

FACTS about Sight Versus Auditory Reading Comprehension



- **Hearing is a major vehicle of learning.** The spoken word (as in hearing a story read aloud) is a relatively simple process in comparison to reading the printed word.
- Oral storytelling has **tone, rhythm, pitch** and **volume** to help the child **understand** the story.
- On the other hand, **seeing the printed word**, decoding the combination of letters and patterns is much more **work** and develops at a **later stage** than auditory learning.
- Most children’s listening skills are stronger than their reading skills.
- Did you ever stop to think that **we first hear and then we see**. We learn things we hear even before we are born. Though there is evidence that sight is also possible before birth.
- At about the **eight grade** the young person’s **listening and reading abilities come together**. Before that time the child is spending most of its time **decoding the words** while reading. — Emma Walton Hamilton, *Raising Bookworms*
- Often **boys** in particular **learn better from listening** long after they enter high school.
- **Most children can understand more when they hear something, rather than read something.** However, some people are sight learners and others are auditory learners. School tends to develop “sight-learning” from books rather than “listening-learning” from teachers.

BENEFITS OF AUDIO BOOKS

- “A growing body of research is showing that **listening is just as effective as reading with the eyes**, and supports the use of audio-books to enhance fluency and comprehension.
 - **Supplementing teachers’ and parents’** time to read with their children
 - Introducing **new vocabulary**
 - Demonstrating **fluent reading**, phrasing, and articulation
 - Allowing **access to books** a reader may be unable to read independently
 - Creating great opportunities for **discussion and comprehension**
 - **Supporting struggling readers** by helping them enjoy the story by focusing on meaning rather than decoding the text.

- Great for **traveling**
- Great when coupled with **coloring pages**
- **Audio books** are becoming **more popular** and **recognized as vital** educational, learning and reading tools. The American Library Association (ALA) has a new award –the Odyssey Award for audio books.

When my children were little, one of their favorite activities was associated with a reading/drawing/listening kit that came with a tape recorder, tapes, books and a drawing board. The children were instructed to listen and read along until they came to a certain point. Then they were instructed to stop the recorder and draw and color the object just described. This continued throughout the story. My daughter was a reader at age three, but my son was just not interested in anything associated with letters until much later. They both used this system at their own pace. And loved it! - Joycebelle