**The best Book you Ever Heard**

1. Reading words on papers is fast becoming a luxury that most Americans are ready to do without. There are just too many ways to be informed or entertained: computer CD-ROMs, e-mail and the Internet, old fashioned radio, and the new television entertainment center- at least150 channels available by satellite, videotapes, laser discs, interactive T.V games and programs.
2. Even though many people still run out to buy the latest best seller by Stephen King or Michael Crichton, more and more consumers are listening to recorded books rather than picking up a paperback or hard cover edition. If it seems rather like going back to ancient times, it is! Oral news and stories were the only way people used to receive or information and entertainment, until the printing press became a reality. And even then, only the rich or the scholarly could afford the luxury of reading a book.
3. There is something magical about hearing a story read to you. It makes you think of loving adults taking time to amuse or teach a child, or a friendly clergyman trying to help people lead better lives through telling stories from the Bible. Everyone loves a good story, and having it told to you can be a very pleasurable, warm experience.
4. It may be true that reading has its own special rewards. It lets the individual enjoy words and secret meanings at his or own speed, pausing to think, re-reading a special paragraph, skimming pages as you wish. But it basically a solitary, if often exciting, experience. It is only when you discuss what you have read that the experience becomes something to share. Listening to an author or an actor read the story to you is much more sociable.
5. There are number of reasons why these audio books are so popular. First of all, they are so easy to listen to. You can listen to them anywhere- at work, at play, while exercising or walking, and, as most often the case, driving to and from work. Then the range of books is as large as most print-only libraries, from self -help manuals to best selling novels, from science fiction to thrillers, from biographies of famous people to comedy books, from John Grishan to John classics. What is more, smart audio publishers either get the authors to read the works themselves, to hire actors with famous voices to tell the story. Also most of the books have been shortened to three or four hours and sell for about $17 each. Many public and university libraries have a good selection, making it easy to try almost any audio book free of charge.
6. The arguments against listening to books seem weak. Some critics say that listening to a book is not like reading it. The reader just go on reading, no matter what else happens, which causes the listener to miss parts or even fall asleep in the middle. (These book-loving critics forget that there is always the rewind button). Other critics just don’t like the idea that the printed page is slowly disappearing from mass culture.
7. But what most critics forget is that in the past reading was luxury of an educated minority. Even in countries where most people were literate, reading great books was usually for the elite only. Most people read for ways to improve their life, and this meant reading the Bible a variety of instructional books. Those who read for pleasure bought cheap novels and romances. Sometimes they read a great work, but they didn’t think of it as literature. They just enjoyed a good story and did not care if it was called *Hamlet* or *Great* *Expectations*.
8. We may be entering an era where the spoken word becomes as important as it was centuries ago, and where the printed word is catalogued and reviewed on a video screen. Paper has always been an expensive luxury.
9. The joy of handling the printed page will always be there for a part of society. But for the most people, it will be the computer screen and the audio cassette or disc that will be the way they get their information and entertainment in the future. Those people, who use books for information, often find CD-ROM a faster and easier way to get the data. Those who read books for entertainment may find that listening to their favorite author or actor reading the words to them makes more efficient use of their time and is even more enjoyable.
10. Change is often difficult to accept. Many people preferred handwritten newsletters and books even after the invention of the printing press, because they thought the printing was vulgar and ugly. Parents condemned comic books, radio, and then television programs, saying they were bad for their children and prevented them from reading serious books. They seem less worried now because kids do things with computer and CD-ROM that older people find amazing.
11. More important, most of the new technology requires an active mind. You really have to listen to a book to understand what is it about. You really have to be an active participant with CD-ROM and other computer programs in order to get the material you want. Very few people want to just sit and watch T.V. anymore, especially when there is the internet, a new CD-ROM ready to play, the latest audio version of *Time* or *Newsweek* magazine, or a new interactive T.V. program that lets you gamble on cards, invest in stocks, buy clothes, or sell your car.
12. The electronic future we have been hearing about seems to be arrived, and it doesn’t look like words on paper anymore. So read this article on paper while you can. It is probably only a question of time before you will be scanning it on a computer screen or listening to it on an audio disc.

**Answer the following questions according to the text**

**Paragraph 1**

1) List four ways in which Americans receive information and entertainment, instead of reading words on paper.

i.-----------------------------------

ii----------------------------------

iii-----------------------------------------

2) How do Americans feel about reading books?

3) Why do they feel this way?

**Paragraph 2**

4) COMPLETE THE SENTENSE

The writer is comparing -------------------------------------with --------------------------------------

5) Circle the correct word

Even after the invention of the printing press, many people **read**/ **did not read.**

**Why?--------------------------------------------------**

**6)** According to the second paragraph, more and more Americans are listening to recorded books.

a. to what does the writer compare this modern trend?

**b.** what words tell you that the writer is comparing two things?

**-------------**

**Paragraph 3 and 4**

6. a. list two rewards of listening to a story

b. list two rewards of reading a story.

7. What contrast does the writer make between listening to a story and reading a story? Complete the following sentence.

Reading a story is a --------------------- experience, whereas listening to a story is -----------------

**Paragraph 5 and 6**

8. list the arguments **for** audio books in the first column, and write the **marker of listing** that helped you in the second column.

**Arguments for Audio Books Marker of Listing**

1. **They are so easy to listen to a. First of all**

**You can listen to them anywhere**

1. **------------------------------------------ b----------------------------**

**-------------------------------------------- --------------------------------**

1. **-------------------------------------------- c---------------------------**

**----------------------------------------------- -----------------------------------**

1. **------------------------------------------ d. -------------------------------------**

**---------------------------------------------- --------------------------------------e. ----------------------------------------------- e. none**

9. List the arguments **against** audio books. Write the marker that helped you in the second column.

**Arguments against Audio books Markers that helped you**

**a.------------------------------------------ a------------------------------**

**b. ------------------------------------------------------ b --------------------------**

**10.** Why does the writer the writer tell us about the *rewind button*? (lines )

**----------------------------------------------------------**

**Paragraph 7**

**11. What does the word *they* (line ) refer to?**

**Paragraph 8**

**12.** What prediction does the writer make about:

**a.** the spoken word?

**b.** the printed word?

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C. Is the writer certain that these things will happen?

Circle the correct answer: Yes/ No (**no**)

Copy the words that justify your answer: ------------------------------

**Paragraph 9**

11. What are the main two reasons that people use books today?

i.--------------------------------------------------

ii.-----------------------------------------------

1. Complete the following sentences to show why people use the computer, audio cassette or disc instead of books? Underline the markers of contrast in your answer.

**A. For Information**

People prefer the CD-ROM because **-------------------------------------------**

**B. For Entertainment**

People prefer audio books because -----------------------

1. **a**. according to the writer, will books disappear completely?

Yes No

b. who will read books in the future?

---------------------------------------------( **Paragraph 10**

**15.**  What two examples does the writer give to support the idea that change is difficult to accept?

**a**

**b.---------------------------------------**

**16.** a. What is the difference in parents’ attitude to change in the past and their attitude now?

----------------------------------------------------------- b. What reason does the writer give us for this change in attitude of parents?

**-----------------------------------------**

**Paragraph 11**

17. a. Why do you think the writer begins this paragraph with the words “More important…..”

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18. Complete the following chart too show why the new technology requires an active mind:

**New Technology Why it requires an active mind**

1. Listening to a book -------------------------------------
2. CD-ROM and other computer programs ------------------------------------

**Paragraph 12**

1. What does the writer mean by “the new technology” (line 92) and “ the electronic future” (line 102)? Choose the correct answer.
2. Audio books only b. many other things besides audio books
3. The main idea of this text is:
4. Very few people will be reading books in the future
5. People find it difficult to accept the change resulting from the new technology
6. The new technology requires an active mind
7. The new technology is making a big change in how we got our information and entertainment, and we must learn to accept this.