

LIBRARY E-READERS INSTEAD OF SCREENS FOR EBOOKS

A TINY CASE STUDY

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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I believe reading on a backlit screen is a huge turnoff for a lot of people. I was relieved to work out a flexible way for my readers to access all of our OverDrive titles.

THE PROBLEM

When offered an eBook, my library users will often scoff and tell me that they “just prefer to hold the book” (which is pretty common and not unique across users).

Yet when offered an e-reader, sometimes they warm up to eBooks because the experience is more like a page and less like a screen.

However, many e-readers are designed for personal ownership, not just an app you can sign into, which makes them hard to use in a school setting with OverDrive.

THE SOLUTION

I have been buying the base-level Kindle e-readers from Amazon on PrimeDay/Black Friday/etc. when they cost about \$50. I also get a folio case that the Kindle can slip into with a magnet flap cover.

Amazon has a service called Whispercast that allows me to manage library-owned Kindles. I use it to create a restricted Amazon login that I can give students (sticker on the back of the Kindle) and reset if they mess with settings or change the password. As a managed device, I can turn off purchasing and other settings in the Kindle.

I also add the Kindles to the library catalog to circulate I use one title record, and the individual devices as copies.

The first step is to have the student sign into Amazon with the Kindle’s login credentials on a separate device. They then open another tab (or app) for Sora/Libby, checkout the eBook, and choose Send to Kindle. They are redirected to the Amazon tab and with one more click, the book is delivered to the Kindle. Users can do this on their own with as many books as they want!

This is one of my biggest strategies for getting the eBook haters to reconsider and start using our digital book collection. I believe reading on a backlit screen is a huge turnoff for a lot of people. I was relieved to work out a flexible way for my readers to access all of our OverDrive titles. The setup is a little intensive, but it’s worth it!