

Ready, Set, Read Webinar

Questions and Answers

1. Is Bookshare open to home-schooled students? Can they get free memberships?

A: Yes, Bookshare.org services are available to home-schooled students that have a qualifying print disability. The OSEP (Office of Special Education Programs) award covers their membership fees. However, if a home-schooled student needs one of the restricted NIMAC-sourced books in Bookshare's repository, the student will need to have a current IEP and obtain the book through the U.S. public K-12 school that issued the IEP. That school will need a (free) Bookshare Organizational membership.

2. How does Proof of Disability work if the district has an Organizational Agreement with Bookshare where we agree we will not distribute to students without a print disability?

A: Depending on your type of organization, you either provide the Proof of Disability, or you certify that you have Proof of Disability on file at your organization. Then, the Organizational Agreement that you sign when you register states that you agree to distribute books only to those students on the roster, among a number of other very important terms. By signing the Organizational Agreement, you are committing to abide by the terms and to communicating them to the Members in your organization. Here is an excerpt from the agreement:

I'm responsible for educating my students or clients that they are not allowed to share the Accessible Media with other people.

A: Access to Bookshare.org books is a privilege, and it is based on a social bargain between the publishers and authors and the disability community. It's important to not redistribute these Accessible Media to other individuals, regardless of whether or not they would qualify for Bookshare.org. I agree to inform my students or clients about these restrictions and that these Accessible Media are for their sole use.

3. If one student in the class has a qualifying disability, is it acceptable to use the Bookshare book with a class that includes that student--(for example displaying it on an electronic write board)?

A: Downloaded book files from an organizational account are meant for a particular qualified registered student. It is acceptable to project a limited portion of the book in a classroom for an assignment as long as the educator is not physically giving copies to students that the book was not downloaded for, and that particular student (with a qualifying disability) is in the classroom. Additionally, the educator is not allowed to keep copies of this downloaded book once the assignment is complete. The concept is that the Bookshare book is the textbook for the student with a disability, and actions that would be clearly acceptable with a print textbook would also be acceptable with the

accessible textbook, such as reading aloud, reading an excerpt together in a small group, asking assistance from a family member with homework and so on. Similarly, actions that most people would recognize as not acceptable with a print textbook are also likely to be not acceptable with a Bookshare book: copying the entire book for someone else to avoid having to purchase a second copy for example. Unlike print books, however, Bookshare books cannot be handed over to someone other than the student for whom it was downloaded. Following is an excerpt from the Organizational Agreement that covers this concept:

Each time I download a book from Bookshare.org, I will select the Member for whom I am downloading the Accessible Media. Once the Accessible Media is downloaded, I will decrypt the Accessible Media using my password (“Unpack” the Accessible Media) and deliver it only to the Member for whom I downloaded that particular Accessible Media. I agree that once I have delivered the book to that Member, I will delete the copy I downloaded.

4. Do you require a proof of purchase of the printed text before the alternative format is given?

A: We understand that some schools and universities have a policy requiring a student to purchase a printed text in order to obtain a digital accessible version. Bookshare serves only Chafee-qualified individuals, and the terms of these provisions in copyright law (Section 121) do not require a purchase. Thus, proof of purchase of a physical copy of a book is not a Bookshare requirement. However, Bookshare does not want to discourage schools and students from buying print copies of books if they choose to do so.

5. IDEA requires Parent Centers to provide information and services to students through age 26. Will the subscription be free through 26?

A: Bookshare.org memberships are currently paid for by OSEP at the federal Department of Education, and therefore free for all U.S. qualified students regardless of age. This includes post-secondary and graduate level students. However, when someone ceases to be a student, they are no longer entitled to a funded subscription to Bookshare and will need to pay for a subscription (\$50 a year).

6. Does a hearing impaired student or adult qualify?

A: Hearing impaired students and adults will qualify only if those individuals also have a print disability such as a visual impairment, physical disability, or severe learning disability that requires the individual to read with an alternative to print material.

7. Can libraries for the blind register and certify students?

8. Can a state library (RiSE library, Resources in Special Education funded by California Department of Education) be an organization member?

A: (8 & 9) Any organization serving members or clients with print disabilities can register for a Bookshare organizational membership. Libraries that are affiliated with the NLS (National Library Service) can certify their patrons that have qualifying disabilities. We already have a partnership with NLS to confirm disability status.

Eligibility Questions

9. Is Bookshare.org only available to students who qualify under the conditions set forth within the Copyright Act of 1931? It sounds like students with IEPs who require alternative formats cannot use Bookshare.org unless they qualify under Chafee...right?

A: This is correct. Please see the general answer below.

10. My son has autism and does not read at all, but loves to hear books on tape or to be read to. Could he use Bookshare?

A: Autism by itself is not considered a qualifying disability, but some students with autism may qualify. If a qualified professional can certify that your son has a physically based disability that prevents the use of standard print, he will qualify for Bookshare. Please see the general answer below.

11. Can you explain in simple language whether or not I qualify for Bookshare.org?

A: If you have a significant disability that makes it difficult or impossible to read a printed book, we believe you will qualify for Bookshare.org services. To confirm this, we need a qualified professional to certify that you have a physically-based disability that qualifies under the copyright law. Bookshare does not certify disabilities; we count on professionals to use their credentialed expertise to make this determination. So, you need someone who has worked with you and can confirm your print disability to us in writing, or else your school must confirm that they have such a proof of disability on file.

12. I have a vision disability: how do I know if I qualify?

A: If you are legally blind, you qualify. In addition, if you don't meet the legal blindness standard, a functional vision assessment that indicates a significant problem accessing text will also be acceptable.

13. I have a learning disability: how do I know if I qualify?

A: If you are a K-12 student in the U.S. who has an Individualized Education Program with a specific language learning disability and a need for text accommodations, we believe that your school will be able to confirm that you qualify and sign you up for Bookshare.org. Post-secondary, adult, or non-U.S. students should be able to obtain equivalent qualifications if they have a significant learning disability that affects reading.

14. I have a physical disability: how do I know if I qualify?

A: If you can't pick up a book, turn pages, maintain visual focus on a book or don't have the physical stamina to work with printed material, we believe you'll qualify for Bookshare.org.

15. So, who doesn't qualify?

A: The 98% of the population who can pick up a book and read it (or could if they learned to read). The copyright provision is there to help the small number of people whose disability has a major impact on their ability to read. Other people who don't qualify include:

- People without disabilities
- People who haven't learned to read yet, but could
- People who don't speak the language they want to read
- People with disabilities that don't impact the ability to read (for example, most hearing and emotional disabilities)

Some of people with these disabilities might qualify on some other basis. For example, someone who is deaf and legally blind qualifies for Bookshare.org. Someone with a developmental disability and a learning disability might qualify.

16. I'm a certifying professional. How can I access the technical requirements for certification?

A: The full technical and legal details are available here: <http://www.bookshare.org/web/CopyrightLaw.html>. If you are certifying someone who has a physically-based disability (including dyslexia) that makes it difficult for them to read standard print effectively, they should meet the technical requirements and you should be able to confirm this in writing if your professional expertise is applicable to such a determination.

Support Questions

17. Why do you offer your books, newspapers and magazines in the HTML format?

A: Strictly speaking, we only offer public domain material for download in the HTML format. Our DAISY format XML books can be saved with an HTML extension, which we find makes some web browsers display the content more accessibly. Some of our Members who use screen readers prefer to listen to and navigate our books in their favorite web browser. Also, Members using a Macintosh computer or Windows Vista cannot use our complimentary copy of Victor Reader Soft, but will be able to read Bookshare DAISY XML books with the HTML extension in their browser.

18. What software do you recommend for converting your DAISY text to MP3 format?

A: There are many applications that have the capability to convert Bookshare DAISY text into audio for use on MP3 players. However, two products that we are familiar with and can recommend are:

Kurzweil 1000
Kurzweil Educational Systems
www.kurzweiledu.com/
800-894-5374

Open Book
Freedom Scientific
www.freedomsscientific.com
800-444-4443

In addition, if you're just interested in the MP3 conversion functionality, you can also download TextAloud from: <http://www.nextup.com/TextAloud/index.html>. It costs roughly US\$30 to register the software.

19. What about the future for Mac computer users, do you plan to offer a DAISY reader?)

A: Currently, Victor Reader Soft is available for PCs. Soon we will have a Macintosh version of both Don Johnston's Read:Outloud and Humanware's Victor Reader Soft. These applications will be available free to members.

Currently, the Mac version of the Kurzweil 3000 can read our DAISY books with an HTML extension. For more information, please visit: <http://www.kurzweiledu.com>. Also see question 24.

20. What about Mac assistive software?

A: The latest Macintosh operating system, Leopard (OSX 10.5) features a built-in screen reader called VoiceOver. If a Member has no other alternative, VoiceOver and Safari can be used to read our books.

21. Does the Bookshare complimentary copy of Victor Reader Soft read DAISY from other sources?

A: No, it can only read Bookshare.org DAISY text digital books.

22. Is there a fee for the student individual membership / unlimited library card?

A: There is no fee for U.S. students. Students with print disabilities in the United States are entitled to a free Bookshare membership under our Office of Special Education Programs award.

23. What's the advantage of Bookshare over something like Kurzweil or WYNN?

A: They offer complementary benefits. Kurzweil and WYNN are software applications that students and other individuals can use to read Bookshare books in the DAISY format as well as scan their own books. If your book is already in Bookshare, it's better to just download it. But, if you need an assignment or article scanned, or if the book you need isn't in Bookshare, Kurzweil and WYNN offer a great way to scan it in. If it's a book, we encourage you to contribute that scanned book to Bookshare so other people will benefit from your efforts.

24. Can a student make notes within the DAISY file?

A: Depending on what software program you use to read the book, note taking may be possible. Our complimentary copy of Victor Reader Soft does support the note taking feature.

25. Can students who prove a disability download Victor Reader Soft onto their personal computers?

A: Yes, it can be installed wherever it is needed.

26. Once a book is downloaded, can it be burned to a CD?

A: Yes, our books can be copied to other media for the purposes of transferring the book to the qualified Member selected when the book is downloaded. While the media containing the books may change, books must stay in the possession of the qualified Member.

Membership Questions

27. Why do I need to provide a student's name? Part of what allows us to keep people coming to us for assistance is confidentiality.

A: We maintain the confidentiality of student data by limiting access to the information to the educational agency serving the students. We also have an extensive privacy policy <http://www.bookshare.org/web/Privacy.html>. By making agreements with each school we serve and protecting student data, we believe that Bookshare qualifies under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to hold student personal data responsibly as part of the public education system's obligations to serve students with disabilities. For schools that still prefer to keep student names private, Bookshare.org

allows student numbers or pseudonyms in place of student names through the use of our Confidentiality Rider form.

Students wanting individual memberships (as opposed to solely receiving accessible books downloaded by their school) are required to provide their name, rather than a pseudonym. If a student is listed with a pseudonym under an organizational membership, and then wants an individual account, we will need the school or student to provide proof of disability. Please email groupaccounts@Bookshare.org for further details.

28. Can individuals who support disabled users in Higher Ed institutions sign up for a subscription to Bookshare?

A: Individuals who support students with print disabilities can sign up for Organizational memberships if they plan to download books for the student, rather than using the membership for their own purposes. Bookshare.org is available to any individual with a print disability, and any organization serving those individuals. Educational institutions (including Higher Ed) qualify for free memberships under our federal award.

29. If we sign up for Organizational membership, can we download a copy of Victor Reader Soft for each print-disabled student?

A: Yes; you can download Victor Reader Soft (a DAISY reader) to any computer your readers will be using.

30. Is Proof of Disability a form that I would complete and sign as an agent of the school?

A: Proof of Disability can be provided a couple different ways, depending on your type of organization. When you select your type of organization online, as you begin the registration process, you will be guided to the appropriate process and forms. Some organizations certify that they have Proof of Disability on file, whereas others are asked to submit a Proof of Disability form.

31. What recommendations do you have for updates of “eligible” student names?

A: Students with individual memberships will be required to reaffirm their student status at the time of renewal by submitting their grade and name of current school. Students managed by Organizational accounts can be deleted from the roster online as needed. Additional students can be added at any time. We require every school to review their roster at the beginning of each school year to make sure it is up to date.

32. If a student becomes a member through a school, do they remain a member after they graduate?

A: Students who Members on a school account will be able to continue their membership after they've been removed from the school roster, either by purchasing an individual

membership if they are no longer a student, or by requesting a new student membership online if they go on to another school. If Bookshare has the name of the school and the name of the student seeking an individual membership on file, we will be able to confirm the individual's Proof of Disability. If the student was registered under a pseudonym, we will need a new Proof of Disability.

33. Is there a fee for non-disabled individuals to use Bookshare?

A: Because Bookshare.org operates under a specific amendment to the copyright law, individuals without print-disabilities are not eligible for memberships, and will not be able to download copyrighted content from Bookshare. Public domain titles are available for download on our site to everybody without membership or the need for a qualifying disability.

34. We paid for our son's subscription last year. Would he now be able to have a free subscription?

A: Yes, assuming he is a student. Existing Members who wish to renew their memberships for free can request a free student membership, funded by the Office of Special Education Programs, by logging in and selecting the student subscription option at the "Add/Renew Subscription" link.

35. Does the individual have to be in school to be a member?

36. How much is the fee for non-students?

A: Anyone can register for a Bookshare.org membership, as long as they have a qualifying print disability. Because our federal funding covers students and educational agencies only in the United States, people in other countries and non-students in the U.S. pay a small subscription fee to receive unlimited access to our library. The fee is \$50 per year, with a \$25 additional charge the first year to set up the membership.

37. If we registered our organization a long time ago but haven't used it in a while, do we need to re-register?

A: If you've previously registered on Bookshare.org, there is no need to re-register. You can save time and update your old account by contacting groupaccounts@Bookshare.org.

38. If we have multiple students who need the same book, will we have to download the book for each student separately? Is there a method to download multiple copies at once?

A: Each book will need to be downloaded separately for each student. During the download process, you'll select the name of the student who will receive the book. The book will then be digitally fingerprinted with information about the school and that one

student. These fingerprints allow us to protect publisher's interests under the terms of the copyright act. With each book fingerprinted, we can detect illegal sharing, and then identify the member responsible (and suspend their access to Bookshare services).

39. What happens when students move to another school within the district?

A: If you've registered as a district, there is no need to delete the student from your roster as long as the individual remains a student at another school within the district. If you've registered at the school level and the student changes schools, the new school will need to register on Bookshare.org in order to provide the student with books.