Welcome to AEM Part Five: Learning Ally Training. We will review the services offered by the Authorized Media Producer (AMP) Learning Ally.
Lets review the agenda for the presentation. The first section will focus on introductory content. In the second section we will get stuff done! Then, we will conclude this training with a brief discussion on the benefits of a Learning Ally membership.
Let's begin with an introduction to Learning Ally.
Learning Ally is an Authorized Media Producer (AMP) and serves as an online repository for accessible books and textbooks.

Learning Ally recently changed their name from Reading for the Blind & Dyslexic, commonly referred to as RFB&D.
Learning Ally’s mission is to: promote personal achievement when access and reading are barriers to learning by advancing the use of accessible and effective educational solutions.
Learning Ally has a great history. Learning Ally was established in 1948 to assist returning WWII soldiers who had become visually impaired during the war.

The GI Bill of Rights guaranteed a college education for returning soldiers, but the textbooks were inaccessible to soldiers with vision impairments. The New York Public Library’s Women’s Auxiliary began to record textbooks on vinyl phonograph discs. This effort led to the establishment of the Recording for the Blind (RFB).
Learning Ally provides audio-only DAISY DTBs. The DTB can be downloaded in two formats:

1) A compressed ZIP file
2) Synchronized with hardware device (download format is dependent on device)
The membership structure for Learning Ally consists of the Individuals & Families membership and the Schools & Educators membership. Each membership plan is fee-based. The Individuals & Families membership is an option for K12 students that can offer more accessible content than that used in the classroom. Students can access their account from anywhere in the world and download any book they want, regardless of its intended use.

The Schools & Educators membership plan is available to any school. The membership plan’s fee is based on the expected number of title downloads. A designated appointee, such as a Special Education Teacher, manages the account and downloads content for qualified students. The organizational membership can provide the initial AEM for a student on a newly formed IEP.

If possible, the long term goal should be to transition the student and/or family to their own individual membership due to the benefits of an individual membership. Currently, applications (apps) for mobile devices (phone, tablet, iOS, and PC) are available for Learning Ally members. This can be a huge benefit for students.
Let’s review the requirements to obtain a Learning Ally membership.

The definition of a qualified print disability is strictly defined, as it is for the Bookshare membership, but Learning Ally also offers membership to individuals with Dyslexia and learning disabilities.
The three categories:

1) Learning or reading disability
2) Visual disability
3) Physical disability

Learning Ally is unique in that it is able to offer Accessible Instructional Material to people with learning disabilities.

Also, Bookshare or National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) members automatically qualify for membership.

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<tr>
<th>Learning/Reading Disability</th>
<th>Visual Disability</th>
<th>Physical Disability</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Documented learning disability</td>
<td>• Visual impairment</td>
<td>• Cannot process print</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reading disorder</td>
<td>• Blindness</td>
<td>• Cannot manipulate a book</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Dyslexia</td>
<td>• Low vision</td>
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• Bookshare or NLS members automatically qualify for membership.
There are exceptions.

“If the diagnostician can verify that you have an accompanying qualified disability, we can certainly reconsider.”

To become a Learning Ally member follow this link:
https://www.learningally.org/educators/sign-up/

There are exceptions. Contact Learning Ally to discuss other considerations that might qualify a student for membership.
Let's review Digital Talking Book technology
What are DTBs?

Accessible multimedia representation of the printed book.

Made-up of the following components:

1. Digital Audio
2. Digital text
3. Digital Images

What makes a DTB so good? Unlike an analog recording, digital media can be indexed, searched, and synchronized with other digital media. Synchronization is what sets DTBs apart from other digital mediums. The magic takes place via the Synchronization Media Interface Language (SMIL). The playback of DTBs synchronizes the digital audio with the digital text that appears on the display. The digital audio can be navigated by chapter, section, subsections, and page and the corresponding digital text and images will appear on the display.

They key word is “digital.” The three multimedia types are represented with digital content. Digital content can be utilized in more than one way: digital audio can be indexed, bookmarked, and navigated. Digital text can be searched and displayed on a computer screen. Digital images can be imported into other computer programs. Digital content allow for flexibility and increased interaction.
There are two leading accessible DTB technologies. The group responsible for maintaining the DAISY standard, The DAISY Consortium, works closely with the maintenance organization responsible for the EPUB standard.

DAISY is considered a specialized format for use by people with disabilities. The DAISY standard has also revolutionized the accessibility of the printed book. We will focus our discussion on the DAISY standard as this is the format the Authorized Media Producers of AEM distribute, including Learning Ally.

EPUB shares many of the accessibility features that DAISY has pioneered. EPUB is an open-source standard and has a lot of support in the e-book market, such as the Barnes & Noble Nook.
The success of the DAISY standard is due to its use of Web technologies, such as XML, to deliver content to users. XML, based on the same technology as html, is a technology used to encode data in a hierarchal structure. You can store almost all data types in this format, such as that used in databases, catalogs, and phone books. With XML, textual information can be nested into elements, which is ideal for representing the structure of a textbook. For example, a chapter 1 element will contain all sections of chapter 1. Each section element will contain all subsections for the subsection. This nested structure gives navigability to the DAISY DTB. On request, a DAISY player can easily locate content in chapter 1, subsection iv, paragraph 3 on page 43. With a click of a button on the DAISY player, a user can easily advance to the next subsection, subsection v, without the need for a search.

The magic of the DAISY format is its ability to synchronize the textual information in the XML document with the audio files during playback. As the audio files are being read the corresponding textual information is displayed—providing a multimodal learning interaction with the instructional material.

Finally, The DAISY standard is an international ANSI/NISO standard.
There are three DAISY DTB configurations. A DAISY file can be composed of audio-only files, text-only files, or text and audio files. All three configurations provide the same multimodal experience, except the audio-only configuration. This configuration does not include an XML file for textual information storage. Thus, there is no synchronized display of text during playback. The audio-only configuration is mainly used to protect copyrighted material. With an XML file it is easy to reproduce and redistribute copyrighted material. Learning Ally is one of the very few entities that has implemented an audio-only DAISY configuration for mass distribution.

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<tr>
<th>Audio and full text</th>
<th>Text and no audio</th>
<th>Audio-only</th>
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<tr>
<td>audio and text synchronized</td>
<td>Audio will be rendered with synthetic computer voice</td>
<td>no textual rendering</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audio and text synchronized</td>
<td></td>
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Learning Ally DAISY

- Learning Ally delivers audio-only DAISY in:
  - Downloadable DAISY (digital) format
- Downloadable DAISY is becoming more popular with AMPS and AIM users.

You can request the delivery of DAISY DTBs via downloadable DAISY. Downloadable DAISY is available immediately after request. When the DAISY DTB is downloaded from Learning Ally you will need to sync with your DAISY reader software or DAISY reader hardware player (device). You can also download the DAISY DTB as a compressed ZIP file.

Downloadable DAISY is becoming more popular with AMPS and users.
Let's get familiar with Learning Ally's web interface.
We will login as an organizational member and then review the Learning Ally website. The website pages we review might be different than the public website interface. If you prefer, you can follow along and go to www.learningally.org with your internet browser.

The home page (called the My Home page) can be seen in this slide. There are four items in the navigation menu. We will briefly review each of the four main items (tabs) in the menu.
My Account

From the My Account page you can:
1. Change account info
2. View order history
3. Change password

The My Account page gives you options to manage your account. You can change account information, view order history, change password, among other tasks.
Browse Audiobooks

Includes:
1. Featured
2. Suggested
3. Most popular
Categories for browsing.

There is also a Browse by subject menu in the left panel.

The Browse Audiobooks page presents members with featured, suggested, and most popular audiobooks. There is also a Browse by subject menu in the left panel.
Resources
The Resources page has information for parents, such as:
1. Finding a specialist
2. Information related to recognizing, diagnosing, and overcoming a learning disability
3. Articles

The Resources page has information for parents, such as: finding a specialist, information related to recognizing, diagnosing, and overcoming a learning disability, and articles.
The My Bookshelf page lists all the audiobooks that have been designated for download and includes the interface to begin the audiobook download process. Select the Choose a Device button on the left panel to begin the audiobook download process.
Let's perform a trial textbook search and download.
Five Steps:

1. Login in to Learning Ally website.
2. Search for a book from the My Home page.
3. Add a book to our Learning Ally (online) Bookshelf.
4. Download the DAISY file to our computer via the Learning Ally Audio Manager.
5. Sync DAISY file to device or listen to DAISY on computer.

Here are the five steps of downloading a DAISY book from Learning Ally.
1. **Login to Learning Ally**

   **Account member’s home page**

   From the My Home page you can:
   - Find an audiobook
   - Add (authorize) a device
   - Perform an advanced book search

From the **My Home** page you can find an audiobook, authorize a device, and perform an advanced book search.

We will perform an advanced book search by following the link on the **My Home** page, indicated by the orange arrow.
2. Search for a Book

Enter the title, author, or keyword of the book in the appropriate field.

Enter the title of the book in the Title field. Searching by title or author will yield better search results. Often, you can find a book by title or author, whereas an ISBN search will not yield any results. ISBN numbers may have been incorrectly input into Learning Ally’s database or the database may not properly index ISBN numbers for search. Search by ISBN number as a last resort.
3. **Add Book to Bookshelf**
   - We have found our book. Now, we will add it to My Bookshelf.
   - Click the **Add to Bookshelf** button.

You can add the audiobook to your Bookshelf as downloadable DAISY.

Select the “Add To Bookshelf” option and the audiobook will be immediately available for download via the AudioManager.
4. **Download DAISY DTB**

- Books added to the Bookshelf will appear at the top of the list and will be ready for download.
- Select the **Continue** button on the left-side panel.
4. Download DAISY DTB (continued)

- Continue the DTB download process by clicking the Choose a Device button on the left-side panel.

Continue the DTB download process by clicking the **Choose a Device** button from the left-side panel.
4. **Download DAISY DTB (continued)**

   **Choose a Device**
   
   - Select a device from the modal screen.
   
   - For this example, I have selected the **DAISY-Compatible Player** option.

Select a device from the modal screen. For this example, I have selected the **DAISY-Compatible Player** option.
Select a DAISY player from the modal screen.

For this example, I have selected **Software or DAISY player** option. When the **Continue** button is selected the Audiobook Manager application will launch.

I have also highlighted the **Authorize a Daisy Device** option. You can follow this link to update your DAISY device with an authorization key. The Audiobook Manager is a software application made available to Learning Ally members and is required to download audiobooks from Learning Ally.
5. Sync DAISY to Device

Audiobook Manager

You have the option to:
1. Sync to ReadHear software
2. Sync to Windows Media Player
3. Sync to Humanware Stream
4. Manually manage DAISY files
   - downloaded as DAISY file

Select the device you want the audiobook synced in the panel at the left.

The Audiobook Manager also lists the last time an audiobook was synced or if it has not yet been synced.

Learning Ally’s Audiobook Manager is the software management tool that you will install on your computer and use to coordinate the delivery and syncing of downloadable DAISY DTBs. You can sync the DAISY-formatted books to your mobile DAISY player, such as the Humanware Stream, Windows Media Player, or one of the free DAISY reader software applications available from Learning Ally, such as ReadHear.
5. **Sync DAISY to Device**  
   (continued)

For this example, I will download the American Government DAISY file to the computer.

1. Select **Sync to My Manually Manage Your Files** by moving the checkmark to the **Yes** position.
2. Click the **Sync Now** button.

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For example, I will download the *American Government* DAISY file to the computer.

1. **Select Sync to My Manually Manage Your Files** by moving the checkmark to the **Yes** position.
2. **Click the Sync Now button.**
5. **Sync DAISY to Device (continued)**

- The Audiobook Manager will show a download/sync progress bar.
- When it is finished downloading, the Audiobook Manager will show a successfully completed message in green.
- The DAISY file will be downloaded to the designated folder location on your computer.
- We have downloaded an DTB from Learning Ally.

We are done downloading the DTB to our computer. Now, we are ready to listen to the DAISY DTB.

If we had selected to sync to ReadHear, Windows Media Player, or Humanware Stream we would be ready to listen to the DAISY DTB with the selected software/hardware player and we would be done. However, we will quickly review how to deliver a DAISY DTB to you’re a student.
Delivery of student-ready DAISY files
Delivery Options
From the Audiobook Manager you can:
1. Sync to the student’s Humanware Stream device.

Learning Ally DAISY reader software can also be installed on the student’s computer. From the Audiobook Manager:
1. Select My Manually Manage Your Files and download the DAISY file to your computer.
2. Transfer the DAISY file to student’s computer.
3. Open the DAISY file with Learning Ally’s free DAISY reader software:
   1. Learning Ally ReadHear
Lets review the DAISY playback options provided by Learning Ally
Learning Ally sells DAISY reading software and hardware devices that are digitally authorized to play Learning Ally content.

Learning Ally offers the following DAISY players:
1. DAISY-compatible hardware devices
2. Software applications
3. Mobile device apps
DAISY Player Options from Learning Ally:

1. Learning Ally Audio App for iOS devices—FREE.
2. ReadHear by gh (PC and Mac)—FREE.
3. Pextor Pocket (PTP1) - $349.

DAISY player options from Learning Ally:

- Free DAISY reader app for iOS devices (iphone, ipad and ipod itouch)
- Free ReadHear software for PC or Mac (note: software can only play Learning Ally DTBs)

You can also authorize DAISY-compatible devices purchased from other vendors. Navigate to the My Home page and follow the link: Add a Device.
Alright, let's conclude with our Learning Ally presentation.
Learning Ally differs from other AMPs in that it provides membership for reading and learning disabilities. It offers free DAISY reader software for personal computers and iOS devices. Only provides audio-only DAISY which is not capable of displaying text during audio playback. Membership is fee-based.
Thank you for joining us today. Please join us for our next, and last, AEM module – Part Six: Accessible Microsoft Word Document Design.