# Ways to Use E-Books Appropriately with Children

While e-books should not replace physical books, they can be useful in developing children's print awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension (i.e., understanding the story) and disposition towards reading.

These are some of the common features found in e-books for young children and ways that they can be used appropriately with children (adapted from Guernsey & Levine, 2016; Lowry, 2016).

| Feature | Description |
|---|---|
| **Hotspots:** Interactive areas that children can press to receive auditory and/or visual information<br><br>**Games:** Puzzles, mix-and-match and other fun/engaging activities provided with the e-book | Games and hotspots should only be activated after the page is read and should help children to understand the story.<br><br>• When children can access games and hotspots during the reading of the story, the narration is interrupted and this affects children's comprehension of the story. |
| **Bi-modal text:** Highlighting the words at the same time that they are narrated | E-books with bi-modal text help children to develop print awareness, making connections between what the narrator says and the text. "Forward" and "backward" buttons also help children to understand that a text is read from left to right. |
| **Dictionary:** Feature that explains difficult words | Dictionary mode in e-books helps children to understand challenging words and increases their vocabulary. |
| **Repeated reading options:** Options that allow children to select a word, phrase, sentence or pages to be narrated | Repeated reading options help children to develop understanding as they revisit the text. |

*This resource is adapted from pages 107 to 108 of NEL Educators' Guide for Language and Literacy (EL) 2022.*