"As They See It: Technology for Students with Learning Disabilities”

Students with dyslexia and other learning disabilities share their excitement about books, Bookshare, and the ways that assistive technology opens doors to confidence, independence, and achievement.

[Light, playful music starts.]

[8th grade boy talks while seated in his living room.]

When I use Bookshare, it’s like a door opener.

I say it’s like you doing something that you’ve never done before. It’s like you doing something you like but you’ve never done it before.

[School gym lights turn on. Several students walk down a middle school hallway. Students share observations about Bookshare while seated in classrooms and the school library.]

It’s an app that you can download really any book.

Fiction, comedy. Sci-fi.

Something with mystery.

I like reading the *Bourne Identity* series. I just started reading that.

I'm reading now this book called *No Choir Boy*. It's for one of my classes.

It's about teenagers on death row.

*The Hunger Game*s.

The *Harry Potter* series.

*The Giver*. It was a really good book, too.

[Boy seated in his living room downloads a Bookshare book on his iPhone.]

I can download books on my phone, I can get books like that, they're downloading in like, three seconds.

You can do different stuff with it…. Like make the font bigger.

You can make make it so it's as big as you want it and you can see it the way you want to see it.

It shows where it's reading so you can stay along with it and you're not just listening to it.

[An excerpt from *Harry Potter* reads on an iPad.]

You can change the voice, how the voice sounds and you can also change the speed that it reads.

So I use it a lot. I like to skim over, like, read it with highlighted sections because it helps me read later on if I don't have access to technology.

I don't know, it just gets me in the book.

You can put your textbooks on it.

Instead of having to carry like five extra pounds.

[Girl shoots a basketball at a hoop in the school gym.]

We travel a lot. We mostly go to the football games, the volleyball games, and some of them are a really long drive, and if it gets dark you can't read so I’ll just, like you can read them in the car.

[Boy demonstrates reading a book on his iPhone while seated in his living room.]

(With) other apps, you have to have a certain device. Like sometimes it will be on a computer and I don't want to have to lug my computer around just so I can read, I want something that's portable, which I use Bookshare for, which I use Bookshare for.

I wouldn’t have been able to make it this far without Bookshare, I would be held back in probably the third grade, or fourth.

It was more of people telling me, “you're not gonna make it,” after they figured out that I was dyslexic.

So if you're struggling with reading, you might want to go ask your parents if you can get checked for a learning disability.

Check it out now before it, you get pummeled with reading.

Just because you think, oh man I don’t wanna get checked, ‘cause if I do have it I’m gonna be awkward and weird, it’s not like that, there are tons of kids at your school that have it and you just don’t know about it.

When you actually, finally break through the barriers, and people tell you, you’re not going to succeed, despite all that you make it through and you succeed.

[Five students smile broadly into the camera.]

Bookshare is the world’s largest online library of accessible ebooks for people with print disabilities.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Bookshare is free for all qualified U.S. students and schools.

For more information, visit bookshare.org

[Music plays as Bookshare logo enters and text displays on screen.]

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