Calibre audio

# Is Listening to Audiobooks helpful for Dyslexia?

# About Calibre Audio

Calibre Audio is a national charity which provides audiobooks for people living with a print disability in the UK and overseas. We have over 18,000 audiobook titles in our collection. Every day we send out over 1,500 books to our members.

Since 1974, Calibre Audio has brought the joy of audiobooks to anyone struggling to access print, so they can immerse themselves in wonderful stories, memorable biographies or travel the world in their mind.

# What we’ll cover today

- ✓ How audiobooks support comprehension & reading confidence
- ✓ The link between audiobooks and reducing anxiety
- ✓ Practical ways to use audiobooks in education & everyday life
- ✓ Where to find free & affordable audiobooks

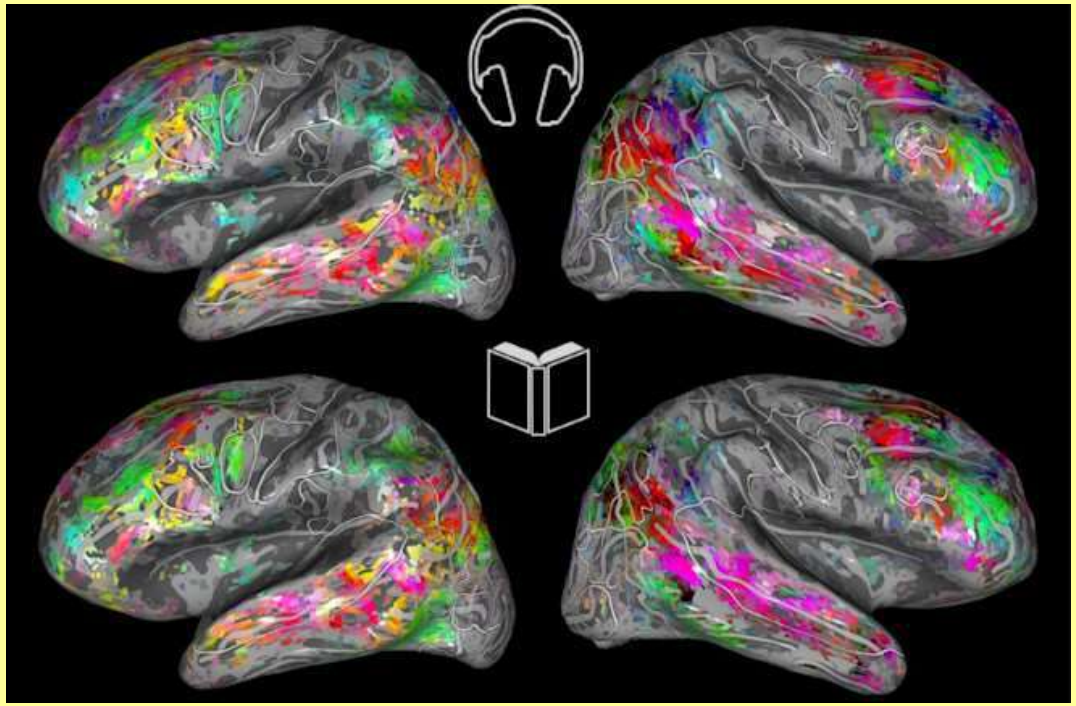
# How do audiobooks support comprehension & reading confidence?

- Listening  can help you better absorb and understand the material.
- Listening can allow you to focus on the meaning, rather than decoding the words on the page.
- Audiobooks can ease frustration, boost confidence and make reading much more enjoyable.
- You can go at your own pace – you can alter the speed, you can rewind and repeat sections as needed.
- Listening to an audiobook while following along with the text can actually help bridge the gap between decoding words and assigning meaning for people with dyslexia. Receiving information both visually and audibly reinforces word recognition, improves fluency, builds vocabulary and supports the development of higher-level comprehension skills

# The link between audiobooks and reducing anxiety

Audiobooks or Reading? To Our Brains, It Doesn’t Matter

Why reading can be good for mental health · MHFA England



“If you struggle with stress, depression, or anxiety, audiobooks may offer a reprieve from distressing thoughts. Not only can they help to boost your mood in the moment, but they can also help disrupt the negative thinking patterns that may be dragging your mental health down.

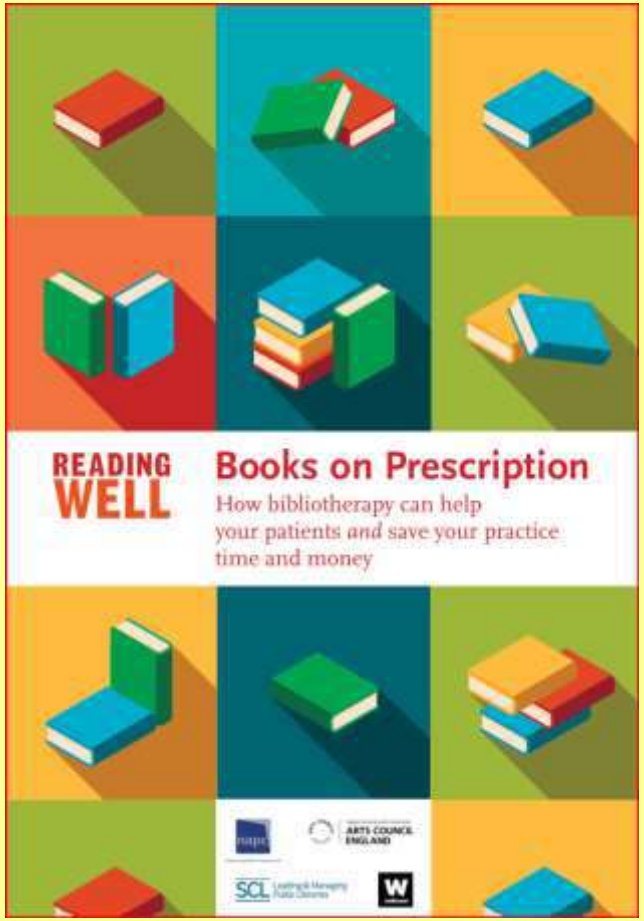
In fact, reading for as little as six minutes has been shown to slash stress levels by more than two-thirds—and audiobooks have been found to have the same effects on the brain as hard-copy books.”

**Marissa Moore**, MS, LPC, a therapist, licensed professional counselor, and mental health consultant writer

# Why does listening to stories improve mental health and wellbeing?

1. Tuning into a story can calm and comfort us – plays into the history/tradition of oral story-telling and memories of childhood
2. They can be an antidote to visual over stimulation. Our eyes get tired looking at screens so much.
3. They can help us break free from negative thoughts. Distraction and escapism.
4. They can help us develop empathy.
5. They can help us feel more purposeful – turning a boring commute or time doing chores into something more useful.
6. Book groups – enjoying the audiobook and then talking about it with others is beneficial to mental health and well-being.

# Reading on Prescription…what about audiobooks on prescription?




The national books on prescription programme, delivered through public libraries, that helps people to understand and manage their health and wellbeing using quality endorsed reading. Recommended books can be ‘prescribed’ by GPs, link workers, or any other health, social care or voluntary sector professional, and accessed free of charge in public libraries across England and Wales.

# Practical ways to use audiobooks - Education

Audiobooks have emerged as a powerful tool to help dyslexic students:

- Pair audiobooks with printed or digital texts
  Following along visually while listening, reinforces understanding of the text. It helps with word recognition, spelling, and vocabulary development.

- Active listening and note-taking
  Take notes, summarize key points, and ask questions while listening. This helps improve comprehension, critical thinking, and engagement with the material.

- Use a variety of audiobooks
  Consider fiction, non-fiction, biographies, and books that align with the curriculum to cater to different interests and learning goals.

- Discussion groups
  Get together with other learners to discuss audiobooks, to reinforce learning.

# Practical ways to use audiobooks – everyday life

This is very individual so I would encourage you to find what best suits you….

- Some people like to listen to audiobooks in bed, others like to listen when doing another task (doing housework, running, taking the dog for a walk, whilst commuting, making Lego models, painting)
- Listen alone or in a group
- Listen on a speaker or on headphones
- Following the words in a book or on a screen
- Join an accessible book group/ audio book
- Try different genres and different narrators
- Try listening at different speeds

# Create your own audiobook recipe….
# Consider where, when, what, how, who!

# Where to find free & affordable audiobooks

Calibre Audio
Free audiobooks for children and young adults under 25 years. £3 a month or £30 a year for adults. Unlimited audiobooks.

https://www.calibreaudio.org.uk/

Your local public library service

Often offer digital audiobooks for free via the Libby app (Overdrive) or Borrowbox with library membership (proof of address/ID)

Free or low-cost trials from commercial audiobook suppliers like:

- Audible https://www.audible.co.uk/ £0.99 a month for the first 3 months then £7.99 a month -1 credit a month
- All you can books (offer a 30-day free trial) https://www.allyoucanbooks.com/ then $24.99 per month – unlimited downloads
- Spotify Premium – 15 hours of audiobook listening a month included in your monthly subscription. 1-month free trial available then £11.99 a month. Unused listening hours expire at the end of each month and do not carry over.
- Xigxag (pronounced Zig-zag) No subscriptions, better prices the more you listen. https://xigxag.co.uk/

“I absolutely love listening to audiobooks...I’m not sure what I would do without them."

Gareth, 21, student

"Discovering Calibre has been an absolute game changer The gift of a book is so much more than the pages it’s written on. It supports education, self-esteem, social interaction."

Claire, mum to young Calibre member Toby

https://www.calibreaudio.org.uk/50th-anniversary/tobys-story

“I always had problems with reading, and my mum took me to be assessed for dyslexia when I was about seven or eight years old. I was fortunate to have had a very helpful teacher, who gave me extra lessons. And as a result, my reading improved, but I still struggled. It’s much easier for me to understand a story if I can listen to it, rather than having to read it. The beauty of audiobooks is I don’t miss out. I can still have as good an access to the experience of reading as someone else who can read more easily.”

Patricia's Story - Calibre Audio

Thank you for listening!