

# Using podcasts in the classroom

Podcasts are a great way of getting children and young people interested in a range of topics. Our research also shows that children and young people who listen to podcasts are more likely to enjoy reading for pleasure, so you can also use them to encourage further reading around, a topic as well as promoting a love of storytelling.

As podcasts are audio rather than image-based, they may help encourage children to use their imagination.

Podcasts can be a great way to inspire conversation. Consider how you might use podcasts, or an extract from a podcast, to develop exploratory, dialogic and Socratic talk. More resources on these talk techniques can be found on our [website](#).

Listening to podcasts can be a great way of involving a whole class in an activity that doesn't involve an individual device or screen.

Guests, interviewers and reporters on podcasts will be experts not only in podcasting but often in their specialist subjects, so are great for modelling talk. Play a podcast or podcast extract in a lesson to build exposure to tier 2 vocabulary and help your students learn to speak like experts!

Encouraging reading around a subject is really important, especially at secondary school, for building cultural capital and background knowledge as well as understanding subject-specific ways of presenting information. Podcasts are a great way of promoting interest in a subject, for example science or history, that might then lead students to read more in their own time.

Most podcasts are free and can be accessed on smartphones, laptops and smart speakers through free apps such as Spotify, BBC Sounds, Audible or Podbean. You can also listen and stream using websites and smart speakers.

Why not create your own podcast? All you need is a sound recording app (you can download these on smartphones and computers) and some free basic editing software. Get students to write their own script, interview each other or even invite local guests or teachers to talk. You could share your podcast on your school website for parents, friends and families to listen to.

Because students can listen to podcasts in their own time, they can help support blended learning during potential school closures. Consider setting a task, for example a writing or comprehension exercise, that uses a podcast as a starting point.

Listening comprehension is a key skill at all ages and using podcasts in the classroom and as homework can help to teach this. This is particularly useful when helping older students prepare for university where they will be doing a lot of listening!

**Visit [literacytrust.org.uk/resources](http://literacytrust.org.uk/resources) for a huge range of lesson plans, presentations and ideas to help build your classroom practice.**

# Great podcasts to listen to in the classroom

Just like with non-fiction books, many podcasts that are not directly marketed at children and young people can be hugely beneficial for their learning, particularly for older students. But a quick safety warning! While we have recommended some titles here, and while most podcasts will announce at the start of an episode if they contain inappropriate or sensitive material, you should always listen to a podcast yourself in advance of sharing with your class to ensure you're comfortable with the content.



## Fun Kids Story Quest

This podcast series from Fun Kids – the UK's radio station for children – features stories that are perfect for children and families of all ages. Fun Kids also have a range of other podcasts about things pupils might be interested in, from science and space to comedy and sports.

[funkidslive.com/podcast/story-quest-stories-for-kids/](http://funkidslive.com/podcast/story-quest-stories-for-kids/)



## English KS2: Shakespeare Retold

This series features 10 fun and irreverent retellings of some of the best-known Shakespeare plays, written by authors including Jamila Gavin and Andy Stanton. The website also includes accompany teachers' notes and resources.

[bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/english-ks2-shakespeare-retold-index/zh4h2sg](http://bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/english-ks2-shakespeare-retold-index/zh4h2sg)



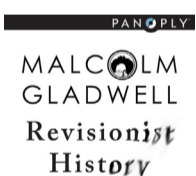
## Goodnight Stories for Rebel Girls

Following on from the bestselling book, this podcast showcases stories about extraordinary and brilliant women from the worlds of politics, sports, arts and so much more. The stories are narrated in short and snappy 20 minute episodes. [rebelgirls.com/pages/podcast](http://rebelgirls.com/pages/podcast)



## Radiolab for Kids

This podcasts features a curated list of child-friendly episodes from a long-running American podcast and radio series, exploring everything from whether animals laugh and our obsession with space to the speed of thought and how rainbows are formed. [wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolab-kids](http://wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolab-kids)



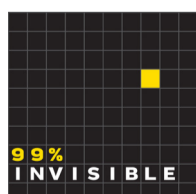
## Revisionist History

New takes on a wide range of historical events, people and ideas along with unusual and undiscovered stories. Episodes cover everything from civil rights to our relationship with technology. References and extras can also be found on the website. [revisionisthistory.com](http://revisionisthistory.com)



## Ask The Geographer

Designed specifically for GCSE and A level students, this podcast from the Royal Geographical Society brings the latest geographical research to the classroom. Accompanying resources are also available for members. [www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/ask-the-expert-podcasts/](http://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/ask-the-expert-podcasts/)



## 99% Invisible

This design and architecture-focused podcast has a focus on unpacking generally overlooked or misunderstood activities or ideas that contribute to the way the world works. Recent topics include the invention of the address and in the influence of Instagram on design. The website also includes in-depth descriptions and transcripts. [99percentinvisible.org](http://99percentinvisible.org)