

How Digital Books Help Reinvent Reading Personalization District-Wide



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Presentation Overview

- What is Sora?
 - Features for reading customization
 - A word on audiobooks
- Special needs and unique reading communities
 - Student Support Services, SPED, 504s, assistive technology, and summer school
 - RTI
 - Basketball Team Read
 - Book Clubs
- Promoting Sora
 - District wide shared promotions
 - Emails to faculty and staff
 - Promoting to our teachers and student readers
 - Groups in our Learning Management Program (Schoology)
- Advocating for funding
 - #EdTech Department
 - Principals
 - Librarians- reminders throughout the year and right before funding ends

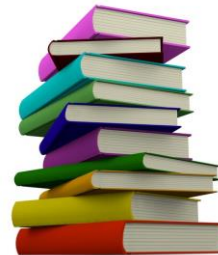
What is Sora?



- Sora is an Overdrive product
- It provides ebooks and audiobooks for school libraries
- It is designed for student/school use
- Libraries have the ability to set user content access levels
- Very similar to the Libby app you may have used with your public library



More about Sora



- The app itself is FREE- you only pay for content
- Librarian selects which books to purchase to add to the collection
- Publishers determine how books can be purchased/lending models
- Recommend a point person/main admin at your school or district to take the lead with Sora

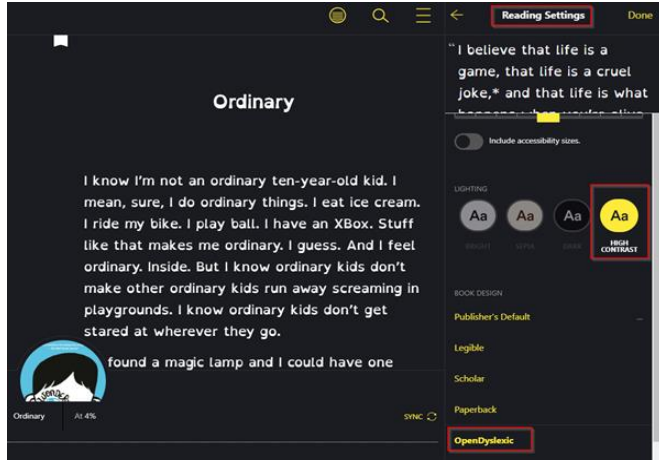
Some great Sora features- Users

Users can control:

- Display in high contrast
- Dyslexic font feature
- Some titles are available as read along with both text and audio
- Audiobooks are read by a human voice, frequently by skilled voice actors or the author, to be engaging while listening
- Users may adjust the audiobook playback speed in audiobooks and font size in ebooks
- Users may connect to various other libraries including Audiobook Sync
- Achievement badges that keep track of completed reading and a timer that counts how long you have used the app

Examples:

Example of High Contrast Mode:



Also has Sepia background/text and dark font options.

Dyslexic Font:

But in spite of that, I believe it's true. I hear the nurse's words again. I am running the show. Everyone is waiting on me.

Regular Font:

But in spite of that, I believe it's true. I hear the nurse's words again. I am running the show. Everyone is waiting on me.

A Word on Audiobooks



- Listening to an audiobook is still reading!
- Great for students who love reading as well as reluctant readers
- A different way to approach reading



Articles about the power of Audiobooks

[Sizing Up: Rich picks for kids “reading” above grade level](#)

- School Library Journal; June 16, 2016

[To Your Brain, Listening to a Book Is Pretty Much the Same As Reading It](#)

- Science of Us (New York Magazine); August 10, 2016

[5 Ways Sora Supports Diverse Collections](#)

- Sora Blog Post; December 5, 2022

**LAST CALL FOR THE
RAFFLE!**

SSS, SPED, RTI, Summer School, and Assistive Technology

- Audiobook options for students with various needs
- Audiobook options for teachers doing a class read
- Student Choice
- Meeting student reading level
- Options for students gaining credit or making up credit so they can do work asynchronously without the need of a print book

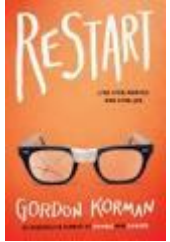


Audiobook: *Restart* by Gordon Korman

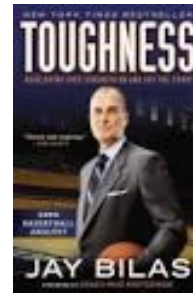
Testimonial from Teacher:

The audiobook through Sora has been very important in my endeavor to help students with their reading comprehension. Many students who have a problem with their comprehension admit that they are not readers. The audiobook allows me the opportunity to draw those students into the story quicker and I have seen an increase in comprehension scores because they are sucked into the story line.

--Glen Robertson, Reading Interventionist



Unique Use: Sports Team Read



- Our Boys Basketball team used a Sora audiobook for a team read.
- We were able to buy 100 copies of the audiobook so they could all use it at the same time.
- Used title assignment to check out the book to each player and coach, and they did a book study together.
 - Title Assignments can save copies in Metered Access format
- We still have several copies left over and other schools have shown interest in doing the same thing with their team.



Testimonials from Basketball Coach



“The coaches wanted to share their passion for reading with their student athletes in a way that could challenge them as critical thinkers and bring them closer as a team. The problem was not only finding 30+ copies of the book (*Toughness* by Jay Bilas), but also finding 30+ copies at a reasonable price. After speaking with our amazing team of librarians, they recommended audiobooks in SORA. The use of SORA put an audio copy of *Toughness* on the one item that students will never leave at home or loose: their phone. The student athletes and coaches met every week to discuss 2 chapters. The results superseded all expectations and student athlete led discussions lasted over an hour. Group discussions served as much more than a book review, as they often led to thought provoking group talk that allowed teammates to connect in ways that are often difficult to do on the court. **If I have any regrets, it's that we didn't do this sooner!”**

--Justin Anderson, Assistant Boys Basketball Coach

Promoting Sora District Wide



- When we opened the collection in 2020, we did lots of hype leading up to the release
 - [Sora Designed Marketing Kit](#)
- Shared reading challenge across the district like the “Reading Without Walls” Challenge by Gene Luen Yang
 - Learn more about the [Reading Without Walls challenge](#)
 - We included “Read a book in Sora” or “Listen to an Audiobook in Sora” to the challenge or included ebook or audiobook in the format category.
- Reminding teachers about Sora has been very effective too. Teachers who use Sora will talk to their students about it
- Friends of the library groups and book club groups in Schoology
- Collaboration with our Public Librarians who are more familiar with Libby



Funding

- Site based money from our county
 - We are advocating for a small amount to be automatically put into Sora each year before it reaches the schools
- Remind librarians when their budgets are released with data about Sora usage at their school
 - Then a follow up reminder about a month before final requisitions must be submitted in case anyone has with any leftover money
 - A little here and a little there really can add up and it's nice that the money stays in Sora versus if it stayed in our school budget it would just disappear!
- Use your data to highlight needs.
 - Principals love data and students reading!
 - Sora staff is happy to help you with understand the numbers in your school or district.

Questions?

Thank you!

If you have additional questions, feel free to email Tiffany Tucker
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