

# Speechify



Your personal reading  
assistant.



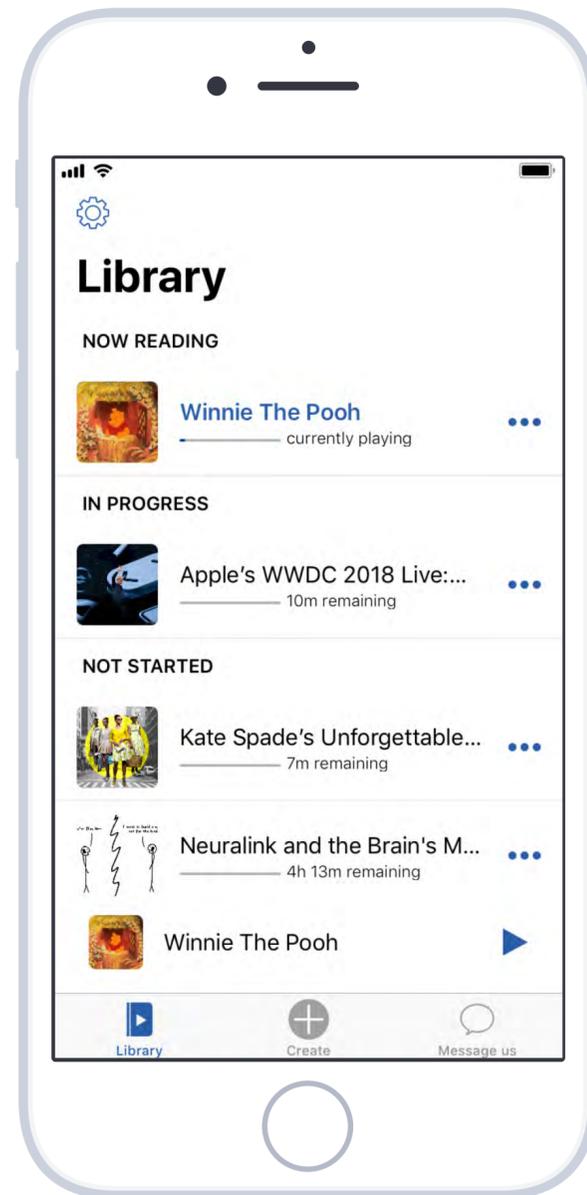
Continue

# Our mission

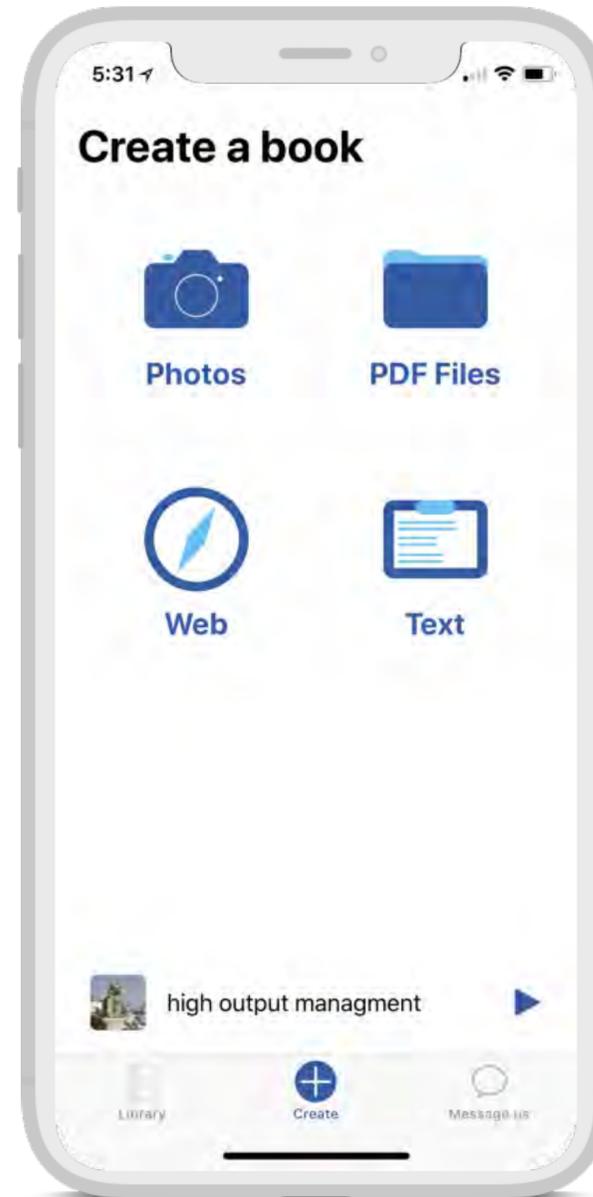
Make reading *joyful* and *accessible* to all.



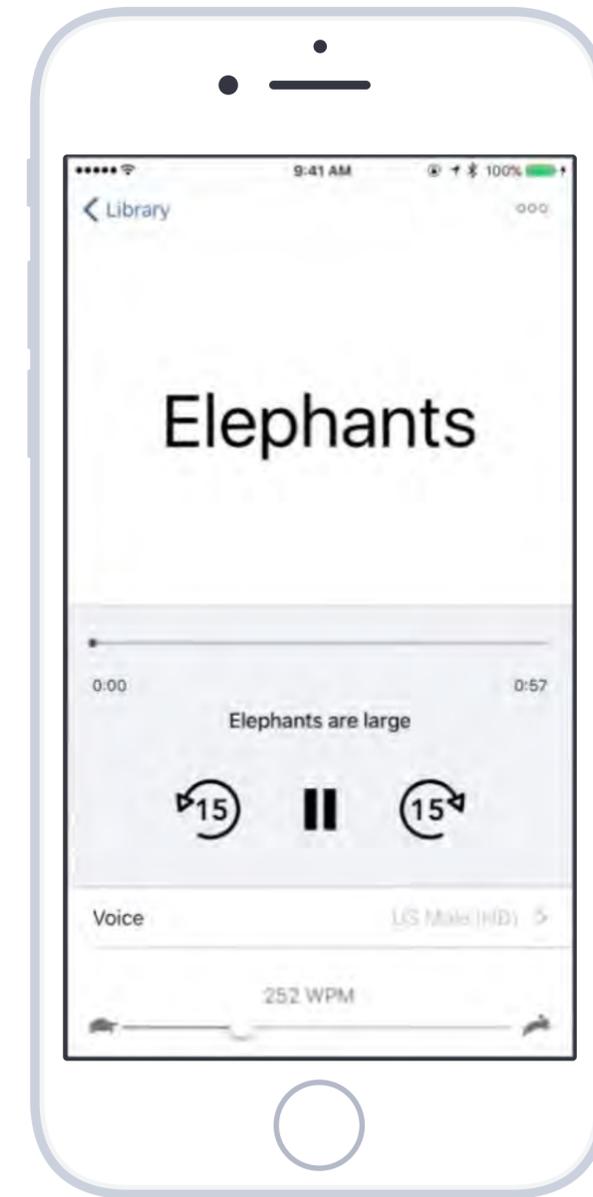
# Previous State of the App



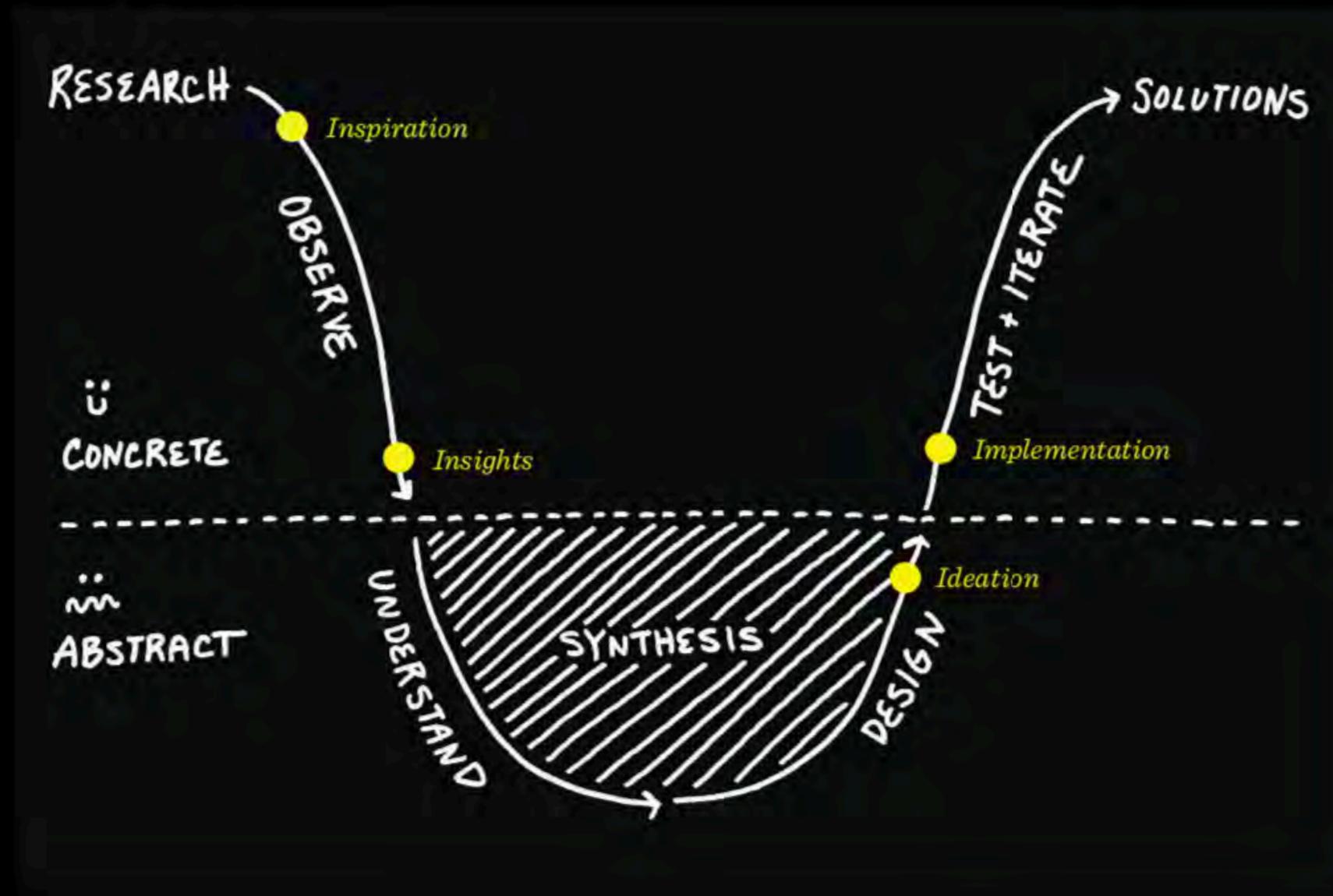
A "Library" of Books



Add Books from Sources



Listen to Books



Points of interest in this presentation mirror the IDEO Design Thinking Flow and are highlighted in **yellow**.

# 3 Big “How Might We” Problems



1. How might we make *computer-generated voices* more *approachable*?



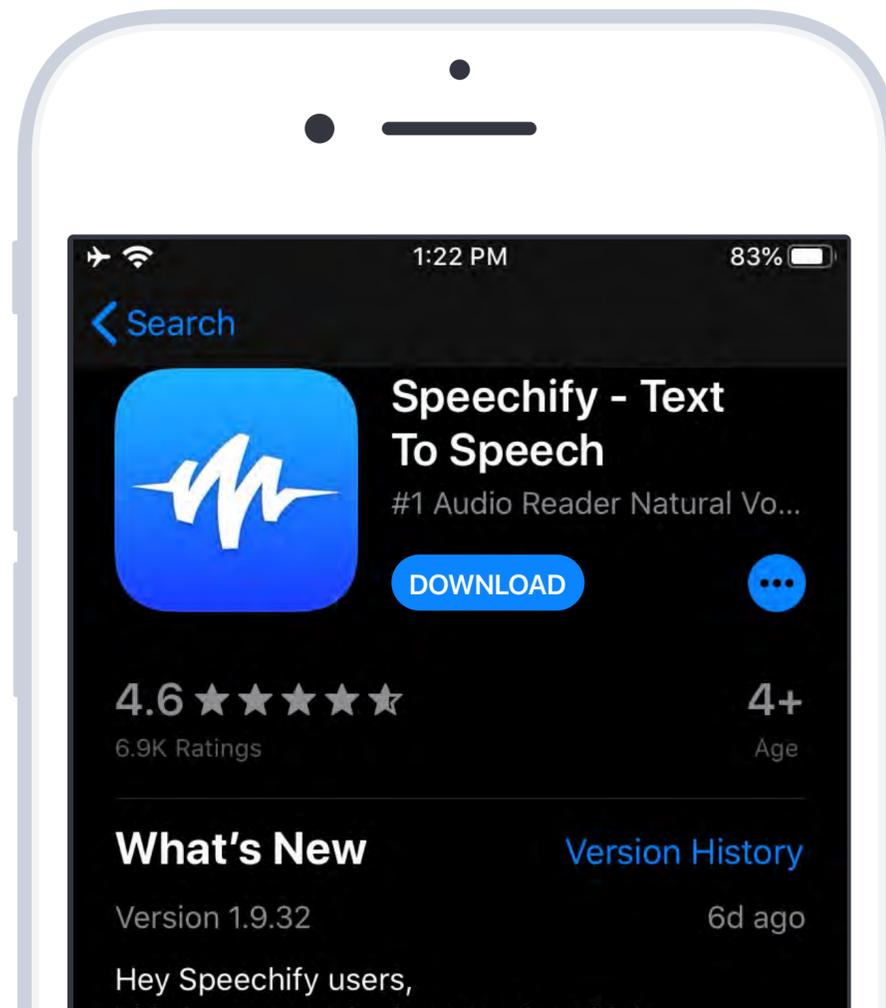
2. How might we provide *relevant reading content* in an *intuitive manner*?



3. How might we allow people to *save time* and *retain more* from their readings?

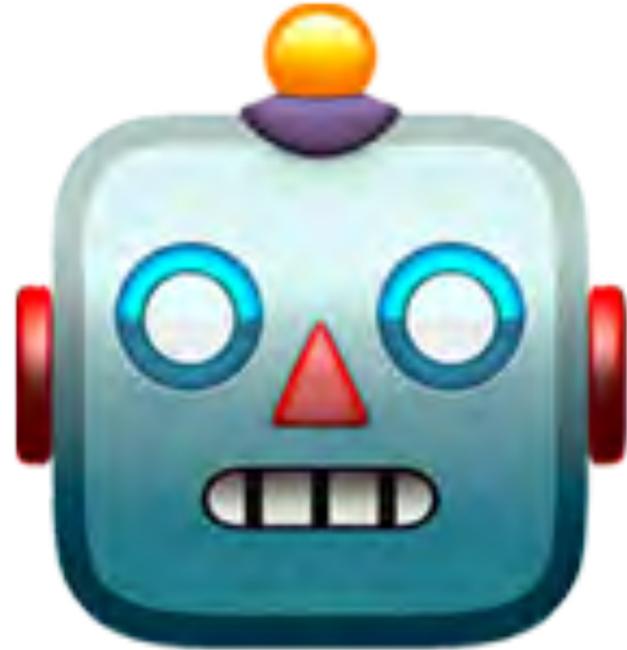
# Problem #1

How might we make computer-generated voices more approachable?



**Inspiration:**  
Many impressions  
but low rate of  
downloads

# Insights: How do you feel about text-to-speech?



## Worry Voices Are Robotic

“Things like that don’t really work because they don’t sound like people. That’s why I like podcasts, ya know? Real people.”



## Want to Test the Voices

“The app looks good, but what does it sound like though?”

# Ideation Process

We usually spent 5-10 minutes writing things down as fast as we could (quantity vs quality) and then voting on what to do.



Speak on the website

Personable mascot

Play voice on startup

"Hello, I am speechily, nice to meet you!"

Give voices names & faces

Remember birthdays

Happy icons

Anthropomorphic finder

Fun feedback sounds



# Implementation: Humanize Text-to-Speech

Gave the voices names, make them human, not robotic.



Cliff



Anna



Simeon



Sophie

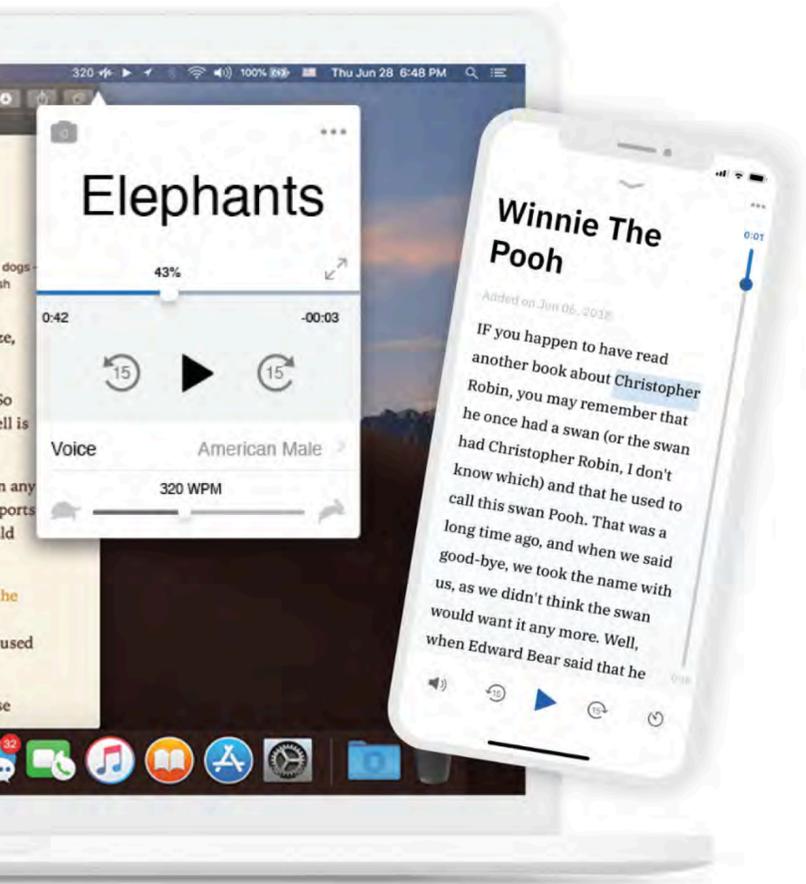


Richard



# Implementation: Voice Trial Mode

Users can try the voices directly from the website and the app

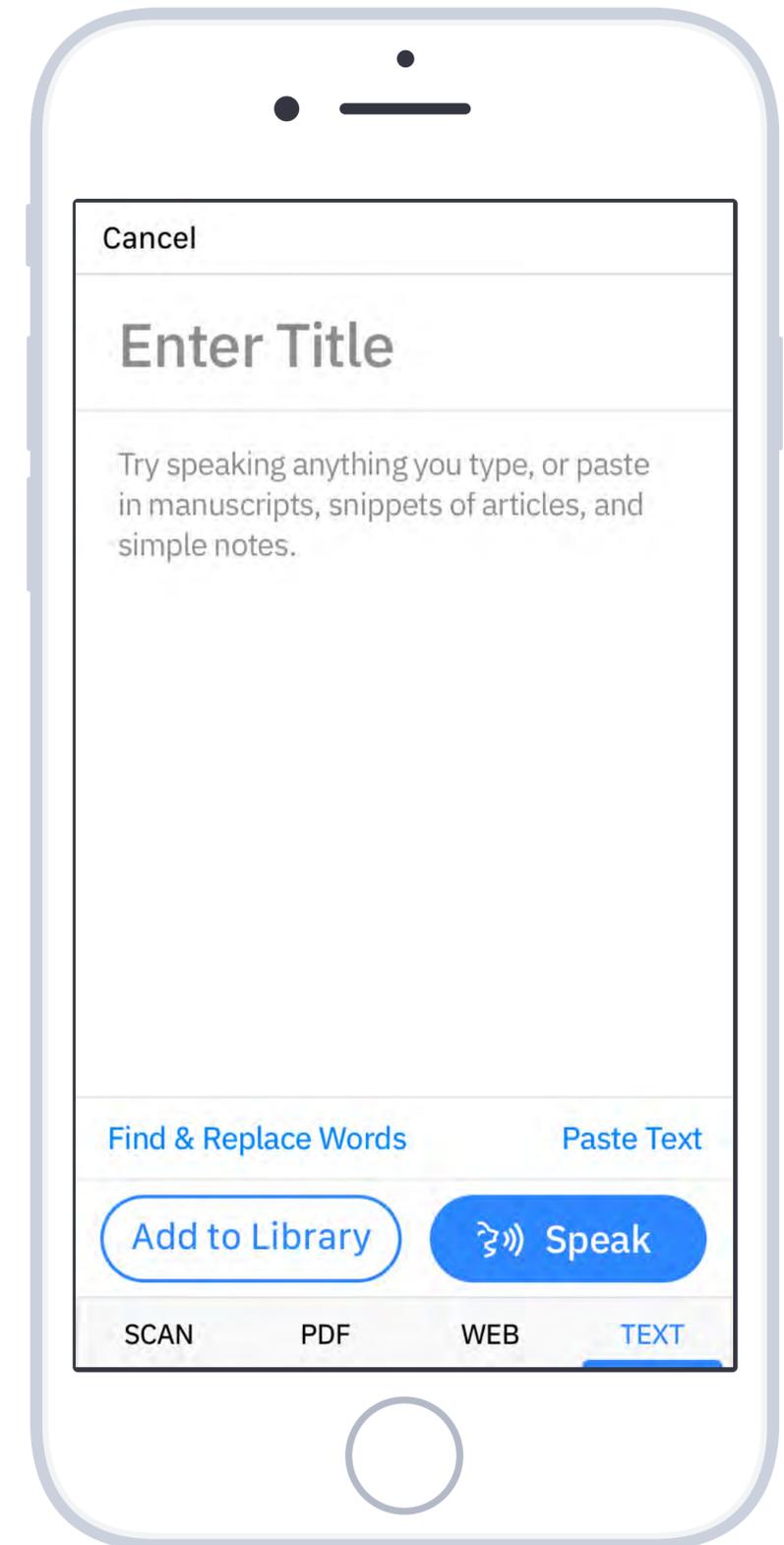


DO YOU SOMETIMES STRUGGLE TO FOCUS ON READINGS?

**Speechify helps you focus on what you want to read.**

**▶ LISTEN IN CLIFF'S VOICE**

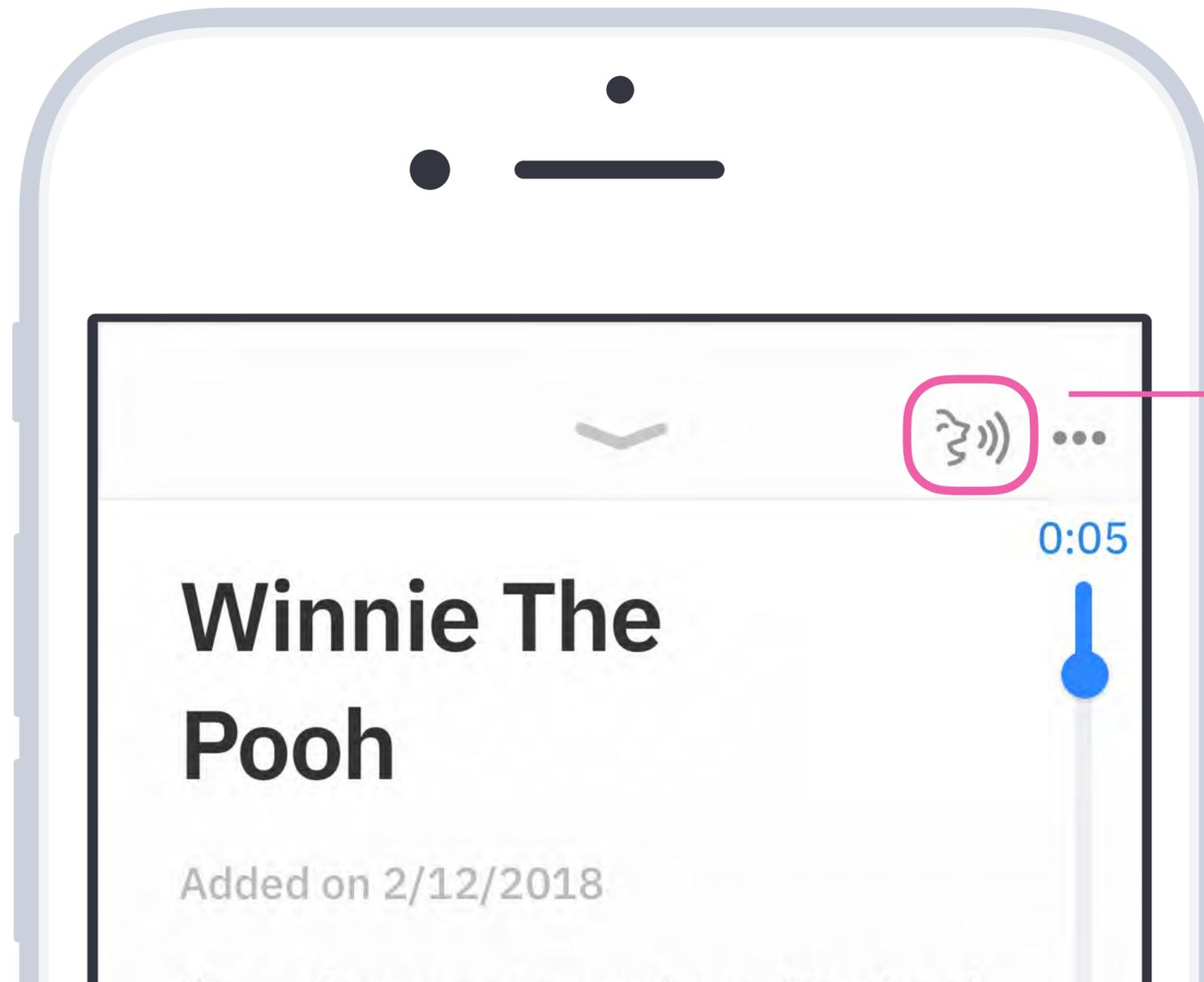
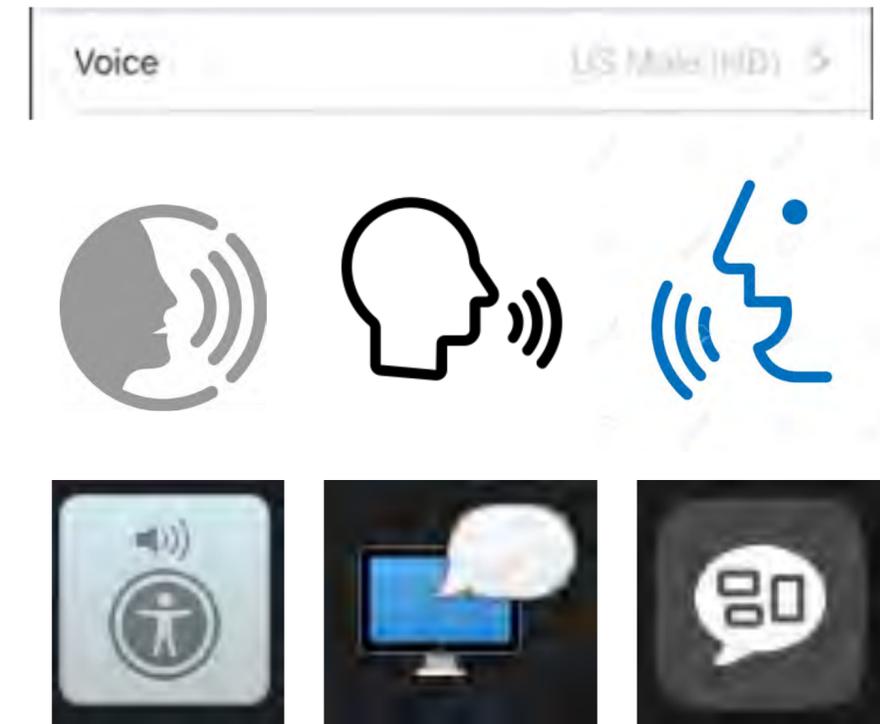
Whether you are a productivity lover, have dyslexia, ADHD, or a concussion, with Speechify, reading is never a barrier. You can set your reading speed from 100WPM for maximum comprehension, or dial it up to 700WPM for speed reading.



## Implementation: Friendly Icon



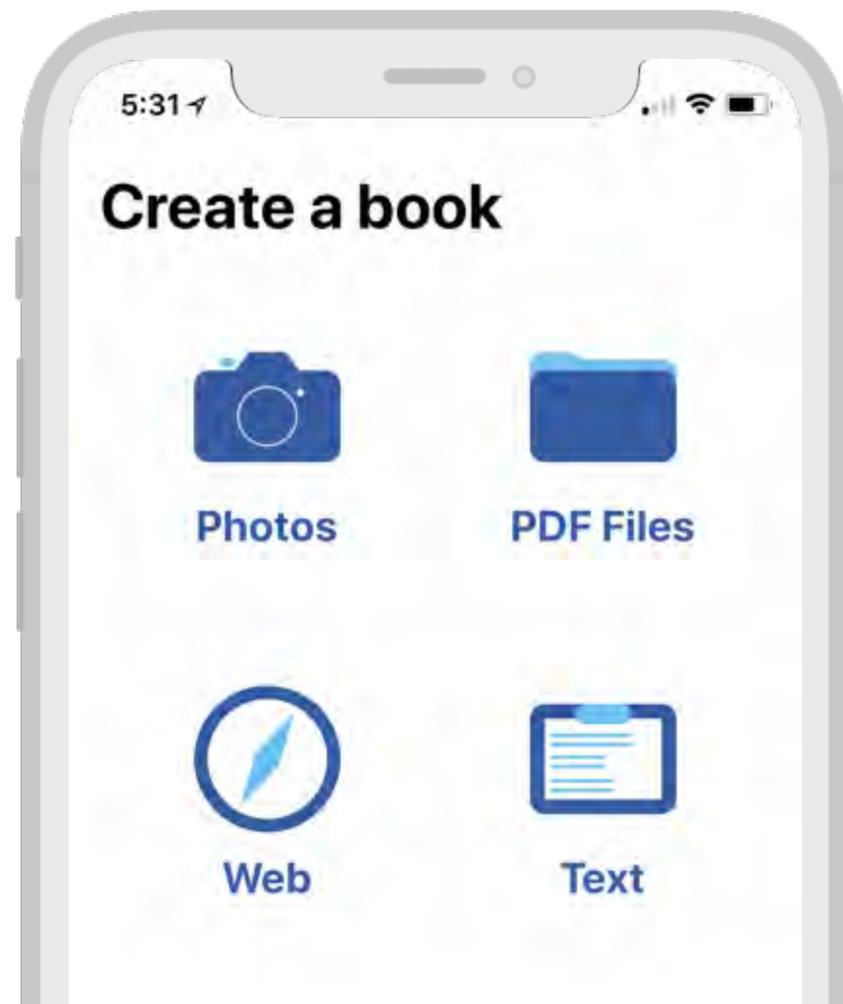
How might we make the voice appear human? What if we make it look human?



Sketches for this icon were on dinner napkins.

## Question #2

How might we provide relevant reading content in an intuitive manner?



### Inspiration:

People are downloading the app but not creating books.

# Insight: How do people usually consume information?

In the past week, can you tell me about what you have read?

“I’ve been reading this textbook about Mechanical Engineering for my masters program. It’s very dense.”

“I have a large folder of classics on my Google Drive that I’ve been reading.

“I usually just read the things that come up on my Facebook.”

“I have a lot of legal documents I read each week. I also read Economist, the NYT, twitter happenings.”

Tell me about the last time you tried a new source of readings?

“Every so often, I see a new newspaper get recommended by Facebook.”

“I use the app Pocket, and it recommends me new articles all the time.”

“I get my legal documents from different places and put them all in a Google Drive. I get new news on my Facebook feed occasionally.”

“I just put all my books in Google Drive.”

***Conclusion: People may like different content, but they get their content from the same, specific, places.***

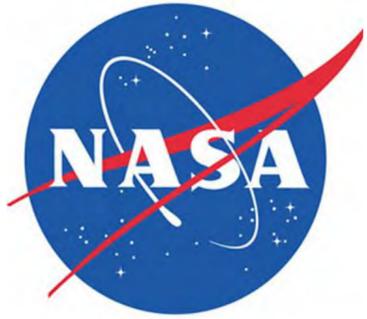
# Can you try to use this app to import your [favorite source of content]?

**Insight:** People want to see the services, not the categories. 🙄🙄

The central smartphone screen shows the 'Create a book' app interface. At the top, it says '5:31' and has signal, Wi-Fi, and battery icons. Below the title 'Create a book', there are four main categories: 'Photos' (with a camera icon), 'PDF Files' (with a folder icon), 'Web' (with a compass icon), and 'Text' (with a document icon). Surrounding the phone are callout boxes:

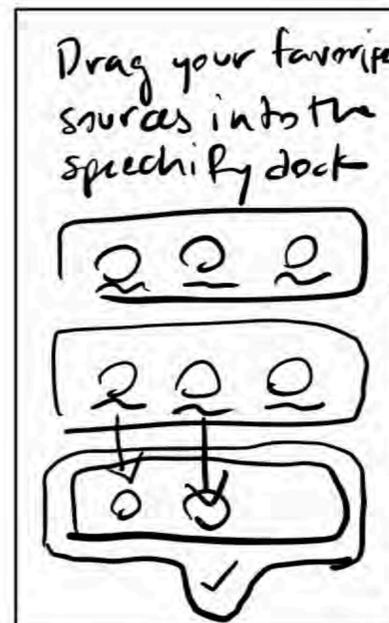
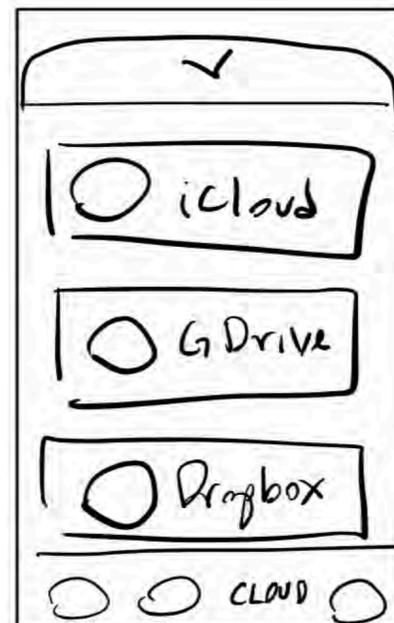
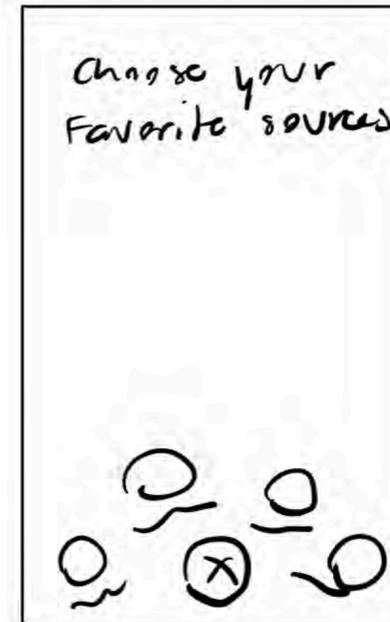
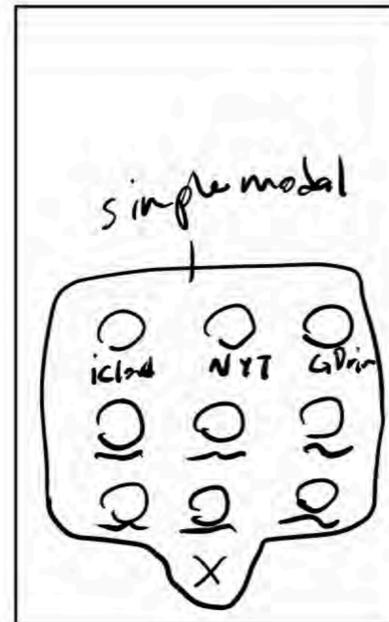
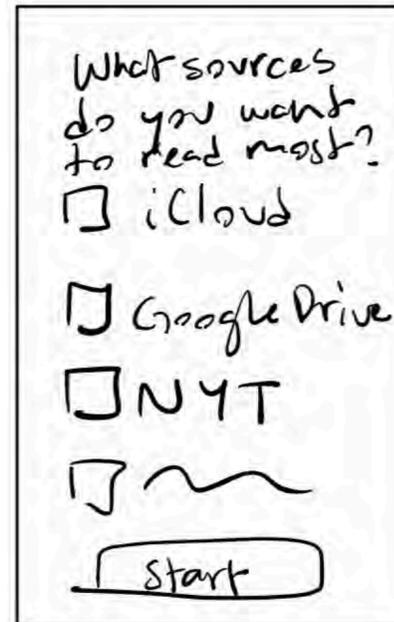
- Top-left: A scanner icon with the text "Scan".
- Top-right: Logos for Google Drive, OneDrive, and Dropbox.
- Bottom-left: Logos for The New York Times, Flipboard, and Medium.
- Bottom-right: A quote and the NASA logo.

Egregious situation:  
"I had to email myself the books, copy, then paste into the app"



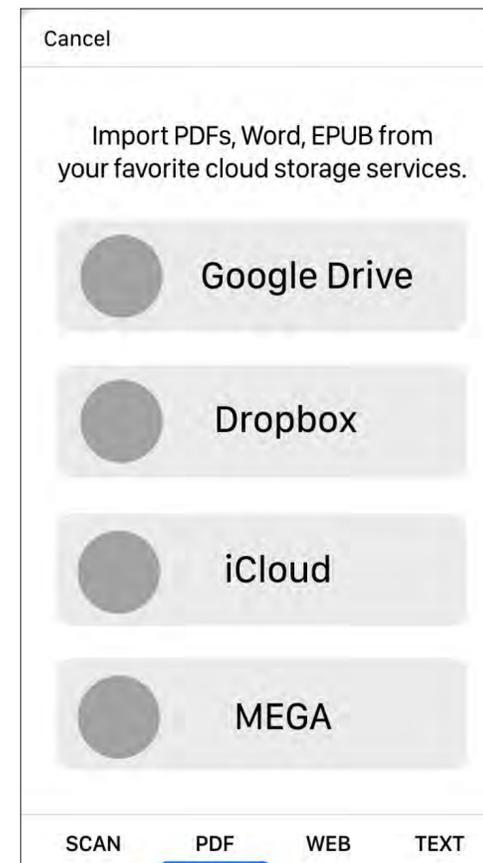
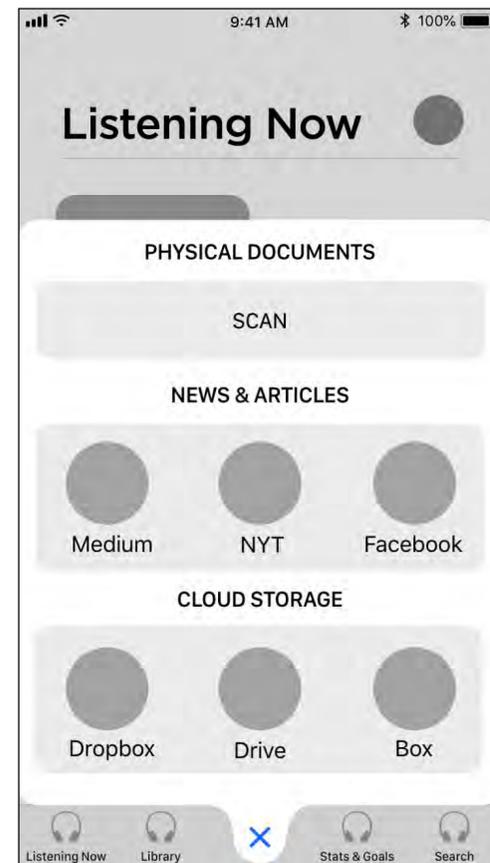
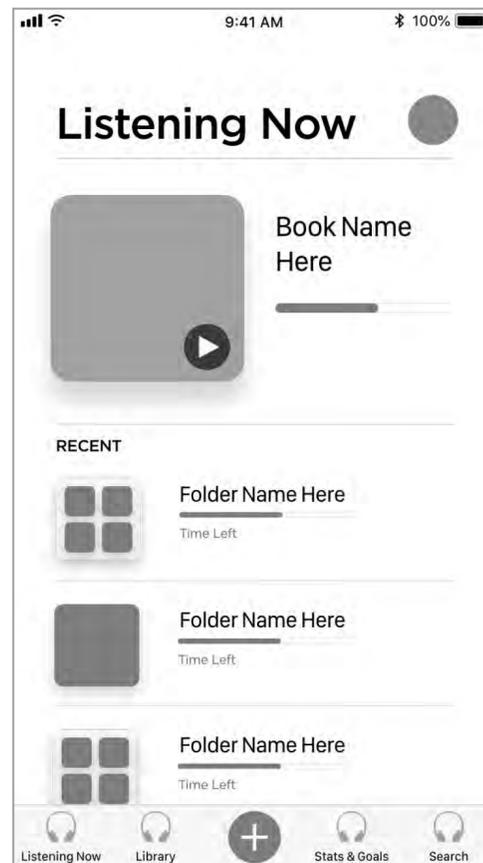
- Dave, retired NASA engineer

# Ideation: "Create Book" experience concept sketches

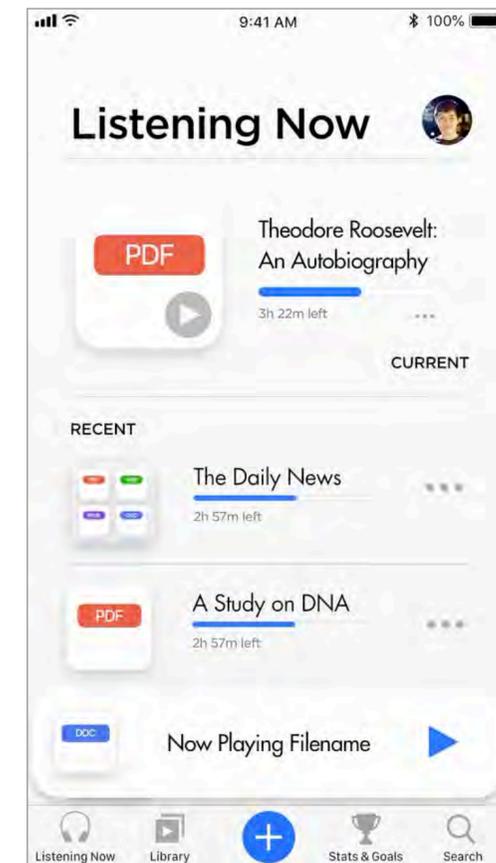


# Implementation: Wireframes & Mockups

## Lo-Fi



## Hi-Fi



Home Screen

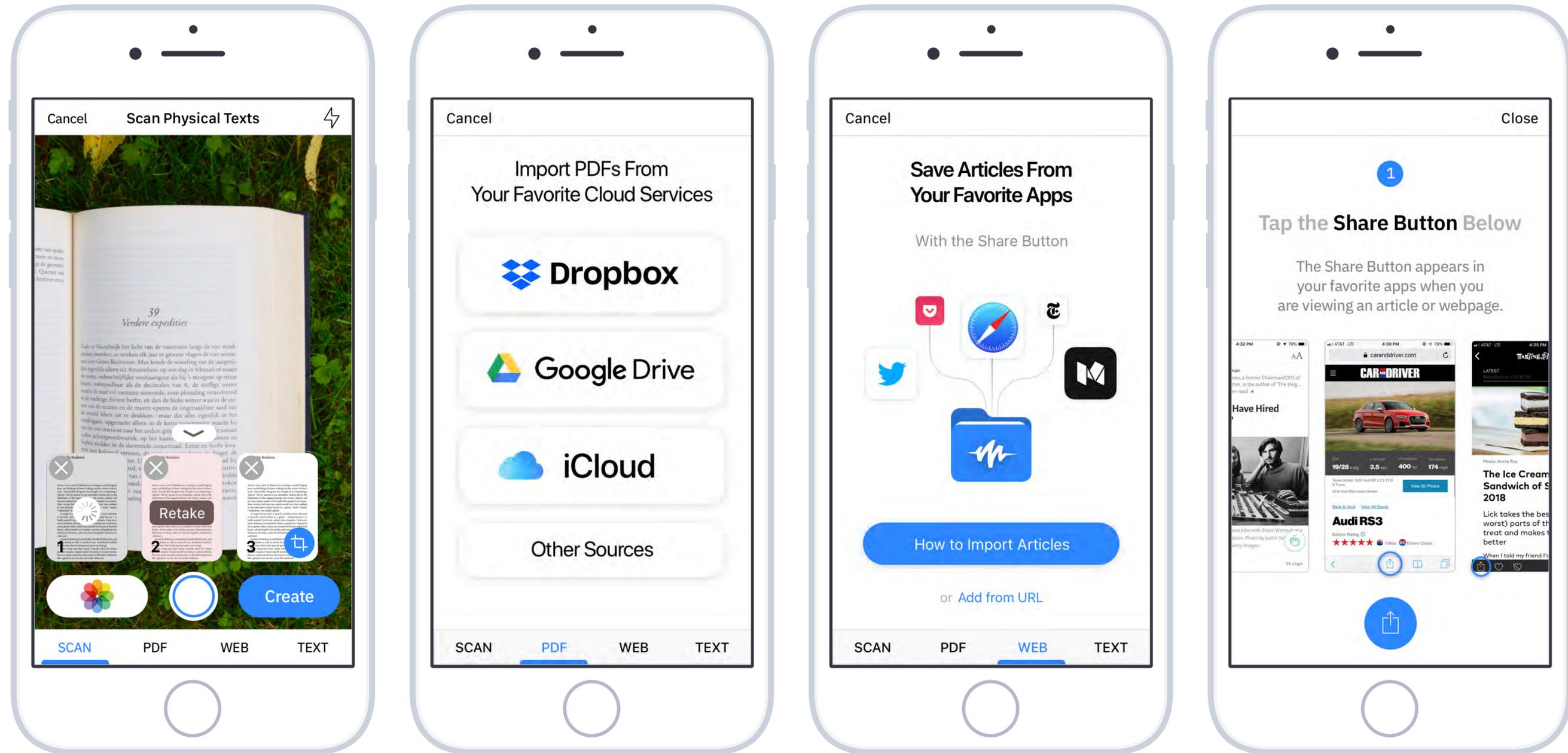
“Modal” Approach

“Window” Approach

Mockup of “Modal” Approach

We chose the “Window” approach, because testing showed that users preferred it (they tend to import the same content over and over)

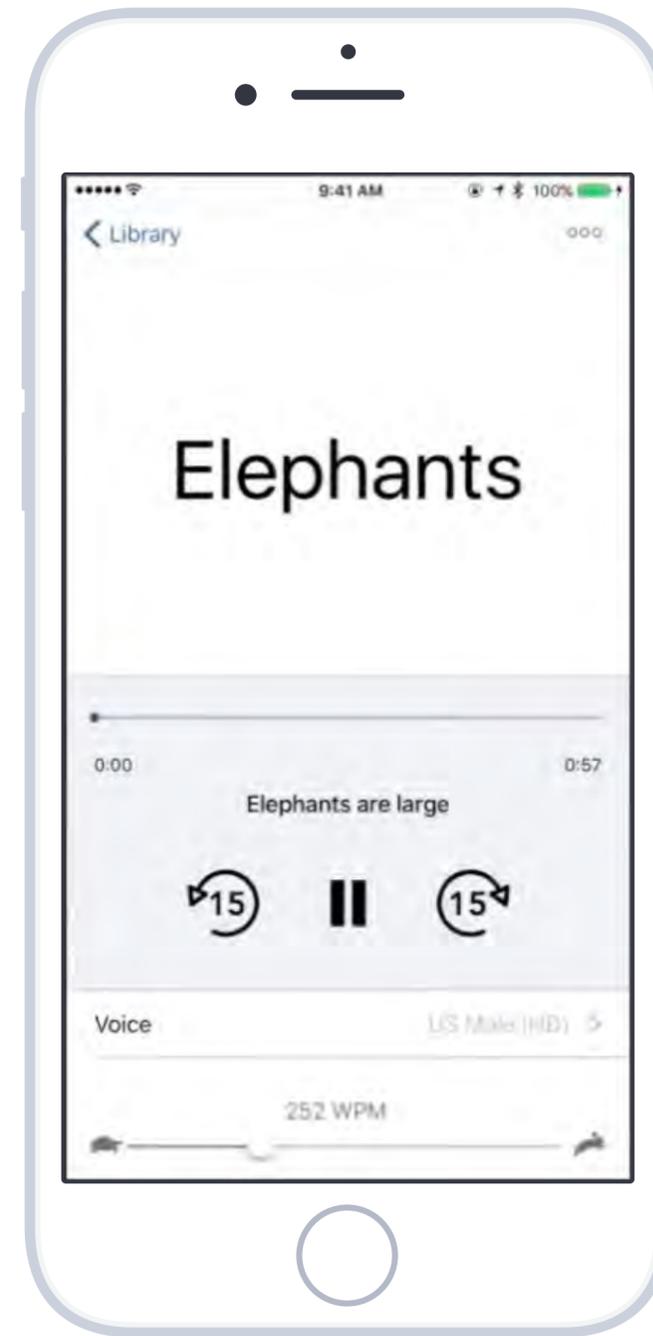
# Implementation: Final Product “Window” Approach



\*People want to see the services, not the categories.

## Question #3

How might we allow people to save time and retain more from their readings?



# **Inspiration:** When do you feel the most stressed about reading?



## **Save Time**

“Have so much stuff to read. I need to get it in by a deadline.” - Lawyer



## **Retain More**

“I get stressed when I’m cramming for an assignment and I have to read very fast. It’s hard to get everything when you read quickly and sometimes I have to reread.” - Student

# Insight: Perceptual Expansion, Trackers & Pacers



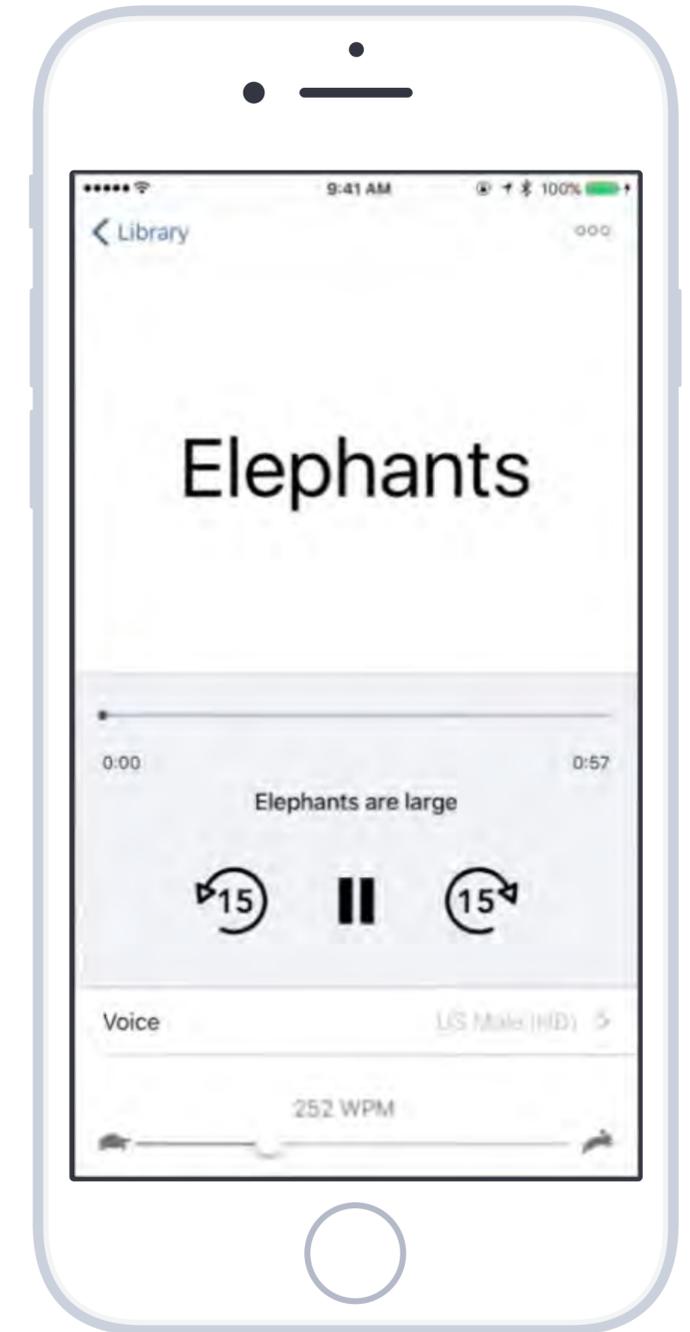
Tim Ferriss published [this article](#) on how to read faster/retain what you read.

## 1. Perceptual Expansion



## 2. Trackers & Pacers

Lorem ipsum dolor



## Insight: Different Trackers

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

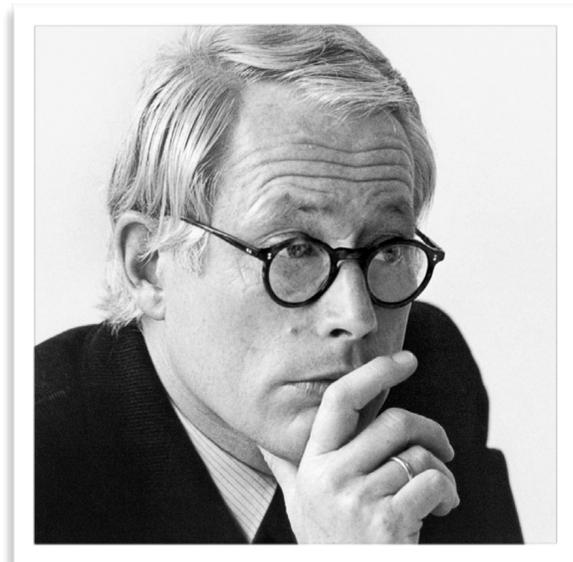
➔ The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

**Ideation:** Good Design Tends to be deferential to the essential elements.

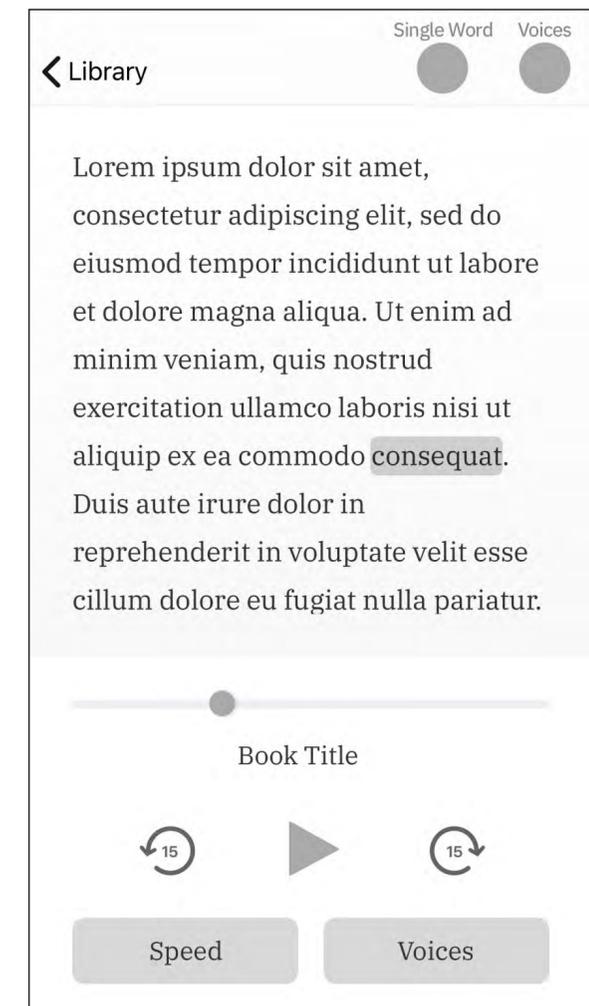


Dieter Rams

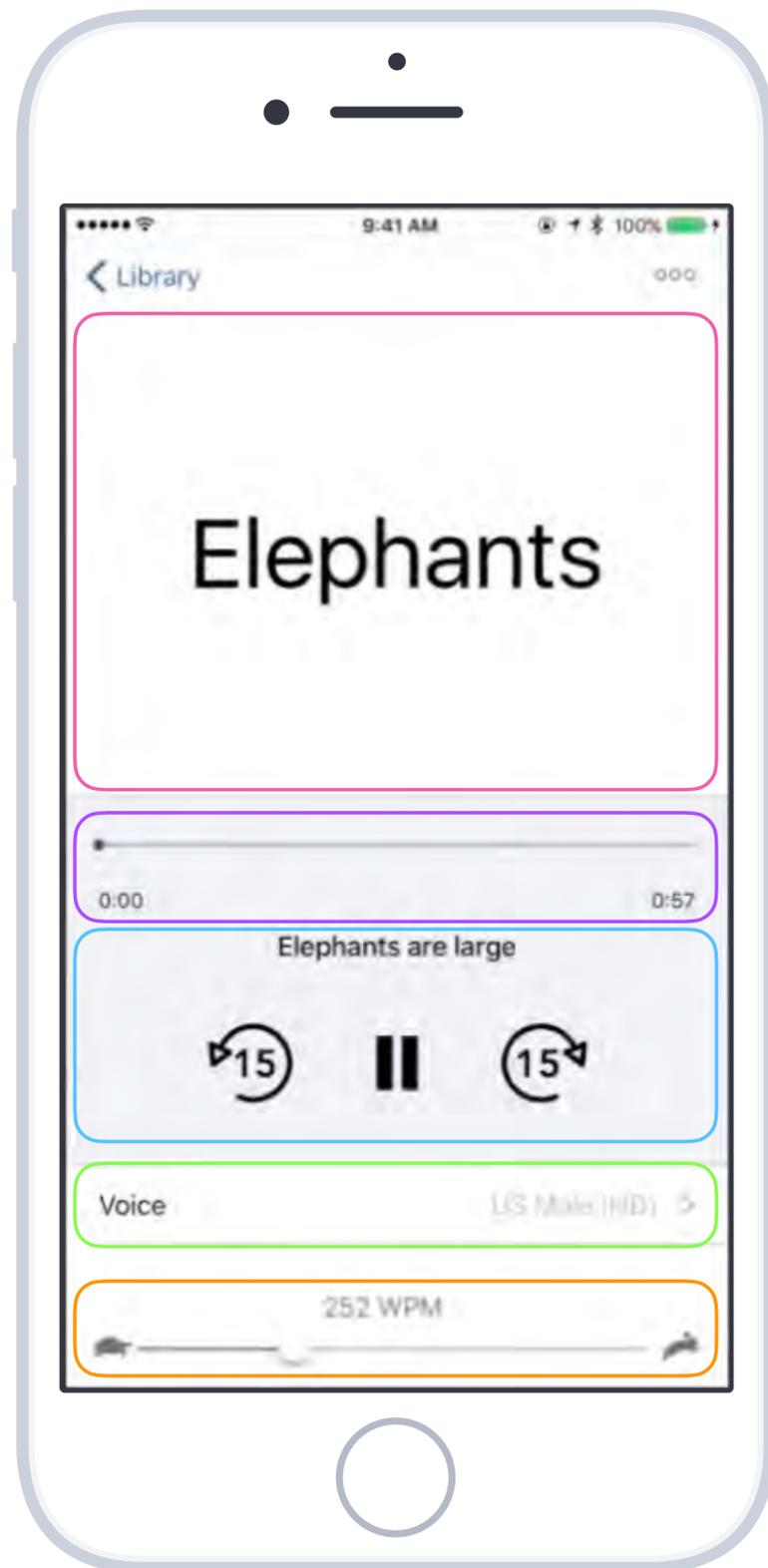
**Good design is as little design as possible**

Less, but better – because it concentrates on the essential aspects, and the products are not burdened with non-essentials.

Back to purity, back to simplicity.



**What are our essential elements?**



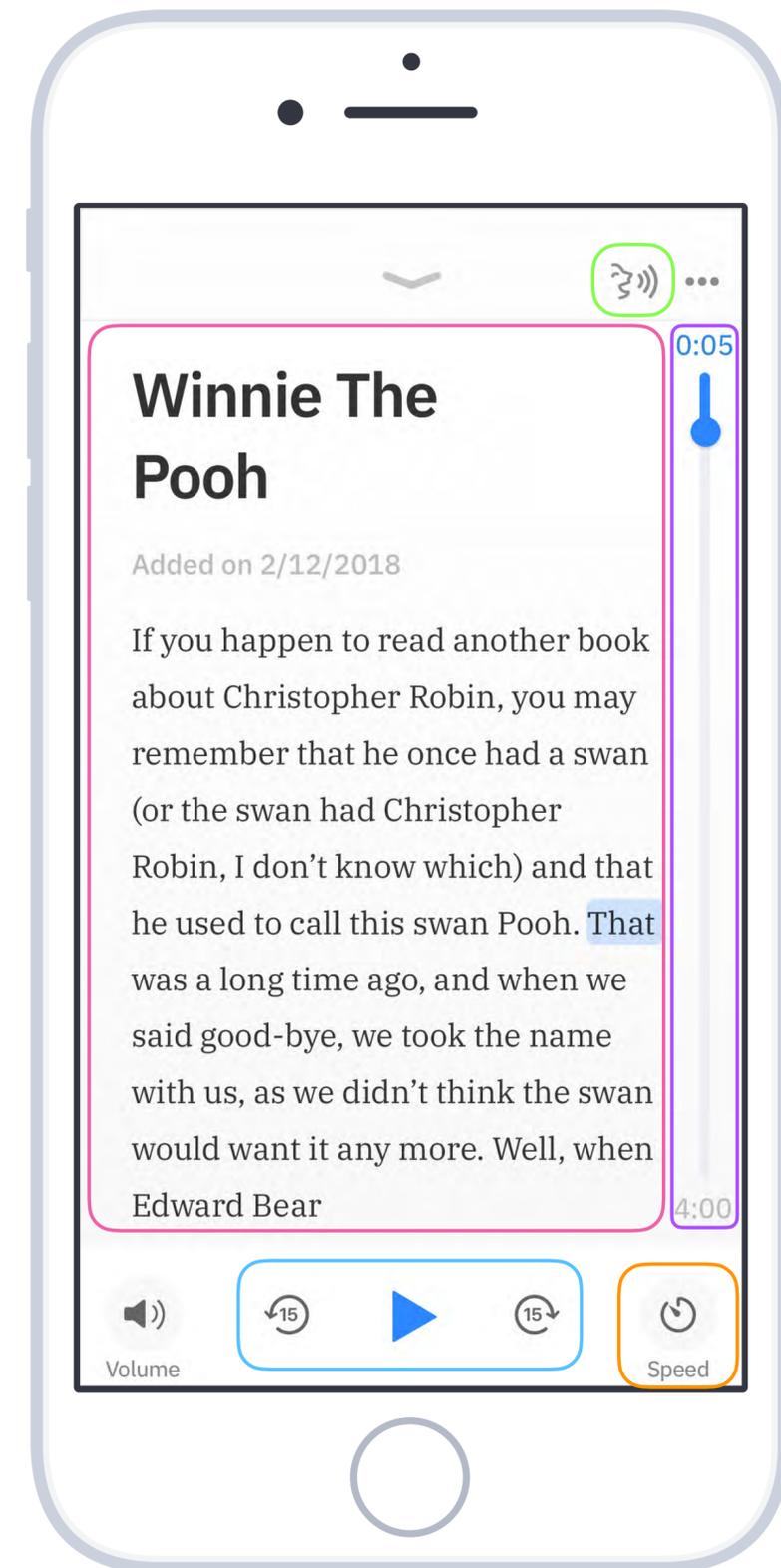
Our *most important element*:  
Expansive **reading view**

Progress bar *affords* the **correct direction**.

**Play/Pause/Skip** buttons simplified, moved closer to **thumb's natural position**, interactive elements highlighted with **popping color**.

**Voice** turned into an **human face**, changed to **names** like "Cliff" instead of "US Male"

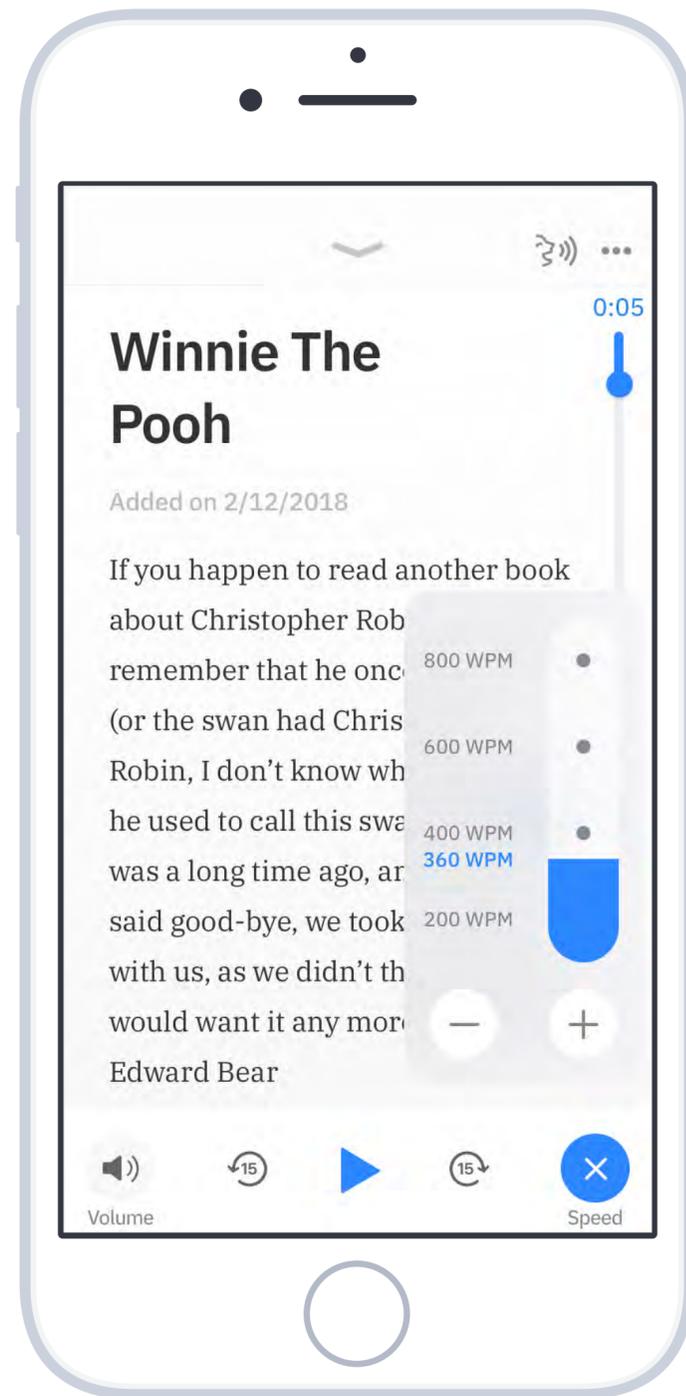
**Speaking-rate slider** changed to "**Speed**" instead of "**WPM**" for easy understanding. Less movement to manipulate.



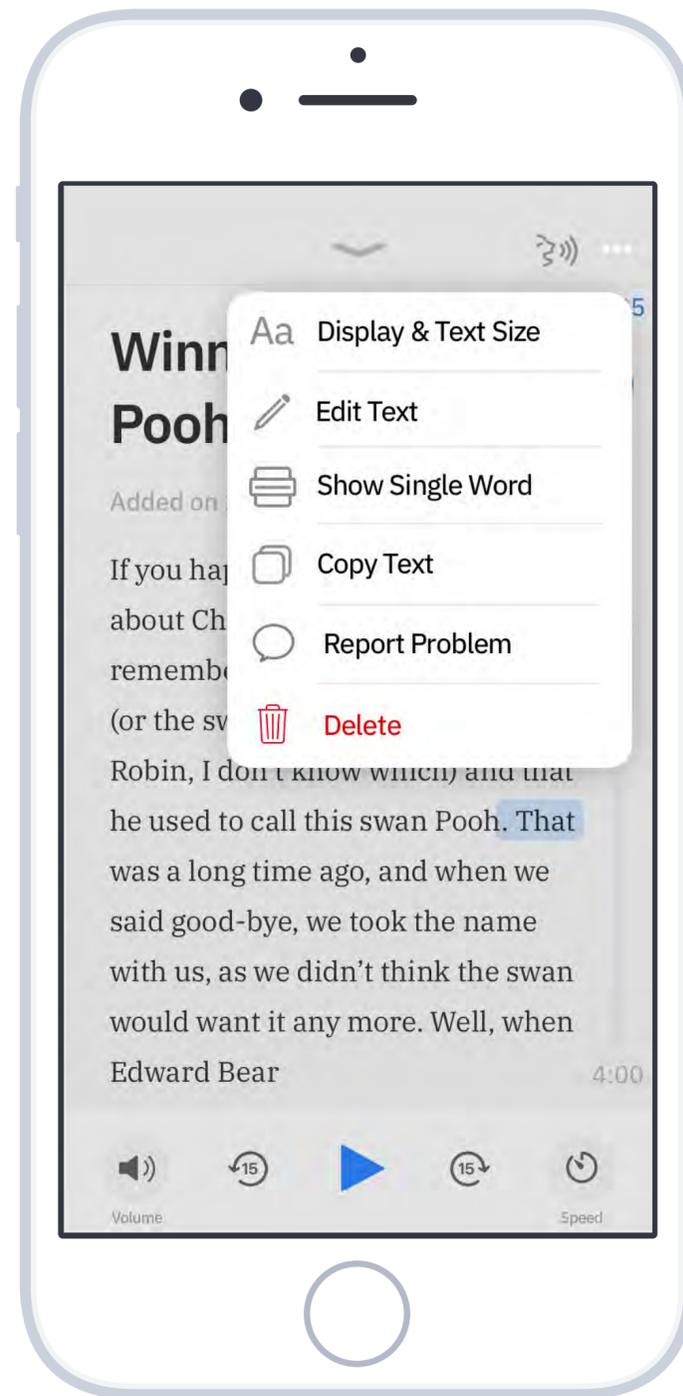
## Winnie The Pooh

Added on 2/12/2018

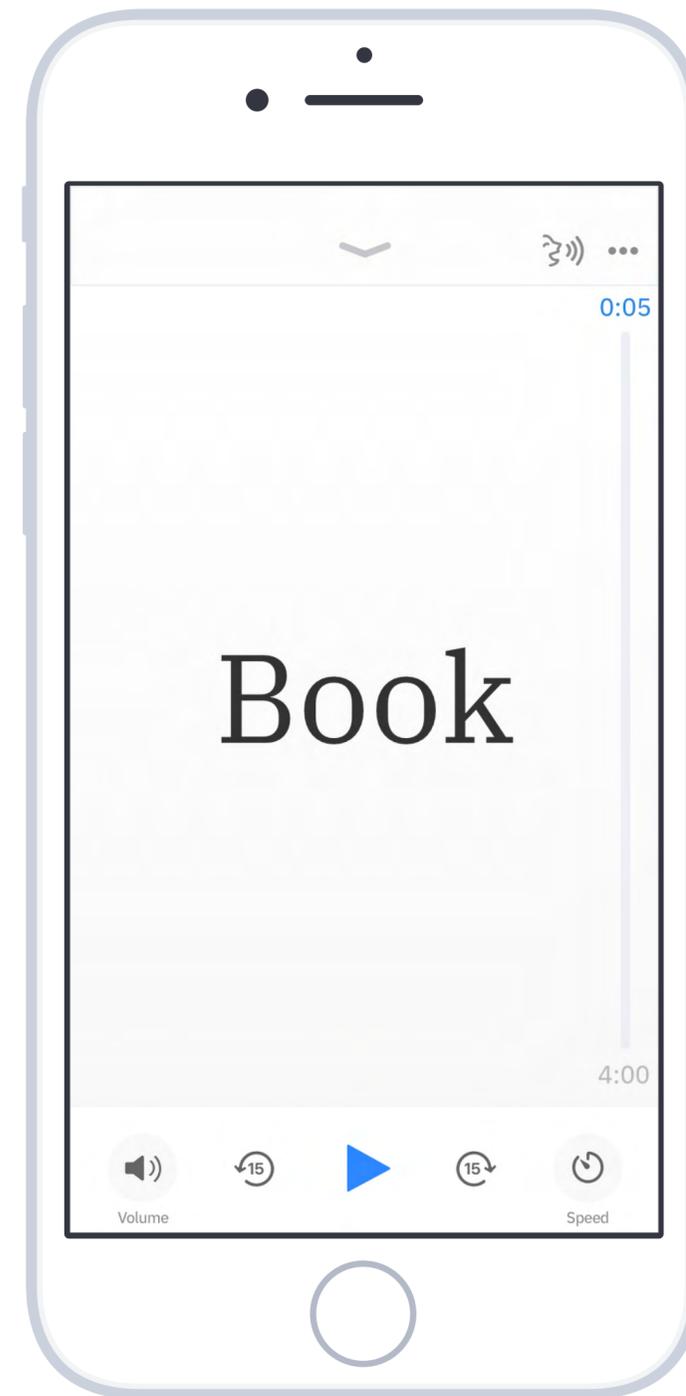
If you happen to read another book about Christopher Robin, you may remember that he once had a swan (or the swan had Christopher Robin, I don't know which) and that he used to call this swan Pooh. That was a long time ago, and when we said good-bye, we took the name with us, as we didn't think the swan would want it any more. Well, when Edward Bear



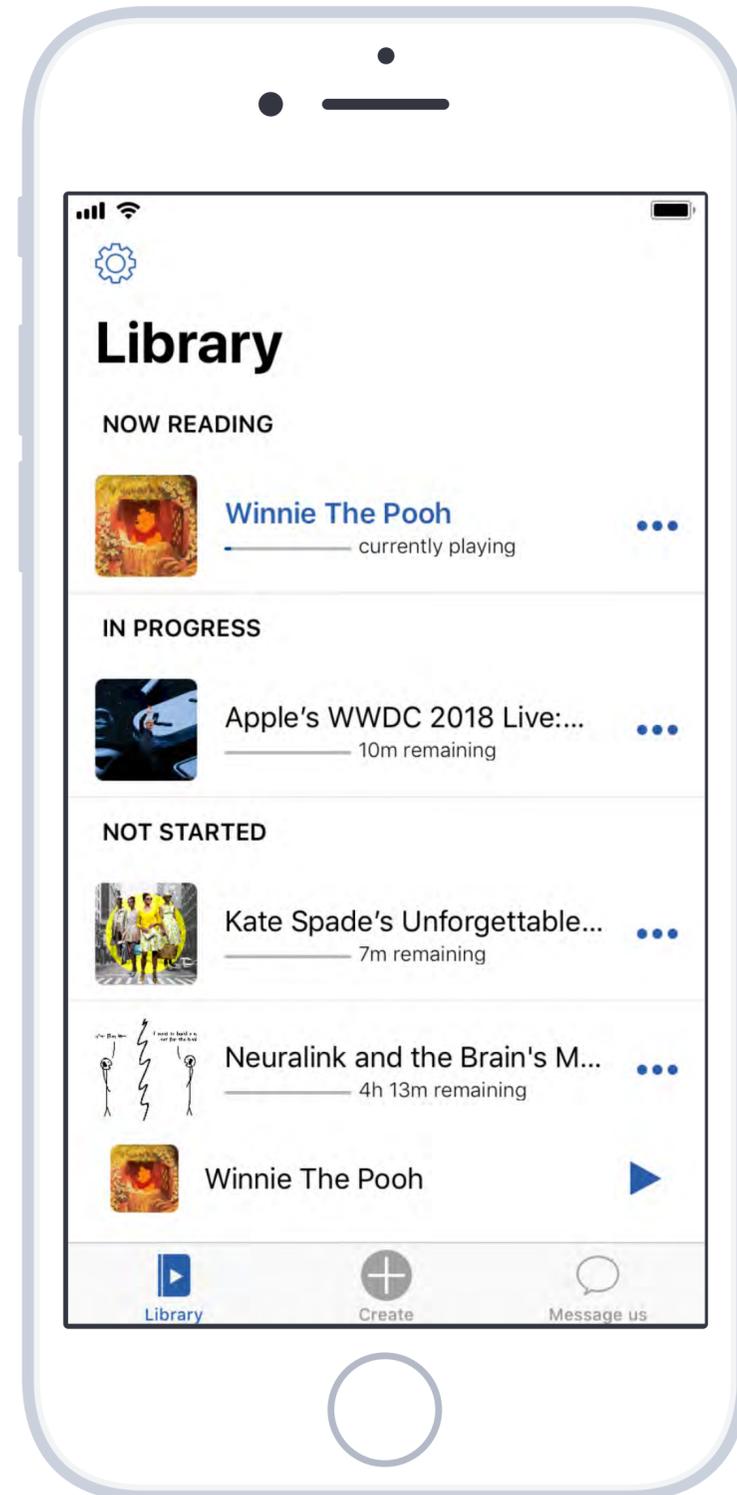
Translucency - sense of depth and layering



Can still engage single-word view, for little kids with dyslexia.



# Visual Aesthetic & Readability



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Follow the general principles of  
**Complexion Reduction**

---

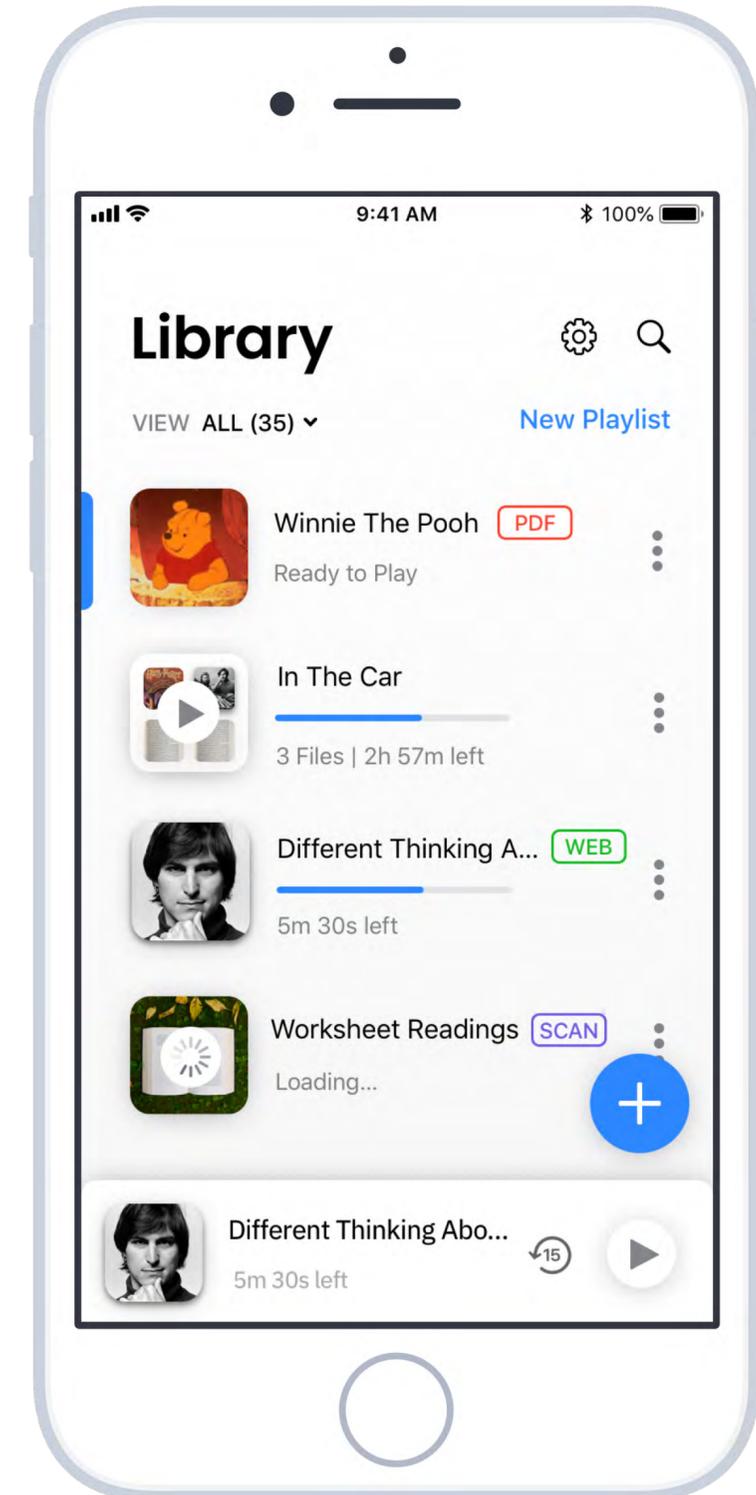
**New typography** to add a sense of  
**playfulness**

---

**Subtle drop shadow** under preview  
art and UI elements to **add dimension**

---

Using **spinners** to show loading as  
per **Human Interface Guidelines**



# Style Guide: Making Things Pixel Perfect for Developers

## Color

### Speechify Blue

#2E87FF

Use sparingly to indicate interactivity and points of interest.



### Highlighter

#D5E7FF

A paler tint of Speechify Blue, used to highlight phrases, words, or as a reaction to user interaction,



### Deep Gray

#848489

A darker gray used for icons and non-title text.



### True Gray

#E3E3E6

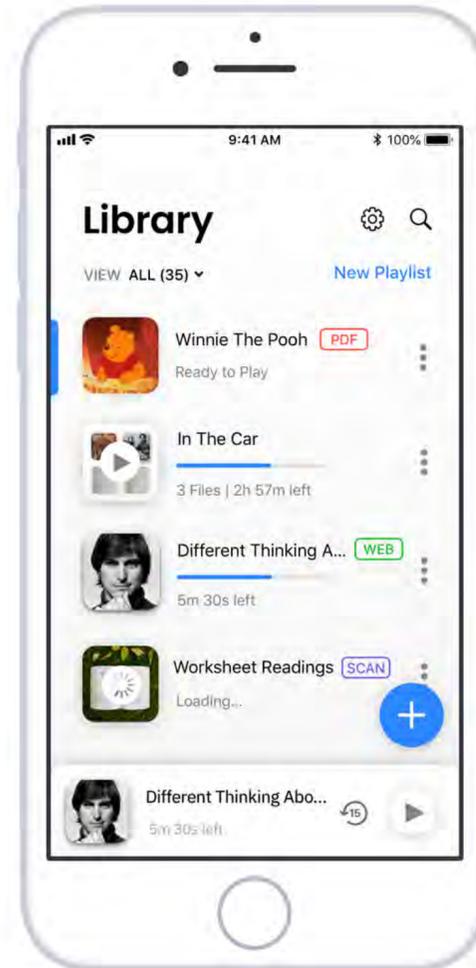
A cool-toned gray used for drop shadows, ground elements, and thin dividers in the layout.



### Ultralite Gray

#F6F6F6

A very subtle gray reserved for subtle washes of color, and page gradients.



## Typography

### Heading

35px - mainHeaderFont()

25x - mainSubHeaderFont()

Poppins SemiBold

### Subheading

20px - mainLabelFont()

SF Pro Display Medium

### Text

18px - mainTextFont()

SF Pro Text Regular

### Caption & Buttons

16px - captionFont()

SF Pro Text Regular

### Label

14px - labelFont()

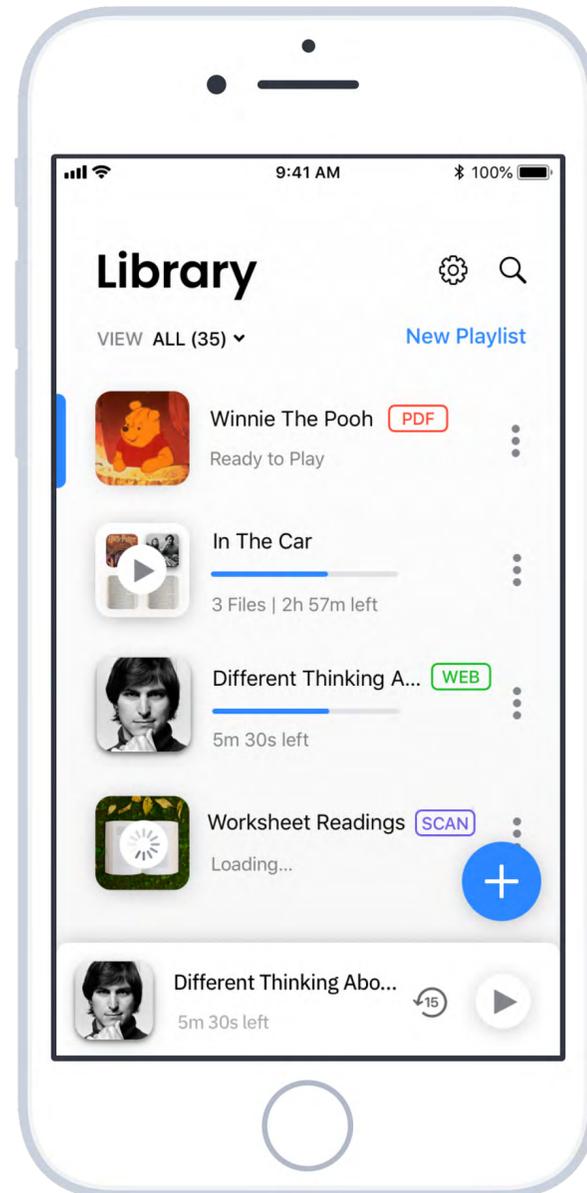
SF Pro Text Medium

## Notes

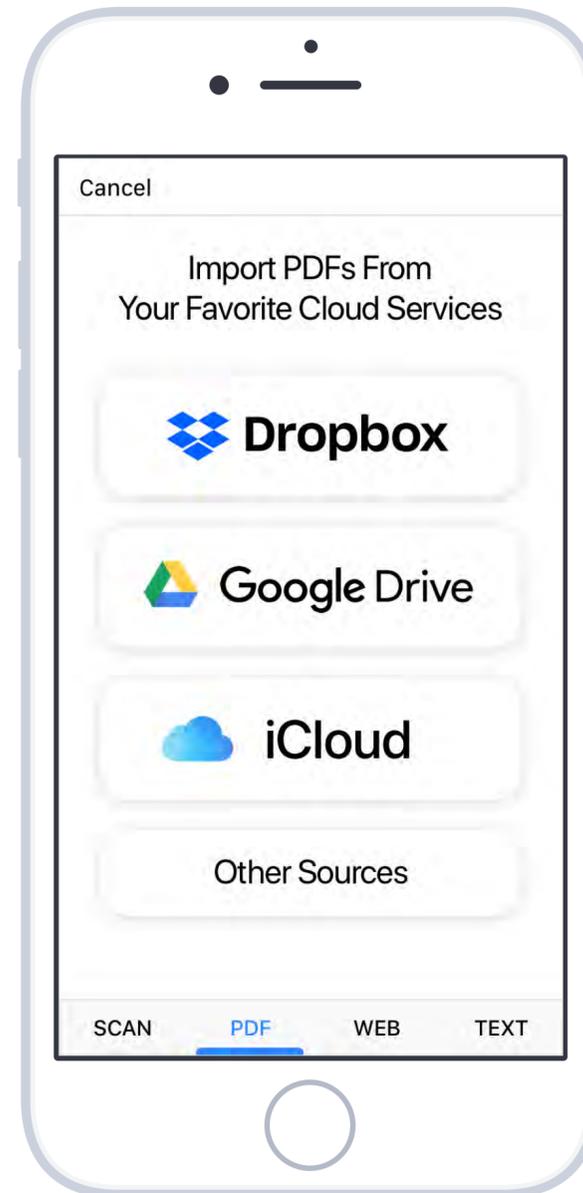
1. File source tags are centered vertically from the file/folder title
2. Loading files' titles are centered vertically on the icon
3. Library background has a gradient from #ffffff > #f6f6f6



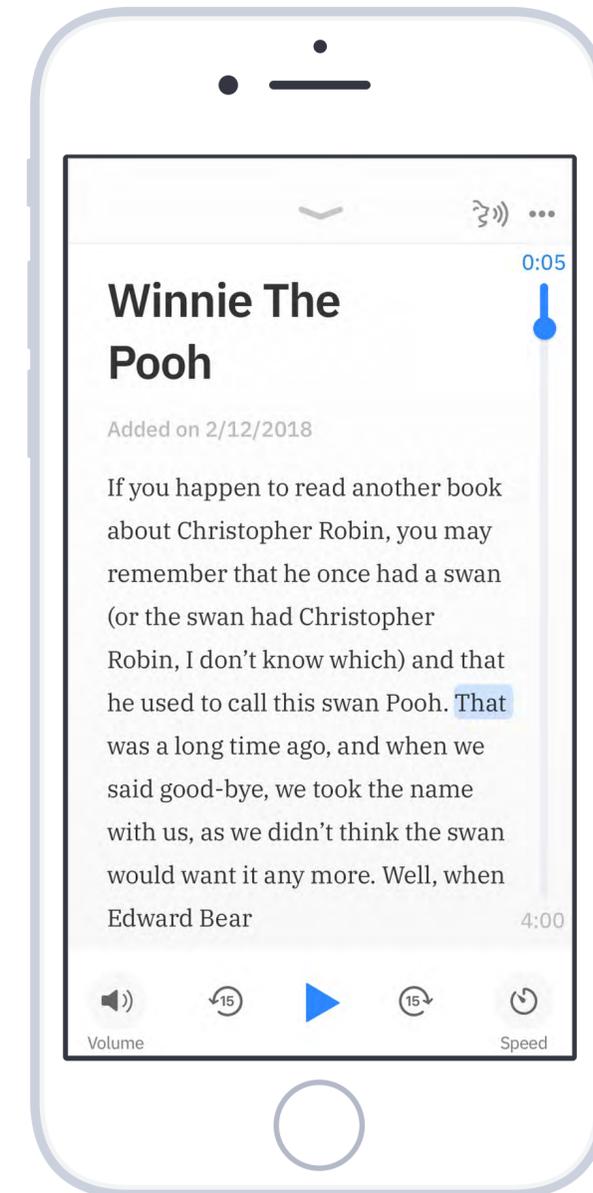
# Current State of the App



A "Library" of Books

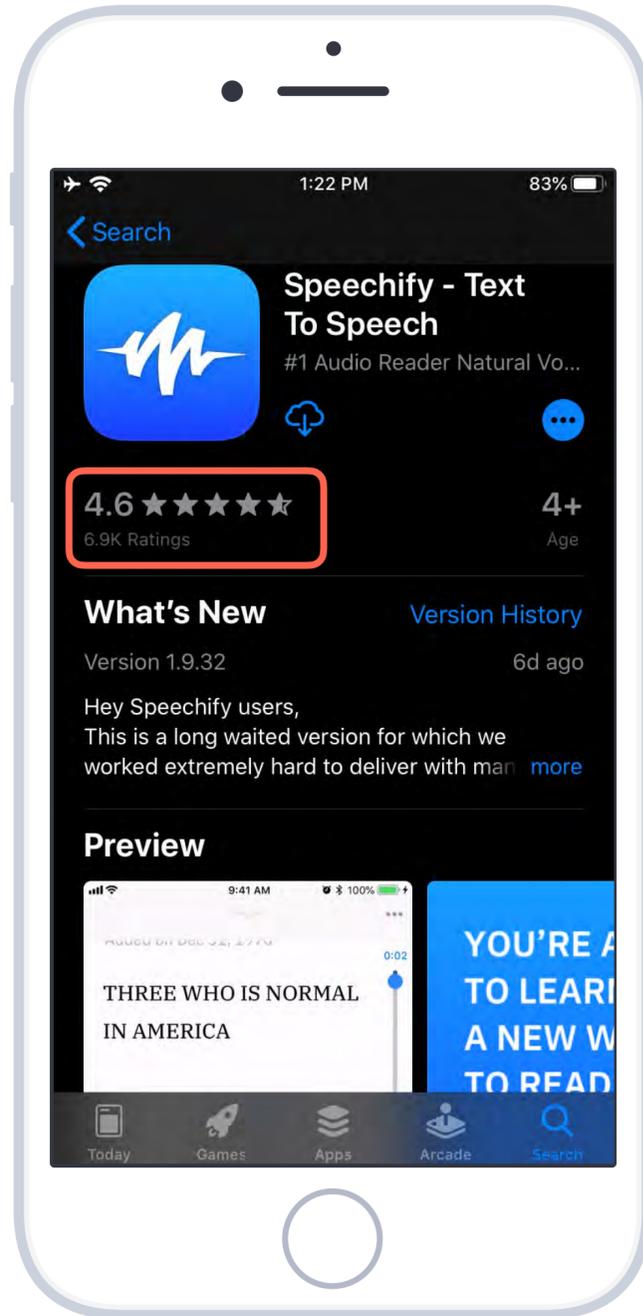


Add Books from Sources

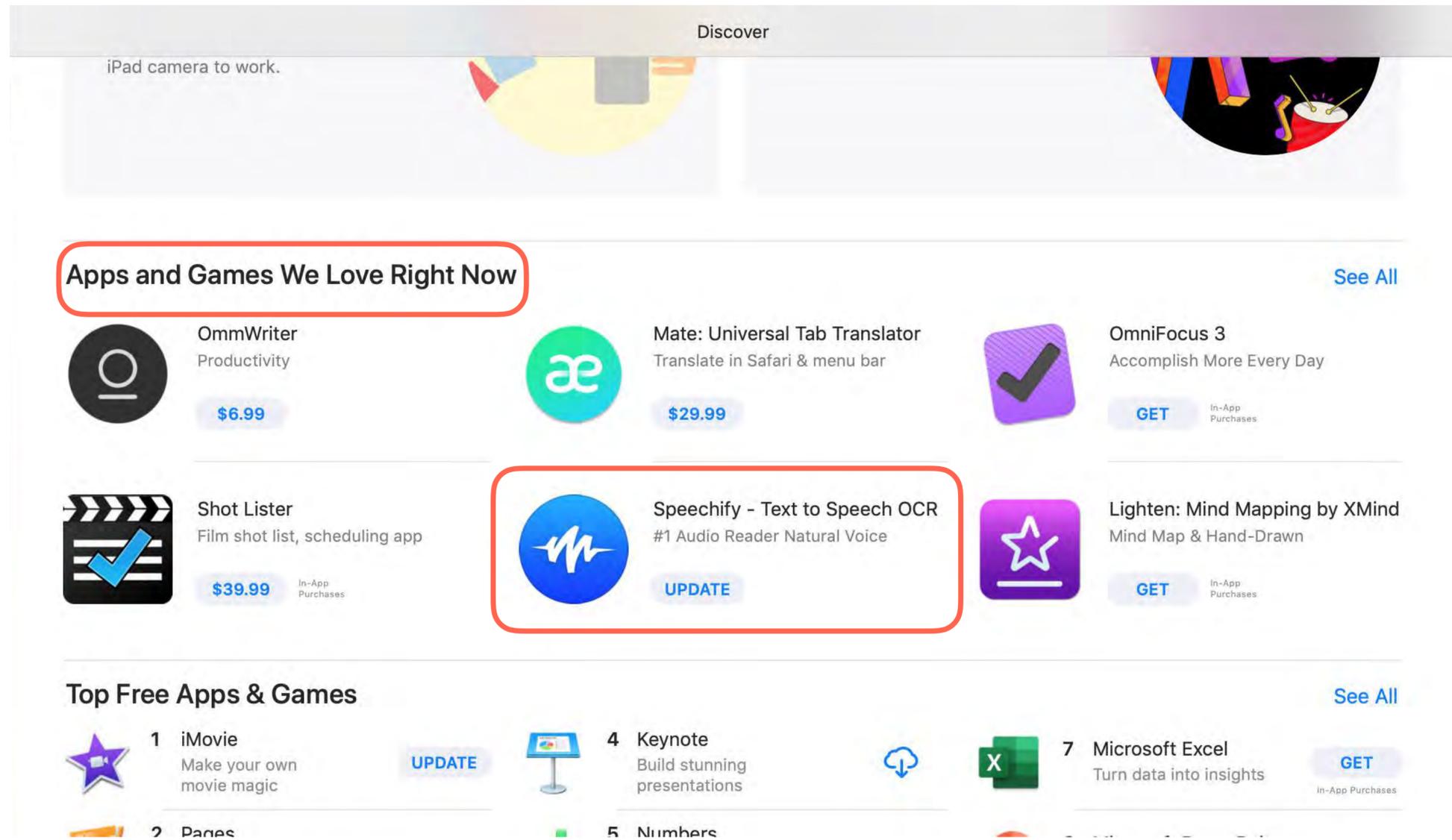


Listen to Books

# Some stats we are proud of...



6.9k ratings with an average of 4.6 ★



Featured in both iOS and Mac App Store

## Featured in **The New York Times**

The New York Times

LEARNING | Bulletin Board

f t e ↻

### Study Help at Your Fingertips

What app or website do you use to help you with your schoolwork?



Kyle Hilton

#### Liz Covey

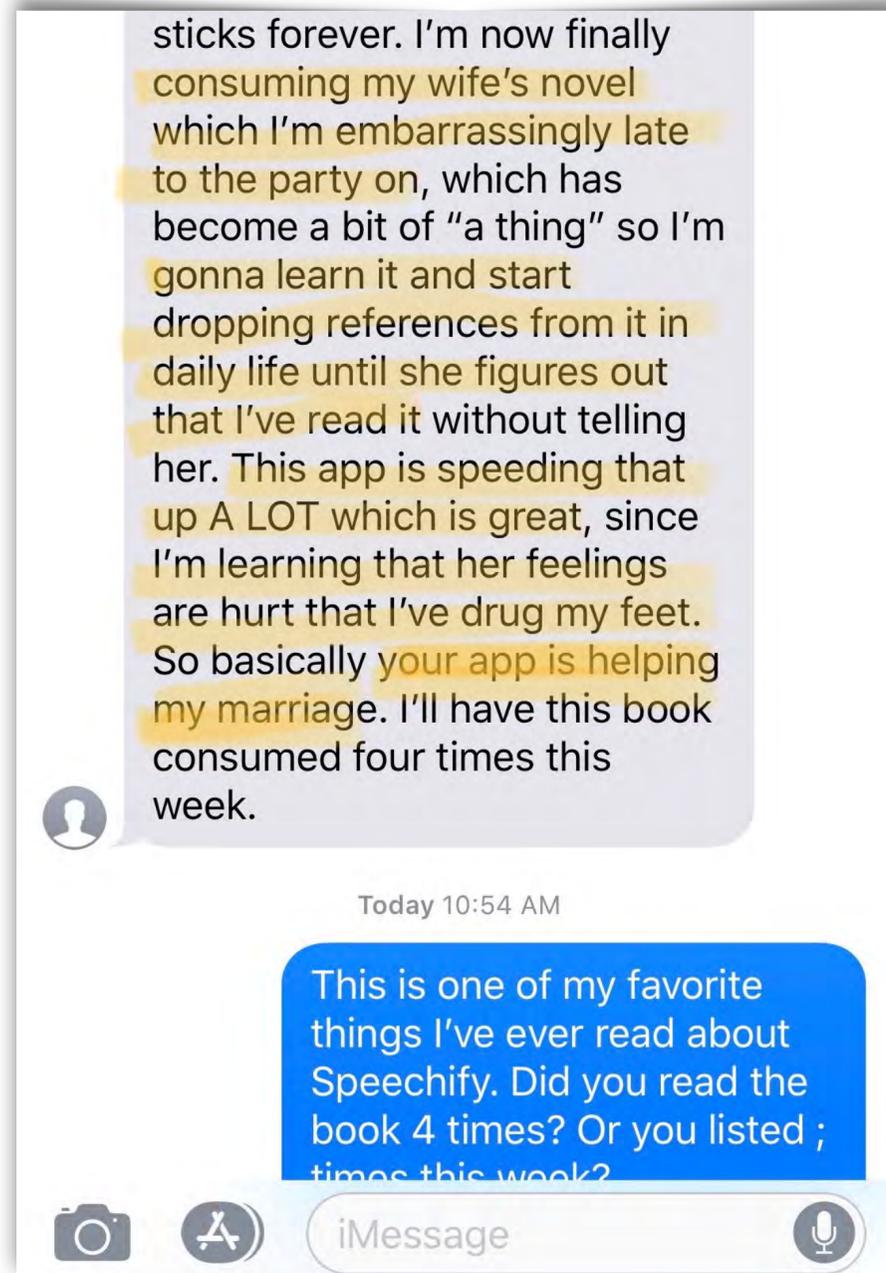
Grand Canyon University, 40, class of 2020

App: Speechify

About: Instantly convert written text to an audio file

“It allows me to listen to my nightly reading while commuting to and from school.”

## But this is really what gets us up in the morning.



My mom was finding apse that would help me

Hi, Anna. My name is Elizabeth. I am Mia's mom. Yes, she meant legally blind. There are not enough words in the universe, to truly express our gratitude for this app! Speechify has made it possible for my daughter to read a book on her own, order off her own menu, read the instructions off the back of a cake box, and so much more! I had no clue how well it would work when I found it but thought we could give it a try...it is easy enough for her to use on her own. It has been wonderful to see her feeling successful, and getting to do a few of the things that her friends can do! Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

Hi Team Speechify! My book experience was: fantastic! This app is amazing! I wish I had this when I was in college! I was first diagnosed with a read disability in college nearly 20 years ago . At the time I switched majors from psychology to computer information systems because I knew then why reading was so time consuming and took so much focus for me... and that it would never get easier. But with your technology that is not true anymore. I literally could read anything now! Thank for this app! It is life changing! I have already recommended it to one of my child's friends who has difficulty reading. And I will continue recommending it to anyone who may need it! Truly with your app people are only limited by their desire to read and not their disability! Amazing!

Thank you!  
And the fact that it is free?!? You guys are amazing!

❤️ Make reading *joyful* and *accessible* to all. 🦊

## Things learned:



This project absolutely made me love the field, the people, the potential to change the world and touch others hearts.



Good documentation is helpful for others to understand design choices.



While interviewing people, the worst response you can get is a no and the best you can get is deep conversation and a lifelong friend.

## Areas to Explore



We focused a lot on utility - making the product functional, intuitive, accessible. But what makes reading joyful? How can we impart that in our experience?



Being self-taught (Brown doesn't have UX major, so I created my own program), sometimes I wonder if the process I follow and the questions I ask are the best they could be. I hope to work with a more experienced designer to improve my methods.



**MATT**  
Developer

**ANNIE**  
Marketing

**CLIFF**  
Founder

**JUSTIN**  
Head Designer

**SIMEON**  
Head Developer

**SOPHIE**  
Simeon's Girlfriend

**RANDY**  
Developer

**VINH**  
Developer

Couldn't Have Done It Without These Guys