Are You Hearing This? Introducing College Age Reluctant Readers to the Joy of Audiobooks

Why?
- Studies have shown that “leisure” reading in the U.S. is at an all-time low
- People spend more time than previous generations on other activities, including social media, streaming video, and other technology.
- Does it matter?
  - “Reading affects everything you do” is not an overstatement.
  - Delayed reading acquisition has cognitive, behavioral, and motivational consequences that slow the development of other cognitive skills and inhibit performance on many academic tasks

How?
- Use technology, go beyond simple text, add engagement
  - Learning is more likely to happen when students like what they are doing.
    - Tech = fun
  - Built-in dictionaries, synced narration, backlight options
  - Big Idea: combined reading/listening experience allows students to adjust their reading rate and tackle unfamiliar or difficult-to-read words. For many students, the extra audio support improved their reading stamina, enabling them to read more and for longer periods of time.
- But is listening to books the same as reading books?
  - Not the same, but supports the same skills we ask college-ready students to have.
    - “The only difference is that we have substituted the visual understanding of written words with the auditory understanding of written words.” - Gene Wolfson
  - Students reading on their own may struggle with new words, pronunciation, or intonation, eventually grow frustrated and simply put the book down. Instead, given proper audio support, they may continue to read.

The project
- Two classes, ESL and college reading improvement centered (21 students total)
  - Pre-survey
  - Book Club lunches
  - Post-survey

The Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-survey</th>
<th>Post-survey</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1 hour reading / week</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative response to “leisure reading”</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy using Kindle Fire*</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
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</tbody>
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*Reading improvement was mentioned as a highlight of why they enjoyed using the Kindle

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slide deck and reference list -- https://www.slideshare.net/secret/N2OzVzufe5oQKg