

EVIDENCE-BASED AND PROVEN-EFFECTIVE



The Learning Ally Audiobook Solution

The Learning Ally Audiobook Solution has been proving its effectiveness as a reading accommodation for students with reading deficits for more than 70 years.

There was plenty of existing research by academic experts showing the potential of audiobooks in general, but we wanted something more concrete. That's why we commissioned several efficacy studies designed specifically to evaluate the impact of the Learning Ally Audiobook Solution on students with reading deficits who require an accommodation.

These studies show that Learning Ally offers significant benefits when implemented with fidelity, including:

- » **Increased vocabulary, fluency and comprehension**
- » **Greater self-confidence, motivation, and classroom engagement**
- » **Higher assessment and high-stakes test scores**

“Students tended to see a higher increase in performance with increased usage of Learning Ally.”

DEPT. OF ACCOUNTABILITY,
RESEARCH & EVALUATION,
DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

LEARNING ALLY EFFICACY STUDIES

Students that used Learning Ally saw an increase in DRA and EDL scores.

DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS EVALUATION OF LEARNING ALLY, 2016 (PRIMARY RESEARCH)

This study conducted by Denver Public Schools found that the 1,000+ students who used the Learning Ally Audiobook Solution with fidelity saw an increase in DRA and EDL scores between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. As a result, the Department of Accountability, Research, and Evaluation within Denver Public Schools concluded that "Students tended to see a higher increase in performance with increased usage of Learning Ally."

Additionally, the analysis observed that students who used the Learning Ally Audiobook Solution with fidelity are correlated to lower rates of chronic absenteeism as compared to their peers.

Students appeared in the top 25% of state assessment reading scores.

LEARNING ALLY'S IMPACT ON STATE ASSESSMENTS, 2011 (PRIMARY RESEARCH)

This study conducted by Learning Ally's internal evaluation team examined the effect of the Learning Ally Audiobook Solution on school-level state assessments of reading. When comparing rates at which schools appeared in the top 35% of state assessment reading scores, schools that were actively using Learning Ally appeared more frequently than schools that were not.

Students demonstrated statistically significant increases in standard scores for reading skills.

TUFTS UNIVERSITY AUDIOPLUS (LEARNING ALLY) STUDY, 2006 (PRIMARY RESEARCH)

Maryanne Wolf's study, *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Learning Ally's* AudioPlus Books on CD in Conjunction with RAVE-O, A Comprehensive Reading Intervention*, found that students using the Learning Ally* Intervention demonstrated increases on standard scores in multiple areas of important reading skills.

Researchers concluded that: "Over the course of three summer studies, integrating Learning Ally's* AudioPlus books on CD with the RAVE-O minute stories led to significant increases in students' phonetic skills, listening and reading comprehension and fluency. These results were especially encouraging as the intervention took place for such a short period of time (approx. four weeks)." (Wolf, 2006).

Learning Ally* students showed a 38% increase in content acquisition.

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY EFFECTIVENESS STUDY, 2003 (PRIMARY RESEARCH)

Boyle, Elizabeth A., Rosenberg, Michael S., Connelly, Vincent J., Washburn, Shari G. Brinckerhoff, Loring C., & Banerjee, Manju (2003) investigated the impact of CD-ROM DAISY audio textbooks with advanced navigational capabilities on the learning of students with mild disabilities in grades 9-12. Students who used the audiobooks outperformed peers reading traditional textbooks on a post-test of content learning. As a result of these learning methodologies, students with learning disabilities showed a 38% increase in content acquisition.

LEARNING ALLY EFFICACY STUDIES

8th and 9th grade students made significant advancements in word recognition and reading comprehension.

BALTIMORE PUBLIC SCHOOLS CASE STUDY, LEARNING ALLY, 2004-2005 (PRIMARY RESEARCH)

This study by Connie Dowling and Elyse Kantrowitz involved 35 schools, 300 teachers and a representative sample of students. Teachers submitted evaluations of 166 students, based on Brigance Reading Assessment for Reading Comprehension and Word Recognition results. As a result of the Learning Ally* interventions, students demonstrated significant achievement gains, including:

- An average increase of one full grade level in word recognition and 1.5 grade levels in reading comprehension for 8th grade students.
- An average increase of 1.5 grade levels in both word recognition and reading comprehension for 9th grade students

Learning Ally students made statistically significant increases in their reading rate, word recognition and comprehension.

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY READING STUDY, LEARNING ALLY, 2004 (PRIMARY RESEARCH)

Kuhn, Melanie R. Ph.D., Swan, Aubrie & Groff, Carolyn (2004). Researchers found in this year-long, multi-classroom study that students using Learning Ally's* AudioPlus textbooks reported improvement in reading skills, including word recognition, reading rate and comprehension. The research demonstrated:

- Reading rate in context (measured by QRI-III) for students using the program in the inclusion setting showed statistically significant increases ($p < .05$), whereas the control group remained nearly constant.
- Word recognition in context increased from 94.4% (frustrational reading level) to 96.3% (instructional reading level).
- Teachers noted: The program gave students access to materials for independent work, core curriculum, curriculum supplements and as the basis for content review; as students experienced success with the program, they used it more frequently and their skills improved.
- Researchers conclusion: "the use of Learning Ally's* Learning Through Listening program in the classroom has a positive effect on reading growth for students with mild to moderate learning disabilities, classroom instruction, student and teacher motivation and the affective development of the students. As such, it is an assistive technology that can make a difference in schools.

**Formerly known as RFB&D, Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic.*

AUDIOBOOK RESEARCH

Multisensory reading through audiobooks can improve decoding and comprehension skills. There is a significant body of research conducted independently by leading academic experts that demonstrates the effectiveness of audiobooks as a reading accommodation for struggling students. Here is a topline overview of that research.

When students are able to access words and stories with audiobooks, they are expanding their background knowledge, an essential component in evolving as a student and building the capacity for higher-order thinking skills.

McAllister, T., Whittingham, J., Huffman, S., & Christensen, R. (2014). Developing Independent Readers with Audiobooks: Audiobooks build student confidence and interest in reading. Association for Middle Level Education, 20-21.

The results of a meta-analysis, conducted to determine the effects of read-alouds and text-to-speech tools on reading comprehension of students with reading disabilities, showed a significant effect size of .35 and is consistent with a previous meta-analysis on read-aloud accommodations for students with disabilities. In addition, this study suggests that human-read audio had 50% greater effect on student comprehension versus synthetically narrated audio.

Wood, S. G., Moxley, J. H., Tighe, E. L., & Wagner, R. K. (2017). Does Use of Text-to-Speech and Related Read-Aloud Tools Improve Reading Comprehension for Students with Reading Disabilities? A Meta-Analysis. Journal of Learning Disabilities, 51(1), 73-84. doi:10.1177/0022219416688170

Audiobooks can provide a significant improvement in reading accuracy.

Milani, A., Lorusso, M. L., & Molteni, M. (2010). The effects of audiobooks on the psychosocial adjustment of pre-adolescents and adolescents with dyslexia. Dyslexia, 16(1), 87-97.

Reading audiobooks supports the development of all four language systems: phonological, semantic, syntactic and pragmatic.

Audiobooks can model reading, teach critical listening, build on prior knowledge, improve vocabulary, encourage oral language usage and increase comprehension.

Wolfson, G. (2008). Using Audiobooks to Meet the Needs of Adolescent Readers. American Secondary Education, 36(2), 105-114.

Upper elementary students with reading disabilities showed a greater increase in reading fluency rates when assisted with digital audiobooks.

Esteves, K. J., & Whitten, E. (2011). Assisted Reading with Digital Audiobooks for Students with Reading Disabilities. Retrieved from http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons/vol51/iss1/4/

LEARNING ALLY is a leading education solutions organization committed to transforming the lives of struggling learners. The Learning Ally Audiobook Solution is a proven reading accommodation comprised of human-read audiobooks, student-centric features and a suite of teacher resources. Used in more than 17,000 schools, this solution successfully helps students with reading deficits become engaged learners and reach their academic potential.