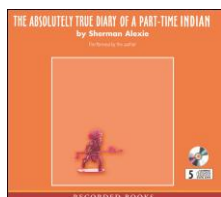


Sound Learning Audiobook Collection Lists & Samples

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 9-12



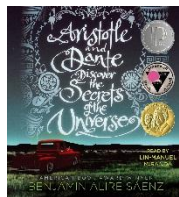
[*The Absolutely True Story of a Part-Time Indian*](#), written and narrated by Sherman Alexie, Recorded Books, 2008

Sherman Alexie *is* the central character and voice of Arnold Spirit, a.k.a. Junior. Semi-autobiographical, Alexie imparts this inspired narration to thoroughly capture Junior's complex persona. Set on the Spokane reservation, the realities of Native American life are vivid, especially the alcoholism and poverty. Junior's anguish is fraught with barriers – a disability, the entrenched inequality, his family's dysfunction – but he determines that education is his path out of the cycle, and his perseverance is remarkable. Only Alexie could tell the story, and only Alexie could create a memorable performance that cemented the well-deserved 2007 National Book Award for Young People's Literature and the 2009 Odyssey Award for Excellence in Audiobook Production. The vivid details of Junior's resilience, his ability to overcome prejudice, his self-deprecating humor, and a hope for the future, makes this audio a memorable listening experience.

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS-ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.2

Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.



[*Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*](#), written by Benjamin Alire Sáenz, narrated by Lin-Manuel Miranda, Simon & Schuster Audio, library edition Recorded Books, 2013

Polar opposites Aristotle and Dante become fast friends after meeting at the pool in the summer of 1987. Ari recognizes that he is on the cusp of manhood, but cannot find his place in the world. His Vietnam-veteran father is distant and his incarcerated brother has vanished from family discussion. By contrast, Dante's family is secure and he seems to know exactly who he is and where he wants to go. Miranda skillfully creates the voice of the Mexican American community of these two friends and guides listeners through their difficult journeys of self-discovery in this powerful, poetic, multi-award winner (2013 Printz Honor Book, 2013 Pura Belpré Medal for Narrative, and 2013 Stonewall Book Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature).

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS-ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of the text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.



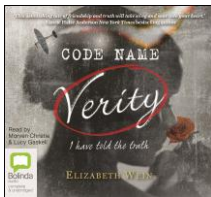
The Book Thief, written by Marcus Zusak, narrated by Allan Corduner, Listening Library, 2006

Set in Nazi Germany during World War II, Death narrates the story of the power of words to harm, inspire, and heal. Seeing young Leisel steal a book from her brother's gravesite, Death follows the girl throughout her relationships with her foster family, her community, and years of stealing books. Though Death refers to this as a "small story," it strikes on the best and worst of human interactions. Corduner gives unique voices to Leisel, her family, and community, while his detached interpretation of Death mines the depths of his observations—laden with irony and laced with humor. A 2007 Michael L. Printz Honor Book, this Common Core Text Exemplar for Grades 9-10 is now a major motion picture, offering students an opportunity to explore this novel through support of this standard:

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.7

Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.



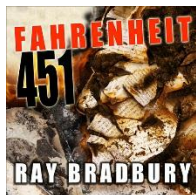
Code Name Verity, written by Elizabeth Wein, narrated by Moreven Christie and Lucy Gaskell, Bolinda Audio, 2012

Queenie and Maddie form an unlikely friendship, each working to advance the allied cause during World War II. Captured by the Gestapo, Queenie's story twists around on itself, leaving listeners wondering what is real and what is false. This 2013 Michael L. Printz Honor Book plumbs the meaning of truth with a beautiful, heartbreaking text and mesmerizing performances by Christie and Gaskell that will have listeners stunned and weeping at the tragic turn of events.

Craft and Structure:

CCSS-ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning



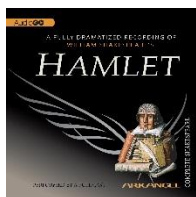
[*Fahrenheit 451*](#), written by Ray Bradbury, narrated by Stephen Hoye, Tantor Media, 2010

In this novel of a twisted dystopian future, firemen don't put out fires—they start them. Their explicit task of burning the subversive ideas found in the pages of books has become impossible for one fireman, Guy Montag, whose questioning of the system brings down its wrath on him, his wife, and the challengers he seeks to join. Hoye narrates with a tempo that moves Montag's actions and musings at just the right pace, steeping listeners in the terrors of a world that seems frighteningly familiar. The story's final message of the need to keep books alive by memorizing and speaking them aloud works especially well in an audio medium. This eminently discussable book, a Common Core Text Exemplar for Grades 9-10, is found on many high school reading lists.

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.



[*Hamlet*](#), written by William Shakespeare, narrated by Simon Russell Beale, Imogen Stubbs, Jane Lapotaire and a Full Cast, Blackstone Audio/AudioGo, 2005

The tragedy of a young prince who exacts revenge on his uncle for the death of the king, his father, is arguably one of Shakespeare's most famous plays. For students, the scope of Elizabethan language and poetry as well as the hidden meaning buried in the text is more easily understood when performed aloud, and this first-rate, full cast production more than fits the bill. Musical interludes and an insert listing track details with a scene-by-scene summary make this a must-have for classroom use. A Common Core Standards Text Exemplar for Grades 11-CCR (College and Career Ready).

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.



[*Here in Harlem: Poems in Many Voices*](#), written by Walter Dean Myers, narrated by multiple voices, Live Oak Media, 2010

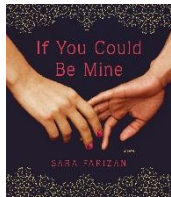
The beautifully crafted poetry of Walter Dean Myers is given a memorable performance that introduces the lives of Harlem residents to listeners. In a spare 54 poems, the characters elicit a picture of life in the iconic New York neighborhood.

Background sound effects, jazz, and other urban music, serve to underscore a cast of diverse characters: Lois Smith, age 12, student; Homer Grimes, age 83, blind veteran, Harland Keith, age 33, reporter, and Clara Brown, age 87, who binds the narrative with her view of Harlem's history. The introduction, read by the author, is another highlight of this wonderful production. Listeners will benefit from having the print version nearby, as it includes graphics, a map of Harlem, and period photographs. Simply put, using this audiobook can improve any poetry unit.

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.



If You Could Be Mine, written by Sara Farizan, narrated by Negin Farsad, HighBridge Audio, 2013

Seventeen-year-old Sahar despairs when she learns that Nasrin has bowed to her prominent, wealthy family's demands that she marry a suitable young man. Best friends since they were both young girls, Sahar and Nasrin are deeply in love, forbidden in their native Tehran where same-sex relationships are illegal. Desperate, Sahar explores the Iranian government-subsidized sex-change practice to accommodate homosexual relationships as a solution. Written by an Iranian-American lesbian, the depiction of how upper-class and well-educated Iranians conceal activities suppressed by political and religious authorities is conveyed with cultural accuracy. Narrator Negin Farsad's authentic accent richly enhances the audiobook, while her sharply-nuanced teen tone creates a universal characterization, creating a vivid portrayal of contemporary Iran. An important title for GLBTQ literature studies by older students, this title can be a springboard to research on current gay rights issues by comparing practices in various countries.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge:

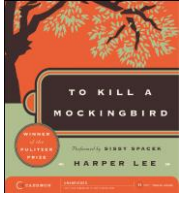
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.8

Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.



[To Kill a Mockingbird](#), written by Harper Lee, narrated by Sissy Spacek, Harper Audio

Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning classic story of a small southern town's descent into racial bigotry gains even more power and poignancy through Spacek's measured, unvoiced performance. Her lilting southern accent perfectly embodies Scout Finch, a young girl whose life is turned upside down when her lawyer-father takes on the defense of a black man accused of raping a white girl. This staple of high school reading lists is a Common Core Text Exemplar for Grades 9-10.

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.



[The Watch That Ends the Night: Voices from the Titanic](#), written by Allan Wolf, narrated by Michael Page, Phil Gigante, Christopher Lane, Laural Merlington, and Angela Dawe, Brilliance Audio, 2011

The sinking of the Titanic has elicited multiple stories, but this audiobook production presents a distinctly unique perspective. Told by the many unheard voices: mail clerks, the captain, the ship's rat, and even the iceberg, the fate of the inaugural sailing creates a palpable sense of being on the ship's deck as it sinks. The gifted ensemble cast includes the indomitable Molly Brown, telegraphers giving Morse code messages, and the formidable iceberg giving indications of tragedy as the ship approaches. Even knowing what will transpire, the listener is captured by this worthy 2012 Audies award for Distinguished Achievement in Production.

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.