

# **TEACHER'S GUIDE TO THE TALKING BOOK PROGRAM**

**Talking Book Program**  
Reader Services



**[www.TexasTalkingBooks.org](http://www.TexasTalkingBooks.org)**

**Texas State Library and Archives Commission**

## **When to call . . .**

Always call TBP when:

- you want to order books
- you have new students to register
- students leave your classroom
- your machine is broken
- you need a replacement for a damaged or incomplete book

## **Talking Book Program**

**Texas State Library and Archives Commission**

**P.O. Box 12927 Austin, TX 78711-2927**

**1-800-252-9605 • (512) 463-5458**

**fax 512-936-0685**

**[tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov)**

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# WELCOME

All over Texas, students are enjoying the magic of reading through the Talking Book Program (TBP). The program provides books on digital cartridge, in Braille, in large print, and via download from the BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download) service. The service is available, free of charge, for individuals who cannot read standard print due to visual, physical, or learning disabilities. Service for students is available both at home and in the classroom.

Once your classroom becomes registered, our Reader Services staff will be happy to assist you with book selections and other aspects of the service. The library wishes you and your students a productive and successful school year.

This document has been designed to assist you in using the TBP materials in your curriculum. Many of our policies are determined by our parent organization, the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a division of the Library of Congress. Our policies are designed to protect copyright and to provide our service in the most fair and efficient manner possible. If you have questions or need additional information, please call:

1-800-252-9605 (toll-free in Texas)  
512-463-5458 (in Austin)

Or, send an e-mail message to: **[tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov)**

## **THE COLLECTION**

The Talking Book Program (TBP) is a joint state and federal program that provides unabridged books in alternative formats for Texans of all ages who have disabilities that prevent them from reading standard print books.

While we do not have textbooks in our collection, TBP offers thousands of books that students can use in their schoolwork. The collection includes more than 70,000 titles for all ages, including literary classics, fairy tales, poetry, mysteries, sports, science fiction, and biographies. Many Newbery, Caldecott, Bluebonnet, and Lone Star award-winning titles are also available. Most of our materials are provided by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), a program administered by the Library of Congress. To supplement the national collection, Texas volunteers have recorded hundreds of books about Texas and the Southwest, along with Spanish-language titles and children's books.

### **Media**

Books are available on digital cartridge, in Braille, and in large print. TBP cartridges are made for use only with special playback equipment (available for loan from TBP) in order to protect copyright and provide more listening time. Books may also be downloaded online via the Braille and Audio Recording Download (BARD) service and through iOS and Android mobile apps. The downloadable collection contains more than 65,000 books and more than 80 magazines in Braille and audio formats, and it is growing rapidly. TBP loans playback equipment free of charge to use with our recorded books.

### **Magazines**

In addition to providing books, TBP also offers many national magazines that students can use in school and recreation. These include National Geographic Kids, Seventeen, Sports Illustrated for Kids, Spider, Conundrum, and others. Not all magazines are available in all formats. A list of available magazines is provided upon registration.

## **SCHOOL REGISTRATION**

To qualify for a school account, at least one of your students must be eligible for TBP services. One playback machine will be provided per classroom, and TBP materials may not be used by unregistered students. Eligible students may also register for individual service, however (see Note below) .

Please download and complete the school registration application, available online at:

<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/sites/default/files/public/tslac/tbp/application/schoolformreg14.pdf>

or contact us at [tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov) or 1-800-252-9605 for a paper copy.

Fax the completed registration form to (512) 936-0685.

By signing the application, the designated contact person (usually a teacher or school librarian) agrees to do the following:

- Ensure that only eligible students use materials from TBP;
- Ensure that books are returned in accordance with TBP's loan policy;
- Ensure that all materials on loan are returned at the end of the school year;
- Ensure that all unused books and/or equipment are returned to TBP as soon as possible for use by others.

Your classroom is registered only for the current school year. If you know that you will have eligible students during the next school year, you may pre-register your classroom. TBP will mail a registration form to you in mid-April of each year, or you can use the downloadable registration form.

Note: Students should not take home any equipment or books that are on loan to the classroom account. If a student needs a machine or books at home, have his or her parents call TBP to initiate a separate home account. Teachers may assist students' parents with registration for service at the home address, but a parent or legal guardian must accept responsibility for and act as TBP's contact person for service in the home.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

To qualify for TBP service, your students must meet one or more of the following four criteria:

- Blindness - Visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with corrective lenses or the widest diameter of visual field subtending an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.
- Visual Disability - Inability to read standard printed material without special aids or devices other than regular glasses.
- Physical Disability - Inability to read or use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations, such as paralysis, extreme weakness, missing arms or hands.
- Reading Disability - Organic dysfunction of sufficient severity as to prevent reading standard printed material in a normal manner. *For this category, the certifying authority must be a doctor of medicine or osteopathy.*

As a teacher, you can certify applications for students who are blind or have visual or physical disabilities. Only a medical doctor can certify applications for students with reading disabilities. You will have to submit individual applications for your students who are not registered with TBP.

## **CIRCULATING BOOKS**

### **Loan Period**

Schools may borrow TBP books for up to 90 days, and in most cases may renew loans once. A book's due date is printed on the mailing label. As you return books, the next selections on your request list will be sent out. If you do not return the books on loan, no new selections will be sent to your classroom.

### **Requesting Books**

To keep books circulating, be sure to keep a request list on file with TBP and return books promptly after they have been read. All of your records with TBP are under your school's name, so please give the school name when calling us.

## **Catalogs**

Print catalogs are provided upon registration. You may use the order forms in the catalogs or call or e-mail TBP to order.

In addition, an online catalog containing many of the books available through TBP is available for your use at: <http://nlscatalog.loc.gov/>

Online listings of large print books in the collection are available at:

<https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/tbp/bibliographies/bibindex.html>

## **Ordering Books**

Our staff is ready to assist you in finding books for your students. The staff can look up authors and titles or search subject areas. Reader's Advisory Librarians are available to assist you in selecting titles and can create customized bibliographies upon request. When you contact us, be sure to indicate that you are calling for a school account, and identify the school. There are four ways to order books:

- By telephone. Call center hours are 8:00 am to noon and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday at 1-800-252-9605 (toll-free in Texas) or at 512-463-5458 (in Austin). TBP also has a voice-mail system to take messages when the call center is closed. Voice-mail messages are addressed within one working day of receipt.
- By fax. Our fax number is 512-936-0685. Don't forget to include the name of your school and contact person for the account on your fax.
- By e-mail. Include the name of your school and contact person for the account in your message. Our e-mail address is [tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov](mailto:tbp.services@tsl.texas.gov). Questions and information requests may also be sent via e-mail. E-mail messages are addressed within one working day of receipt.
- By mail. TBP's mailing address is PO Box 12927, Austin, TX 78711-2927. Be sure to include the name of the school and contact person for the account on the order. Do not include order forms in book containers—order forms should always be sent separately from loaned materials in order to be processed in a timely manner.

## **Ordering Tips**

- Order books well in advance whenever possible;
- Remember books are mailed Free Matter, which can take longer than regular mail;
- Copies may not be available; get your request in as soon as you know the book may be needed.

## **Automatic Selection**

If you wish, TBP can keep books circulating continuously based on your students' reading levels and interests. A book in a desired category will be sent each time one is returned. Just call TBP and a reader consultant will be happy to add this service to your account.

## **Returning Books**

To return a book, place it back in its mailing container. Turn the pre-printed mailing label over, and it's ready to go back in the mail postage-free. Please return each book as soon as it has been read to ensure that you continue to receive books, and so that other patrons may enjoy them as well.

## **Postal Regulations**

By law, mail carriers must deliver, but do not have to pick up, TBP materials. If you have any problems, talk with the carrier. Should the problem continue, call the postmaster and refer to Section 135 of the Postal Manual, based on Public Law 91-375, which provides the rules and regulations governing items mailed as Free Matter.

## **Damaged or Incomplete Books**

Put the damaged or incomplete book back in its mailing container. Turn the mailing label over, draw an "X" on the left side of the label, and return to the library. If you need a replacement copy of the book, call Reader Services, and we will send you the next available copy.

## **Textbooks**

Textbooks are not available through TBP. State-adopted large print, Braille, and audio textbooks can be ordered through the Special Education Director in your school district. Contact your local Education Service Center for assistance.

There are also many recorded textbooks available from the following organization:

Learning Ally (formerly RFB&D)

20 Roszel Road

Princeton, NJ 08540 -6206

E-mail: [Custserv@LearningAlly.org](mailto:Custserv@LearningAlly.org) Phone: 800-221-4792

## **EQUIPMENT**

Playback equipment for school service is limited to one digital talking book machine (DTBM) per classroom.

If you need additional playback equipment beyond that provided on loan from the State Library, TBP can provide information on sources from which additional equipment may be purchased, or you can contact the Assistive Technology Consultant at your Education Service Center. Questions about accessories for machines should be directed to TBP.

If at any time you no longer have an eligible student in your classroom, you must notify TBP promptly and return the books and playback equipment. If you find that the playback equipment is not appropriate for your classroom, please return it to TBP as soon as possible.

### **Returning/Replacing Equipment**

Equipment must be returned to the State Library at the end of each school year, even if you have pre-registered your classroom for the following year. New equipment will be sent at the beginning of the next school year if your classroom is eligible. If you need service for a summer school session, please contact us to extend your service.

If your machine breaks, call TBP and request a replacement. A replacement will be mailed once the defective machine checks in. To make the return of your equipment easier, save the original box. All equipment should be returned postage-free to the following address:

**Machine Lending Service  
Talking Book Program  
4400B Shoal Creek Blvd  
Austin TX 78756-3213**

## **OTHER TBP SERVICES**

### **Disability Information and Referral Center • 1-800-252-9605**

The TBP's Disability Information and Referral Center (DIRC) staff provides information to TBP readers, family members of persons with disabilities, teachers, counselors, researchers, and other interested Texans. The DIRC provides answers to questions about disabilities, adaptive equipment, games and toys, support groups, and advocacy organizations.

### **BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download)**

TBP readers may also download audio books or Braille books using the BARD service. Over 65,000 Braille and audio book titles and over 80 Braille and audio magazine titles are available for download via computer or mobile apps, and the number is continuously increasing.

Electronic Braille books may be downloaded or read online by individuals with the necessary Braille/computer equipment.

Schools may register for the BARD service in order to download materials for use by their eligible students. Registration requests are via a brief online application. More information about the BARD service and a link to the application may be found on our website at: <https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/tbp/nlsbard.html>.

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