

Contributing to an online catalogue of audiobooks

e-lang citizen team

Teacher Sheet

Task

Your students will be given the following task.

You are going to contribute to a catalogue of free public domain audiobooks. In order to do so, you will read and record extracts or chapters (individually or in groups) of a book in the public domain (in one of the languages you speak) and make them available for free on the Internet on the LibriVox site.

Website

<https://librivox.org/>

Website available in English with contributions in all languages.

CEFR level – For B1 level and above

Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacy

Dimensions covered in task	(Potential) specific objectives
➤ Ethical and responsible behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Realise the importance of positive engagement and participation to the web with the contribution to an online catalogue of audiobooks. - Develop awareness about copyright issues, and online copyright infringement. - Know what material is appropriate (and legal) to share and distribute freely online. - Know the importance of crediting material shared online. - If appropriate, develop awareness of the various types of Creative Common Licenses.

➤ Media literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop an understanding how a literary text will be received differently when it is presented in an audio format and the impact this will have on the way the text is read (i.e. accessibility, inclusiveness for sight-impaired or dyslexic people). - Understand the importance of the media and the audience.
➤ Technological literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Know how to choose the best tools to record, save and share audio material. - Know the digital tools to use to prepare a reading activity in a target language.
➤ Creative behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn how to enact a reading to bring a literary text to life and take the audience into consideration.
➤ Multimodal literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the key differences between text-based and audio format and the main features of each one.

Main language activity

Oral production: reading skills only (how to bring a (literary) text alive orally)

Plurilingual / intercultural aspects

Think about the language(s) which can be used for the recording.

Possible steps

This task can be carried out in various steps.

- The first step consists in choosing the work to be read suitable for the students' levels and available languages. Novels, short stories, poems can be considered. You or your students need to identify a suitable piece of work to add to the Librivox catalogue and decide in which language(s) this work will be read. The catalogue of audio material available on the site in the language you wish to post can first be explored. It is possible to browse the catalogue by language. Students can then visit the site forum where various threads are dealing with book choices and where some suggestions can be found (<https://forum.librivox.org/>).
- A decision also needs to be made concerning the reading format to adopt (reading the whole work individually or posting as part of a group).
- Once this is established, it will be important for them to listen to extracts of audiobooks (posted on the site or available elsewhere) to determine the features of a good audiobook.
- Once students have practised their reading (with the help of digital tools if need be), the recording can be made and posted.

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Student Sheet

Task

You are going to contribute to a catalogue of free public domain audiobooks. In order to do so, you will read and record (in one of the languages you speak) extracts or chapters of a book in the public domain and make them available for free on the Internet on the LibriVox site.

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While completing this task, you could learn:

- how to address/take into consideration an audience online (while selecting a text and performing it),
- about the impact of different media format (written or audio),
- about the various tools which can be used to practise reading in the target language,
- how to record, save and share audio files online,
- how to make literary work available in different formats.

You will also be able to reflect on copyright issues, what is appropriate to share online and what is copyright protected.

Plurilingual / intercultural aspects

Think about the language(s) you wish to use for your recording.

Hints

Keep in mind who you are addressing

You will need first of all to choose a text you would like to read, asking yourself if it can be of interest to others and making sure it is in the public domain. You can first check the catalogue of audio material available on the site in the language in which you wish to post. You can browse the catalogue by language.

You can then visit the site forum where various threads are dealing with book choices and where some suggestions can be found (<https://forum.librivox.org/>).

In order to carry out this task, it can be useful to:

- listen to other audiobooks (on the site or elsewhere) for the literary style you have chosen to read (poetry, play, short story, novel...) and determine what makes a good audiobook;
- read the advice given on the forum <https://librivox.org/pages/about-recording>;
- do a search on the site wiki to find additional advice:
 - https://wiki.librivox.org/index.php?title=Voice_Character_Performance
 - https://wiki.librivox.org/index.php?title=Improve_Your_Recording.

All this information will help you to find out how to record and provide some useful tips on how best to make it work, taking the audience into consideration.

Work on the language-related aspects

You need to choose how much of the work you can read (reading out loud the whole work on your own or posting as part of a group).

If you are unsure about the pronunciation of a word, you can use Check Forvo, the multilingual pronunciation dictionary: <https://forvo.com/>.

If you want to hear a couple of sentences, you can use text to speech technology. You can copy and paste an excerpt from the text you will record and listen to it. Here are a few suggestions of text-to-speech technology sites: TTS Reader: <https://ttsreader.com/>; Natural readers: <https://www.naturalreaders.com/online/>; From speech to text <http://www.fromtexttospeech.com/> Acapela: <http://www.acapela-group.com/voices/demo/>.

If you still have questions about pronunciation, you can reach out to various communities such as the ones on Rhinospike: <https://rhinospike.com/home/> or language learner communities such as Babbel: <https://fr.babbel.com/> and Busuu: <https://www.busuu.com>.

For you to think about

Have you ever thought about copyright issues before posting or sharing some material online? Do you know anything about Creative Commons and copyright licences?

Do you usually credit authors when you share/use online resources?

What makes a good audiobook? What qualities does your recording need to have to be a good audiobook? What are the pros and cons of listening to a literary text being read aloud?

In which language(s) are you recording your audio reading? Are you satisfied with your production? What are the challenges for you to produce an audio recording in that language?

What tools can you use to improve your ability to read out loud? Which ones can you adopt for other activities such as presentations or public speech?