

## ARTICLE #1

### **The Talking Book Service Speaks Volumes to Print- or Reading-Disabled Idahoans**

Nearly 45,000 Idahoans (roughly 2%) are unable to read standard print, due to a loss of visual acuity or the physical capabilities necessary to read or hold a book. This deprives them of a joy the rest of us take for granted—namely, the power of the written word to inspire, inform and transport us through our imagination. Many times, this disability becomes another unfortunate reason for people to disengage from what’s happening in their families and the world around them.

That’s why the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) sponsors the Talking Book Service: to help caregivers and family members to connect loved ones and friends with reading through audio materials.

#### **Beneficial beyond words**

The Talking Book Service helps those unable to read standard print rediscover reading by offering a huge collection of free materials including:

- Over 25,000 Braille titles
- 80,000 professionally recorded audio books
- Audio magazines—and much more

These materials include fiction genres ranging from romance to westerns to mystery novels, along with non-fiction subjects of interest to all ages—everything from astronomy to zoology. Plus, the Commission plans to add 2,000 new titles each year.

#### **Who is eligible?**

To be eligible for the Talking Book Service, Idaho residents must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be legally blind
- Have certain visual field restrictions
- Be unable to see or focus well enough to read standard print, even with corrective glasses
- Have a physical disability that keeps them from holding a book or turning its pages

[Learn more about Talking Book Service eligibility at libraries.idaho.gov/page/eligibility-applications](https://libraries.idaho.gov/page/eligibility-applications)

#### **Give the gift of reading**

##### **Ask your librarian about enrolling in the Talking Book Service**

If you’re a caregiver or family member of someone unable to read standard print, you understand how easily they can feel isolated. As a free benefit to those that qualify, the Talking Book Service can make words come to life again, and help them re-engage through reading.

[Explore the Talking Book Service in-depth at neverstopreading.org](https://neverstopreading.org)

## ARTICLE #2

### **Realizing Louis Braille's "Vision"**

Most of us know the raised dots that let the blind enjoy reading as simply braille. But not all realize that, behind that invention, was a great man of the same name who had a passion for helping the reading disabled not just read but be "treated as equals."

That man was Louis Braille, whose birthday we celebrate on January 4.

In keeping with Braille's "vision," the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) is proud to offer the Talking Book Service, which provides a wealth of free materials to help those unable to read standard print stay connected to the world.

#### **Braille:**

##### **A man, a method, an amazing achievement**

Louis Braille was a French educator who developed a system of reading and writing for the blind that remains virtually unchanged since he introduced it back in the early 19th century.

Braille himself lost his eyesight due to a childhood accident in his father's leather workshop. Yet, undaunted by his disability, he worked tirelessly to perfect his groundbreaking system by the tender age of fifteen, and went on to become both an accomplished teacher and musician.

##### **The Talking Book Service brings words to life**

The Talking Book Service is equally ambitious. Free to all qualified Idahoans unable to read standard print, it offers a large collection of materials including:

- Over 25,000 braille titles
- 80,000 professionally recorded audio books
- Audio magazines—and much more

Thanks to this entirely free service, Idaho residents who meet the eligibility criteria no longer need be deprived of reading pleasure. The Talking Book Service offers something for all ages; and virtually every fiction genre is available—from romance to westerns, mysteries to adventure, plus bestsellers to bios. Non-fiction topics run the gamut from astronomy to zoology. What's more, the Commission intends to add roughly 2,000 new titles each year.

#### **Who is eligible?**

To be eligible for the Talking Book Service, Idaho residents must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be legally blind
- Have certain visual field restrictions
- Be unable to see or focus well enough to read standard print, even with corrective glasses
- Have a physical disability that keeps them from holding a book or turning its pages

[Learn more about Talking Book Service eligibility at libraries.idaho.gov/page/eligibility-applications](https://libraries.idaho.gov/page/eligibility-applications)

**Celebrate Braille's birthday**

**Help reading-disabled residents enjoy the Talking Book Service**

If you're a caregiver or family member of someone unable to read standard print—or know someone who is, introduce them to the Talking Book Service.

Ask your librarian for details. Or [go to neverstopreading.org to learn more](https://www.neverstopreading.org)

## ARTICLE #3

### **Oh, the Places They'll Go: The Talking Book Service Helps Young Reading-Disabled Idahoans**

Books like *The Cat in the Hat*, *The Lorax* and *Oh, the Places You'll Go* have helped millions of kids discover the joys of reading. So, it's only fitting that the National Education Association (NEA) designated the birthday of their author, Dr. Seuss, as National Read Across America Day. This program encourages every child in the country to celebrate on March 2<sup>nd</sup> the joys of reading.

Yet in a larger sense, this popular NEA program also aims to give parents, caregivers and children the resources they need to keep reading on the calendar 365 days a year.

The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) is committed to providing the same empowerment and energy to reading-disabled residents through the Talking Book Service.

#### **The Talking Book Service helps kids "see" the world (Adults, too)**

The Talking Book Service is just what young print-disabled Idahoans need to keep the Read Across America spirit alive in their homes year-round. Once signed up, they have access to a huge collection of free materials, including:

- Over 25,000 Braille titles
- 80,000 professionally recorded audio books
- Audio magazines—and much more

As one would expect, the Talking Book Service offers a virtual trove of titles and something for everyone. With genres ranging from romance to suspense, plus bios to bestsellers—along with a plethora of non-fiction subjects, there's something for all ages. What's more, the Commission plans to add 2,000 new titles each year.

[Explore the Talking Book Service in-depth at neverstopreading.org](https://www.nea.org/neverstopreading.org)

#### **Who is eligible?**

To be eligible for the Talking Book Service, Idaho residents must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be legally blind
- Have certain visual field restrictions
- Be unable to see or focus well enough to read standard print, even with corrective glasses
- Have a physical disability that keeps them from holding a book or turning its pages

[Review Talking Book Service eligibility at libraries.idaho.gov/page/eligibility-applications](https://libraries.idaho.gov/page/eligibility-applications)

#### **Keep their love of reading alive**

There's nothing quite like the joy of seeing a young person delight in stories by Dr. Seuss, or other children's book authors. Whether they're young or old, the Talking Book Service can help keep that joy alive for a lifetime. Ask your librarian for details about this free program.

[Learn more about NEA's Read Across America at nea.org/grants/886.htm](https://nea.org/grants/886.htm)