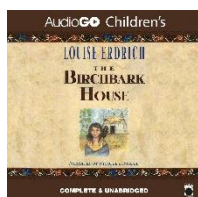


Sound Learning Audiobook Collection Lists & Samples

Use this annotated list to guide your audiobook collection development. Common Core State Standards are included for each title. Click on each title to hear an audio clip.

Grades 3-5



[**The Birchbark House**](#), written by Louise Erdrich, narrated by Nicolle Littrell, Audio Bookshelf/Blackstone, 2002

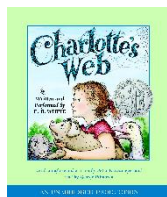
Life is lived by the cycle of the seasons in this story of Omakayas and her Ojibwa family on an island in Lake Superior in the 1800s. Recounting the rhythm her people have shared for generations, Omakayas details what was lost when white settlers moved inexorably westward. Listeners will gain an understanding of the rich culture that makes up the Native American heritage as Littrell's storyteller's pacing describes planting, harvesting, tanning a moose hide, and the devastation of smallpox.

To further understanding of the settling of the United States, students can discuss the differences in perspective from Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* series to this story with its Native American point of view.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.9

Compare and contrast stories in the same genre (e.g., mysteries and adventure stories) on their approaches to similar themes and topics.



[**Charlotte's Web**](#), written and narrated by E.B. White, Listening Library, 2001

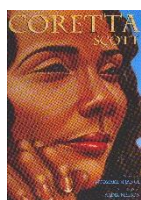
The familiar tale about Charlotte, Wilbur and Fern is, if possible, strengthened by the author's narration. The realities of farm life, the connection between humans and animals, and the strong theme of friendship demonstrates universal appeal. To hear the voice of E.B. White heightens the listener's pleasure and showcases the grandfatherly voice of the creator of the well-loved story. As the plot unfolds, listeners surely experience the delight of listening to stories. The author knows the characters, because they are *his*, and this gives a real and unique power to the words, presenting students with a whole new perspective about storytelling.

An interesting curriculum activity would support the CCSS standard noted below by having students listen to two other E.B. White stories, *The Trumpet of the Swan* (also narrated by the author, Listening Library) and *Stuart Little* (narrated by Julie Harris, Listening Library). This trio of E.B. White novels remain important examples of children's literature for young listeners.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.9

Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).



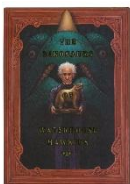
[*Coretta Scott*](#), written by Ntozake Shange, illustrated by Kadir Nelson, narrated by Phylicia Rashad, Weston Woods, 2014

Growing up in the segregated south hardened the resolve of the young Coretta Scott to seek equality. Married to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., she became an icon of the civil rights movement, marching, singing, speaking, and working toward freedom. Ntozake Shange's moving, brief poems describing the life of Coretta Scott King are wonderfully paired with Kadir Nelson's brilliant, sturdy oil paintings on birch plywood. The addition of Phylicia Rashad's quietly elegant narration, with a musical underbed of "Ain't gonna let nobody turn me 'round," lifts both text and art to a level that allows listeners to fully understand the meaning of Mrs. King's contributions to the civil rights movement. The third track is a reading of the excellent author's note, giving more information about Mrs. King and her work. The Common Core State Standards specify that students should be exposed to informational text; this poetic look at history is an excellent means of showing students how historical information can be communicated in a non-traditional fashion.

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.3.

Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.



[*The Dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins*](#), written by Barbara Kerley, illustrated by Brian Selznick, narrated by Jonathan Pryce, Weston Woods, 2010

Biography, science and art combine to bring listeners the fascinating story of Waterhouse Hawkins, a 19th century artist who crafted life-size, three-dimensional models of just-discovered dinosaurs. Working with scientists, Hawkins' creations were an original achievement. Having the beautiful print version at hand is a must, as Pryce's strong and confident narration gives listeners time to peruse the breath-taking Caldecott Honor paintings. The production includes music and sound effects that highlight Hawkins' perseverance to bring scientific models of extinct animals to a large population. The opportunities for interdisciplinary study are many in this wonderful audiobook package.

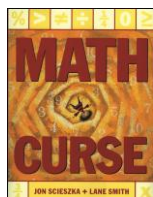
As a learning extension, the International Reading Association's ReadWriteThink web site offers activities related to the dinosaurs of Waterhouse Hawkins in London.

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/calendar-activities/crystal-palace-hosted-first-20544.html>

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3

Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).



[Math Curse](#), written by Jon Scieszka, illustrated by Lane Smith, narrated by Nancy Wu, Weston Woods

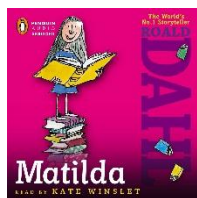
Scieszka's young protagonist is doomed when her teacher, Mrs. Fibonacci, declares that math applies to every facet of life, reducing everything to a math problem: "I wake up at 7:15. It takes me 10 minutes to get dressed, 15 minutes to eat my breakfast, and 1 minute to brush my teeth . . . if my bus leaves at 8:00, will I make it on time?" Listeners are guided through this mathematical nightmare by Wu's inflection and pacing, clearly defining characters and allowing time to grasp not only the complex and hilarious text, but also Smith's frenzied illustrations. Background music and sound effects heighten the amusement of this very silly, and very real, math lesson.

Word problems are often the bane of elementary school existence. Offer this audiobook as an antidote to math hatred.

Operations and Algebraic Thinking:

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.OA.A.3

Solve multistep word problems posed with whole numbers and having whole-number answers using the four operations, including problems in which remainders must be interpreted. Represent these problems using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity. Assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies including rounding.



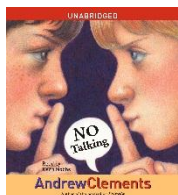
[Matilda](#), written by Roald Dahl, narrated by Kate Winslet, Penguin Audio

Brilliant Matilda, who reads every book in the library before starting school, is unfortunately born into a horribly boorish family. School - and her wonderful teacher, Miss Honey - is her refuge even though her parents try to thwart her enjoyment of learning at every turn. When Miss Honey is threatened by the evil headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, Matilda discovers amazing powers to save the day. Winslet's remarkable narration captures the snarky tenor of Dahl's writing and even manages to add regional accents that hint at the answer to a mystery in this 2014 Odyssey Honor audiobook.

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.



No Talking, written by Andrew Clements, narrated by Keith Nobbs, Simon & Schuster Audio, library edition Recorded Books

War between the sexes breaks out when Laketon Elementary School's fifth grade class get caught up in angry outbursts between ringleaders Dave and Lynsey. Their 48-hour, self-imposed no talking competition leads to some interesting results, not only among the boys and girls, but also between kids and adults. Accurately capturing the cadence and tone of early adolescence, Nobbs allows listeners to feel as if they are in the hallways and classrooms with this clever and inventive group of students.

No Talking lends itself to fulfilling not only a CCSS literature standard (see below) by encouraging students to look at theme and characterization, it also is a model for civics lessons in responsibility and courtesy, as shown in the example from the Virginia History and Social Studies Standard shown below. Students can not only discuss how and why the behavior of characters in the book determine and move forward the theme of the story, they can also attempt to follow the rules concocted by the students in an attempt to restrict talking and regain decorum.

Key Ideas and Details:

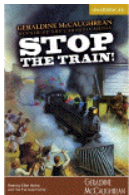
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2

Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

History and Social Science Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools

CE.4 The student will demonstrate knowledge of personal character traits that facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in civic life by

- a) practicing trustworthiness and honesty;
- b) practicing courtesy and respect for the rights of others;
- c) practicing responsibility, accountability, and self-reliance;
- d) practicing respect for the law;
- e) practicing patriotism;
- f) practicing decision making;
- g) practicing service to the school and/or local community.



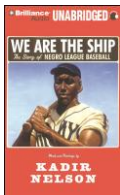
[Stop the Train!](#) written by Geraldine McCaughrean, narrated by Ellen Myrick and the Full Cast Family, Full Cast Audio, 2005

This historical fiction story is dramatized by a full cast performance that suitably matches the eccentric group of characters. Based on the early settlement of the Oklahoma Territory and the western expansion of the railroads, Cissy Sissney and her family arrive in the “middle of nowhere” only to find that the railroad plans to bypass their town. This scenario begins the “train” of events that are both comic and practical as the town works together to solve this critical problem. It is the good fortune of listeners to hear each character’s individual voice, appreciate the original musical score, and learn how life in the Old West brought friends and neighbors together.

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.5

Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.



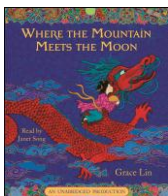
[We are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball](#), written by Kadir Nelson, narrated by Dion Graham, Brilliance Audio, 2009

Dion Graham's mellow baritone invites listeners into the dugout and onto the field as he personifies the "Everyman" Negro Leagues ball player who serves as narrator of this parallel history of America's pastime. It's all covered here, from the despair of racism to the elation of the game well-played. This consummate audiobook package includes a blues harmonica introducing and ending the story and Nelson's striking paintings, one of the highlights of the print edition, are available on an accompanying CD. This Common Core Text Exemplar for grades 4-5 was also a 2010 Odyssey Honor Audiobook, making it an excellent example to use not only as an informational text, but also to support speaking and listening standards.

Speaking and Listening – Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.2

Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.



[Where the Mountain Meets the Moon](#), written by Grace Lin, narrated by Janet Song, Listening Library, 2010

Minli and her parents live a hard life in the shadow of Fruitless Mountain. Her bitter mother rails against Minli's tale-spinning father, especially when the young girl spends one of her last two coins on a goldfish alleged to have magical capabilities. Setting out to prove the truth of her father's tales, Minli is accompanied by the fish (who really is magical) and a dragon. The girl stumbles into danger, friendship, and wisdom

along the way, eventually saving her family and her village. Song wraps this enchanting story with a slight hint of Chinese inflection and cadence, adding to the authentic feel of this original folktale. This grade 4 – 5 Common Core Text Exemplar can be used to support the following standard:

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3

Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a characters thoughts, words, or actions).