

EBooks, Audiobooks and Summer Library Resources

By Troy Ryan, District Library Media Specialist



As the 2020-21 school year comes to a close, we acknowledge that it has been a challenging year for everyone. However, the changes forced upon us due to the pandemic did create some opportunities to offer enhanced digital resources for students across the School District of Wisconsin Dells. The district libraries led the way by increasing digital reading, literacy, reference and exploratory resources that are available year-round for grades K-12.

Each school library has a home page that offers a variety of links to eBooks, audiobooks, games, activities and other educational websites that students and families can use throughout the summer. The library home pages are easily accessible and can be found by going to the SDWD website (www.sdwd.k12.wi.us), selecting Parent/Students and then Library from the drop-down menu. You will have an option of choosing resources from any of the five school libraries. If usernames and/or passwords are needed, they will be provided right on the screen with the link. We want to make it as simple and convenient as possible so people feel comfortable using the resources.

While the libraries offer an extensive collection of resources, we want the focus of this article to be on the reading and literacy options available over the summer. Of course, the public library will be open during the summer and the Spring Hill Library will be open in July during summer school, but if students and families can't get actual books in hands, they have access to a variety of eBooks and audiobooks through our school library pages. Take a look at the offerings listed and explained below and try them out for yourself when you want to experience that next great book.

OverDrive (Sora)

The School District of Wisconsin Dells has joined the Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium, and that gives all of our students in school and out of school access to over 17,000 eBooks and audiobooks

though a subscription with OverDrive (Sora). Some people might be familiar with OverDrive from the public library, and it is very easy to use. Fiction and non-fiction are available for K-12 students.

1. Find the OverDrive link on any library home page.
2. Click on the green bar that says, "My school is Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium".
3. Choose Wisconsin Dells School District from the drop-down menu.
4. Students will log in with Google using school email account.
5. Once in, search for eBooks or audiobooks by title, subject or genre.
6. Click on borrow to check out an eBook/audiobook or place hold to get it when it is available.
7. You will have two weeks to read/listen to the book before it auto-returns to the collection.

BookFlix

BookFlix is a site that is geared toward lower elementary students, and it offers both fiction and non-fiction titles. The neat thing about BookFlix is that it pairs fiction and non-fiction books together by theme/subject. The site also allows students to read along as books are read to them and has a variety of book-specific activities to enhance reading comprehension. Users do need to have a username and password to use BookFlix, but both are provided on the library home pages.

1. Find the BookFlix link on your school library home page.
2. Use the username and password provided on your school library homepage.
3. Search by title or topic.

Infobase Learning

Infobase Learning is an amazing eBook collection that is made up of thousands of non-fiction resources broken down into 26 categories. In addition to the non-fiction materials, it includes over one thousand literary classics. Geared primarily for middle and high school students, there is even a category for grades 2-5. Students will need to login using the username and password provided on the library home pages. Once in, students can browse or use a variety of more specific searches.

1. Find the Infobase Learning link on your school library home page.
2. Use the username and password provided on your school library homepage.
3. Browse by category, title, or advanced search options provided on the page.

Badgerlink

Badgerlink is a collection of e-resources provided by the State of Wisconsin. It is made up of encyclopedias, databases, newspapers, magazines, student resources, dictionaries, historical documents, literacy skills resources, medical information, auto repairs and much more. It truly has something for everyone offered in multiple languages. If you have Internet access that originates in Wisconsin, you have free access. If you have Internet that originates outside of Wisconsin, you have free access by logging in with a Wisconsin library card.

1. Find the Badgerlink link on your school library homepage.
2. Use your Wisconsin library card if needed to log in.

Limited Site-Specific eBooks and Audiobooks

Each building owns a limited amount of eBooks and audiobooks. Unfortunately, the eBooks and audiobooks are site-specific, so students only have access to the eBooks and audiobooks from the school they attend. While not a huge selection at the smaller schools, eBooks and audiobooks are available for students K-12.

To use the district-owned eBooks and audiobooks, students need to log in to the Destiny card catalog for individual schools. They do that by using regular usernames, and the password is the user's birthday. All students have gone to the Destiny card catalog and logged in throughout the year. The directions for logging in are on each school's library homepage, but I am also including an example.

Example: John Smith born February 14, 2011

Username: smithjoh000 Password: 02142011

1. Go to Destiny card catalog by choosing the catalog tab on the specific library homepage.
2. Log in to Destiny on either the catalog page or the Destiny Discover page.
3. Search by browsing or by using a more specific title, subject or keyword search.

Audible

Audible.com offers a variety of audiobooks for all ages. It was made available to schools when schools were closing because of the pandemic. While not the complete version that people subscribe to, it still offers a lot of great titles for students to listen to. We have no way of knowing how long it will continue to be offered for free, but at the time this was written it was still available at school and at home through or library homepage links.

1. Find the Audible link on our library homepages.
2. Click on "start listening".
3. Search by category, title or browsing.

Epic Books

Epic Books is a fantastic collection of eBooks, audiobooks, videos and activities aimed at elementary and early middle school students. It is a free resource while the students are in school, and for much of the year has allowed limited access from home due to the pandemic. However, Epic Books is a subscription-based collection, and that seems to be how it will be offered throughout the summer. The site has offered great summer specials in years past and a free trial for people who are interested. Students love the site so it might be worth your time to check it out.

1. Find the Epic Books link on a library homepage.
2. Set up a free trial.
3. Search by category, title, subject, keyword or browsing.

Knowing that nothing replaces an actual book in a kid's hands, I have mainly highlighted the eBook and audiobook resources provided by the district libraries on our library homepages so that students will be able to read throughout the summer if they can't get to an actual library. I invite everyone to check out

not only the resources listed above but to also spend some time checking out all of the other resources linked on SDWD library homepages.

Have a great summer and keep reading, listening and enjoying great books!