



Library Telephone Box

Audio Book Collection

Our school is focusing on developing our library as an enjoyable recreational reading centre. As part of this development we have enlarged our collection to include audio books. We have made these available in an audio booth (antique red public telephone box). An iPad on a tilt and swivel arm has been fitted inside the phone box. Students can choose from the audio book collection and listen to the stories while seated in the box.



The benefits of audiobooks include:

Listening to audio books can supplement or substitute for the practice of oral reading in the home.

They can introduce children to more sophisticated levels of literature. Because children can understand books written at a higher level than they can actually read themselves.

For less academically talented students, audio books can provide a level playing field with stronger readers. By experiencing books in an alternate form, these struggling print readers can participate equally in discussions of books they've enjoyed.

Audio books can help with vocabulary building. When listening to audio books, students encounter new words and words they know but don't use fluently. (Theoretically, this should also happen with TV, but it doesn't; commercial television uses a lexicon of about 5,000 words, the same number of words the average child knows when entering school.) When encountering words on audio, students will be assured of hearing them pronounced correctly and hearing them used in context. These lead to a more fluent understanding of words.

Struggling readers often read from word to word. These students must work so hard to identify each word that they have difficulty carrying the meaning from one word to the next, to the end of the sentence, the paragraph, the page. The audio experience can provide fluid phrasing and cadence, leading to a firmer grasp of meaning. Furthermore, special forms of literature that contain dialect or lots of dialogue are often made more meaningful to students through audio.

Many teachers observe that today's child is bright and intuitive, but—due to the multimedia provided by our culture—far less attuned to language than in years past. Using audio books can help teachers meet the needs of today's students and their contemporary learning styles. Audio books can motivate students' interest in the school curriculum.

The audio book experience stimulates an intimate relationship among the author, the listener and the story. This relationship resembles the sense of community established between the ancient storyteller and the audience. In a frenetic, mobile society, this sense of

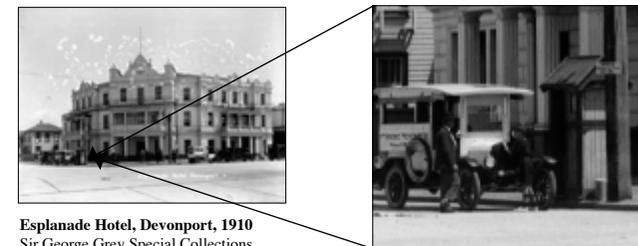
community is often lacking in the everyday life of today's child. By creating the community of story, audio books can help fill that void.

Students live in an increasingly short-form world: Wikipedia rather than research, text message rather than conversation. One often-overlooked literacy skill is that of stamina, the ability to stick with a story until the reader or listener falls into the tale. Audio books offer an ambience that allows listeners to become immersed in long-form literature.

Some teenagers find listening to books easier than reading a text, and, therefore, experience listening as more pleasurable, more possible, and ultimately more worthwhile than traditional reading. Satisfaction with the audio version of a book often leads students back to the printed version or to other works by the same author.

Text adapted from the May 1998 issue of AudioFile and Voices in My Head by Mary Burkey.

History of our red telephone box:



Esplanade Hotel, Devonport, 1910
Sir George Grey Special Collections
Auckland Libraries, 35-R219

Long before the cellular phone, public telephone booths were a common sight on footpaths. We believe that ours was located outside the Esplanade Hotel, Victoria Road, Devonport in 1910.

It was in poor condition when we received it. It first went to the Technology Centre where it was renovated before being placed in the library.

