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Audiobooks for children. Are they beneficial for literacy or are they just a lazy way out of reading? This is the question we will be trying to find answers to in today's episode. Are there any advantages of audiobooks over physical books? Are they more attractive for children? What about reading levels, does the auditive dimension overcome this barrier? Should we feel like we're cheating if we encourage children to listen rather than read books? We will be looking at research from the [National Literacy Trust](#) that analyses this issue. Tune in to find out more.

Transcript

My name is Edith and on today's episode, we'll be looking at answers to the question "Are audiobooks beneficial for literacy or are they just a lazy way out of reading?".

Getting children to read isn't always an easy task. Either because it may seem as a chore for them, because they don't find it easy to engage with the text, or we don't always have the time to read with or to them. So, we end up considering using audiobooks. But wouldn't that be cheating? Well, no.

Even though we would be reluctant to expose children even more to technology and we would rather have them engage with a book, studies have shown [that audiobooks help literacy](#) in young readers, making decoding, fluency, accents, intonation and advanced syntax easily available and approachable for them.

And even though there have been claims that by having the text already decoded is basically all the work done for the reader, these arguments have been countered with evidence that listening is as engaging as reading and by overcoming the barriers of decoding and syntax, young readers can access more advanced books than their reading levels, and thus enrich their vocabulary. Even more so, by having the children follow the text as they are listening, they can improve their literacy and learn to correctly pronounce new words.

There are numerous certified sources of information available which indicate that audiobooks indeed have notable benefits for young readers. These have been neatly synthesized by the [National Literacy Trust](#), which in 2020 released a [literature review](#) on the subject. The most important ideas which can be drawn from here are that:

1. readers have a better understanding of pronunciation and tone, as well as the emotional pitch of a story, which have positive effects on emotional intelligence

2. less confident readers are able to access more advanced and diverse texts
3. audiobooks are a good family listening experience, promoting bonding between parents and children
4. the novelty element, children finding listening on a device or smartspeaker more fun than simply reading

We can conclude that indeed, audiobooks are beneficial for young readers on multiple levels, not to mention that they're easy to use and there are many to choose from, ranging from free to subscription based, such as [Audible](#), or dedicated apps such as the [Roald Dahl audio app](#). A notable mention here is [Learning Ally](#), a dedicated platform for students with dyslexia and learning disabilities, which is subscription based and requires a documented print disability to be eligible for membership.

These being said, will you be having your child listen to audiobooks?

This concludes our episode; hope you tune in next time.

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Music

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