhibit a variety of profiles. The most-common profile is “slow word callers” who can decode but have a low semantic working memory and do not have sufficient fluency skills or vocabulary to support reading comprehension. The second-most-common profile is “automatic word callers” who can decode and demonstrate fluency skills but do not have sufficient vocabulary knowledge and have low semantic working memory. Finally, many struggling readers also fit under the category “globally impaired readers” who have low semantic working memories, are not able to decode accurately, lack fluency skills, and do not have sufficient vocabulary knowledge (Lesaux and Kieffer 2010).

In an action research project involving thirty-one secondary students identified as struggling readers, but without specification as to the nature of their reading difficulties, the students reacted positively to a teacher’s reading aloud of a murder mystery and an historical novel over the course of several weeks. Following the readings, the previously disenfranchised students enthusiastically engaged in in-depth discussion that employed critical thinking. The students also conversed about literary elements and defined unfamiliar vocabulary based on context clues in passages (Zientarski and Pottorff 1994). Thus, the experience seems to have affected psychological and ecological components of the reading process as described by Aaron et al. (2008).

Most of the studies exploring audio delivery, however, have investigated components of the cognitive domain. Comparing the effects of listening while reading (LWR) and repeated reading with twelve adults with reading skills deficits, Beth D. Winn and colleagues (2006) found that both strategies resulted in statistically significant gains in reading fluency. In another study (Milani, Lorusso, and Molteni 2010) conducted with younger adolescents diagnosed with a reading disability, forty students between the ages of eleven and sixteen were randomly assigned to a control group that used traditional printed textbooks or to a treatment group that received audio versions of history, geography, science, and literature anthology textbooks, and a self-selected fiction book. (These audio versions were in place of, not in addition to, printed books.)

All students were tested before and after the study. Following treatment, students who had received audio versions of the books showed significant improvements in reading accuracy as well as reductions in certain emotional behavior problems reported by parents. However, no significant differences for reading speed, self-esteem, or behavior were reported by teachers.

Results of investigations of comprehension of audio content for adolescents who struggle with reading have been mixed but generally fail to demonstrate improvements. Elizabeth A. Boyle et al. (2003) investigated audio and print delivery of instructional content. Sixty-seven high school students receiving special education in their own history classes were randomly assigned to one of three instructional conditions: print textbook, audio textbook, or audio textbook with comprehension strategy instruction. Students in both experimental conditions performed significantly better on cumulative comprehension tests than the control group that received the printed textbook. Additionally, both groups scored higher than the control on short-term comprehension quizzes, but the differences were not significant. Two other investigations of short-term comprehension also found no significant improvements for students as a consequence of audio support. Andrea D. Hale and colleagues (2005) tested the comprehension of four students with disabilities; the students ranged in age from twelve to fourteen and were tested after engaging in silent reading, LWR, and listening-only modes. While students' performance was highest following the LWR condition, improvements were not significant. In a similar but larger study twenty-five students, ages eleven through fifteen and labeled as remedial readers but enrolled in general education classes, were assigned passages to read based on individual reading abilities. Students were randomly assigned to silent reading or LWR conditions. There were no statistically significant improvements for students in the LWR condition (Schmitt et al. 2011). Finally, one investigation found negative effects for audio delivery of content to students with Downs Syndrome (Roch, Florit, and Levorato 2012).

## **Adolescents Learning a Second Language**

Use of audio delivery of content has long been standard practice in foreign language classrooms, and research supports this practice. More recently, teachers have begun using commercially available audiobooks to facilitate second language learning. It is important to note that these investigations involved students who were already proficient readers in a first language and were not socioeconomically at risk nor enrolled in high-poverty schools. This profile differs from many of the second language learners in U.S. middle schools and high schools (Kieffer 2008).

In an experiment involving nineteen students ages fifteen and sixteen learning a second language, participants were assigned to one of two groups: a control group, which employed traditional language-learning methods, or an experimental group, which listened to audiobooks. Both groups completed a listening and vocabulary pre-test. Over the course of twenty-six weeks, the control group learned through traditional methods involving textbooks, quizzes, and multiple teaching methods. In contrast, the experimental group read books while listening to CDs of the books and then met with a researcher each week to discuss the reading material. Though no significant differences between the two groups had been revealed by pre-tests for multiple-choice answer selection and for dictation, on the post-test the LWR group improved 100 percent on dictation compared to the control group, and also made statistically significant vocabulary gains and increased listening fluency (Chang 2011).

Two other studies have explored second language learners' comprehension as a result of engaging with the audiobook format compared to silent reading of the print counterpart. Billy Woodall (2010) examined the fluency and comprehension scores of 137 university-level students

in Puerto Rico enrolled in basic-level English courses. The control group of sixty-eight students read silently while the experimental group of sixty-nine students engaged in LWR with an audio version of the same text. All comprehension quiz scores were higher for experimental students than for control students, and for four of the quizzes the differences were statistically significant. No significant patterns of improvement for fluency were revealed. In the experimental group 92 percent perceived LWR as beneficial. Ekaterina V. Talalakina (2012) investigated the added value for second language learners of scaffolding exercises paired with audiobooks. Sixty university sophomores enrolled in an English as a second language course were randomly assigned to a listening-only or scaffolded group. Members in the experimental group participated in three scaffolding exercises: a discussion prior to listening, completion of activities while listening, and a critical-thinking response after listening. The control group only listened and then completed a comprehension activity. For both groups, the use of audiobooks increased comprehension, but the experimental group had a higher percentage of improvement. Additionally, the experimental group expressed positive attitudes toward the scaffolding method.

### **Adolescents with Typical Patterns of Development**

Studies investigating the effects of audio delivery for typically developing adolescents tend to concentrate on two facets: (1) gains in comprehension, and (2) attitudinal changes toward reading. Results of studies investigating adolescents’ comprehension of audio-delivered content vary widely. Action research conducted by a high school English teacher in the United States points to the role of audiobooks in facilitating narrative literature comprehension (Gunter 2010); however, neither standard measures nor a strong research design were employed. Jessica E. Moyer (2011a, 2011b) tested female college students for comprehension after they had engaged in three different reading experiences: reading four to six pages of print text, reading four to six pages of an e-book, and listening to ten minutes of an audiobook. Comprehension, interest, and engagement did not differ across formats. Finally, as part of a larger study investigating listening comprehension versus reading comprehension, grade 8 students in the Republic of Cyprus completed comprehension tests after engaging separately with print and audio formats of both narrative and expository texts. Reading comprehension was higher in the print condition for both types of text (Diakidoy 2005).

Several studies point to differential comprehension effects of audio delivery based upon reading proficiency. Twenty above-average, twenty average, and twenty below-average readers from grade 6 participated in two administrations of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading tests (MacGinitie and MacGinitie 1989 as cited in Cloer and Denton 1995): one administration involved students reading silently, and the other administration involved students using LWR. Nearly two-thirds of students performed worse in the LWR mode. For below-average and average readers, the difference in scores between the two modes of administration was not significant; however, above-average readers’ scores were significantly lower in the LWR condition (Cloer and Denton 1995). Jill S. Harker and Leonard S. Feldt (1993) accounted for reading ability in comparisons of comprehension of 114 students in ninth grade and 63 students in tenth grade when reading silently versus LWR. Students with higher reading levels did not improve in the audio condition. In contrast, students with lower reading levels scored better in the audio condition. Researchers speculated that, in some cases, the audio hindered the higher-level students’ scores.

Adolescents have expressed positive attitudinal changes toward reading as a result of listening to books. Over 1,700 middle school students from five regions of the United States and one region of Department of Defense schools in West Germany participated in a study in which teachers read literature aloud for ten to fifteen minutes each day. The reading aloud was followed by brief

vocabulary- and comprehension-focused discussions. Teachers read aloud four or five days per week for approximately six months. Analysis of responses to a reading attitudes assessment instrument administered before and after the study indicated that the treatment (listening to literature read aloud and then discussed) improved participants’ attitudes toward reading. It is not clear, however, if attitudes improved because of the reading aloud, the discussion, or a combination of the two (Herrold, Stanchfield, and Serabian 1989).

Another study comparing young adults’ reading versus listening to various types of text provides inconclusive findings. Fifty-nine students, ranging in age from nineteen through twenty-four and enrolled in an introduction to communication course at a university, were randomly assigned to one of eight conditions in which they either read or listened to material on the topic of inventions or innovations; the material was originally either oral-based (i.e., a speech) or literate-based (i.e., a magazine article). Though the results were not statistically significant, oral-based material was best comprehended when heard and literate-based material was best comprehended when read (Rubin, Hafer, and Arata 2000).

## Discussion

Although transactions with print books clearly result in different physiological reactions, including different brain processes, than transactions with audiobooks, professionals in the disciplines of library science and education contend both formats support the literacy development of adolescents. The comparisons and differences between print book reading and audiobook “reading” are many, with some professionals giving the advantage to one process over the other. Pamela Varley (2002) has posited that reading is more intimate than listening, and that because listening is more rigid, audiobook engagement deters negative reading habits and allows a reader to hear a book exactly as it is written. Denise Johnson claimed that audiobooks promote the higher-level aspects of the reading process and facilitate reading motivation: “understanding the message, thinking critically about the content, using imagination, and making connections is at the heart of what it means to be a reader and why kids learn to love books” (2003, 3). Ruth Cox Clark (2007) praised the audiobook format for its adaptability as either an individual or group activity and pointed to its utility as a form of family literacy.

Yet, the findings of this review demonstrate variable outcomes of audiobook use among different populations of adolescents. For individuals learning a second language, comprehension tends to improve as a consequence of audiobook use. However, for students with learning disabilities and typically developing adolescents, results vary. In some instances, comprehension may actually decrease when more-abled readers rely solely on the audiobook format or use the audiobook in conjunction with the printed text. And though audiobooks are often credited for their ability to deliver higher-level content to readers, our recent analysis of award-winning audiobooks revealed that reading levels of the materials are often lower than interest levels (Cahill and Richey 2015). Conversely, the review demonstrates that audiobooks do tend to affect the psychological components of the reading process, and research by John T. Guthrie and colleagues (2007) demonstrated that reading motivation predicts growth in reading comprehension. Additionally, reading is a primary means of knowledge building, which, in turn, is likely to impact reading comprehension (Cervetti, Jaynes, and Hiebert 2009).

## Implications for Researchers

Despite a number of studies exploring audio delivery of information that can inform adolescents and professionals, the findings of this review support our earlier claims (Cahill and Richey 2015) and echo those of other researchers (e.g., Moran et al. 2008): more studies investigating audiobooks and other technologies are necessary. First, very few studies have investigated commercially produced audiobooks. The majority of the studies we reviewed used audio researcher-developed materials or teacher read-alouds, yet the quality of narration impacts the listener’s regard for the text (Cahill and Richey 2015). It is quite possible that the quality of the narration significantly affects comprehension, and this relationship is worthy of investigation. Additionally, long-term studies that explore adolescents’ use of audiobook materials over time could investigate the extent to which audiobooks support general knowledge gains and vocabulary development. As far as we know, no investigations of informational audiobooks have been conducted and reported. The studies that we reviewed used information text more closely associated with textbooks than with nonfiction trade books. Finally, as the Component Model of Reading (Aaron et al. 2008) demonstrates, the reading process is complex and affected by multiple factors; more in-depth studies are necessary to truly understand the nuanced contributions of audiobooks to adolescents’ literacy development and proficiencies.

## Implications for School Librarians

Given that few studies found audio delivery to have beneficial effects on comprehension, school librarians should be cautious about using audiobooks as the sole strategy for supporting struggling readers. Conversely, students often enjoy audiobooks, and they are likely to incidentally learn some general knowledge and some vocabulary, though this growth is unlikely to be sufficient to support their reading development without additional targeted instruction (Penno, Wilkinson, and Moore 2002).

The findings of this review point to the value of audiobook use for students in foreign language courses (e.g., German language audiobooks for students enrolled in a German language course). However, because we could find no research that investigated audio delivery or audiobook use with second language learners with profiles similar to many of the second language learners in U.S. schools (Kieffer 2008), middle and high school librarians should be wary of using audiobooks as a sole strategy for these students.

Finally, the research investigating audio delivery with typically developing adolescents demonstrated that comprehension fails to improve and often declines when proficient and advanced readers engage in LWR strategies or listening-only strategies. Therefore, school librarians should discourage instructional use of audiobooks with these groups of students. However, school librarians might encourage proficient and advanced readers to use audiobooks for leisure reading purposes (Mol and Jolles 2014).

So, if the existing research on audiobooks does not provide clear evidence that they support adolescents’ literacy development, should school libraries continue to develop audiobook collections and encourage audiobook use with young adults? Scholars have connected literacy activities with broader social formation and identity aspects of development (Ivey and Johnston 2013; Moje et al. 2008). Audiobooks, too, can facilitate this type of growth for adolescents and young adults. Use of audiobooks with adolescents who struggle to decode texts allows those individuals to interact socially around texts (Frey and Fisher 2006).

Several scholars have considered the beneficial aspects of audiobooks beyond the academic context. These scholars contend that the value of audiobooks transcends educational usage and shifts into a form of a leisure activity. Listeners can use audiobooks to relax and to multi-task (Pedersen and Have 2012; Audio Publishers Association 2013). Further, audiobooks add an aural experience, potentially altering mood and emotion of a work, and thus adding entertainment value to a book beyond what is possible in print form (Bull 2006; Pedersen and Have 2012; Audio Publishers Association 2013).

Perhaps it is most useful to consider audiobooks in ways similar to the way movie adaptations of books are regarded (Shokoff 2001); movie adaptations of books and audiobooks are neither better nor worse than printed books, nor are movies and audiobooks more nor less entertaining than printed books. Movies, audiobooks, and printed books provide different experiences that are enjoyed in different manners. In fact, Birgitte Stougaard Pedersen and Iben Have coined the term “listenature” (2012 89, 93) to convey audiobook listening as a sensory experience well beyond that of a simple literacy one.

Finally, according to Frey and Fisher (2006), it takes only one good book to hook an adolescent into becoming a reader, and an audiobook could very well serve as that one good book. Audiobooks offer listeners a unique form of mobility. Unlike print materials that require use of both the hands and the eyes, audiobooks require only the ears, and thus free the reader to multi-task and move (Pedersen and Have 2012). A self-selected physical or relaxing activity paired with the perfect audiobook just might motivate an adolescent to become a lifelong reader and/or listener!

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