

# Zone Learn Headset Boosts ELL Student Performance in Epic Reading App

"Many students feel empowered with the Zone Learn headset...and able to make better connections across stories than before."

- BRIAN LOPEZ, ELD INTERVENTION TEACHER



## Overview

Emma W. Shuey Elementary is a public school located in Rosemead, California that proudly serves over 480 students in grades K-6. Over 40% of students are English Language Learners (ELL). The school's mission is to foster well-rounded students who communicate, collaborate and problem-solve, creating successful citizens for a global environment.

**WEBSITE** [ROSEMEAD.K12.CA.US/SHUEY](https://ROSEMEAD.K12.CA.US/SHUEY)

**INDUSTRY** EDUCATION

**LOCATION** ROSEMEAD, CALIFORNIA

**SOLUTION** ZONE LEARN HEADSET

# Challenge

Brian Lopez is a K-6 Bilingual/ELL teacher with more than 20 years of educational experience. As an expert in digital teaching and learning, Brian continually looks for ways to leverage educational technology to support the needs of his students, inside and outside of the classroom.

In particular, Brian saw an opportunity to improve student focus and engagement during independent reading time.

Over the course of an 8-week study during fall 2023, Brian set out to measure the impact of headset technology on student reading performance. To accomplish this, he used **Epic**, a leading digital reading platform with over 40,000 ebooks and audio-based reading experiences, such as audiobooks, videos, and Read-To-Me books. The study included over 50 students in grades K-6.

“Epic is our gateway to the world of information via online books. It has a plethora of books to choose from and it creates an inclusive learning environment for students that are unable to read on their own,” said Lopez. “The Read-To-Me feature allows students to visually see the words move with directionality across the page, while simultaneously hearing the words read aloud from the story. This blend of visual and auditory learning opens up stories that were hard to grasp in traditional books, making it easier for students to focus and learn new information.”

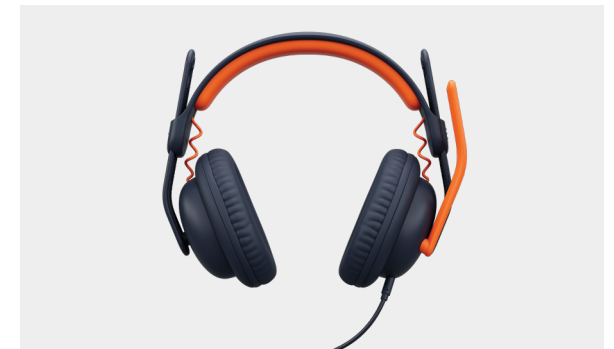
For the first half of the study, Brian’s students used **wired plug-in earbuds** while reading books, listening to audiobooks, and doing activities in the Epic app. The wired earbuds, however, presented several challenges for students. Because the earbuds were not designed to block out ambient noise, students were more easily distracted by classroom chatter and other external noises. In addition, students often fiddled with their earbuds to keep them from falling out of their ears, or from coming unplugged from their computers.



# Solution

For the second half of the study, Brian implemented **Zone Learn**, an adjustable headset designed specifically for young learners and tuned for learning. Students paired the Zone Learn headset with the Epic reading app for independent learning, read-alouds and for various reading activities and assignments.

With audio drivers tuned for vocal clarity rather than music, Zone Learn proved to be ideal for digital learning and reading applications like Epic. With its rigid boom mic, gasket and noise suppression filter, Zone Learn surpassed the wired earbuds in quality, user experience and noise reduction. Unlike the wired earbuds, Zone Learn’s soft, comfortable ear pads and adjustable slider arms provided a personalized fit for students’ smaller heads, which helped the headset stay in position.



Zone Learn also seamlessly integrates into every school’s technological ecosystem. With swappable and upgradable over-ear and on-ear pads and three different input options (3.5 mm AUX, USB-A, and USB-C cables) that securely remain plugged in to the device, Zone Learn also provides a longer lifespan in the classroom, which is better for the environment and schools’ bottom lines.

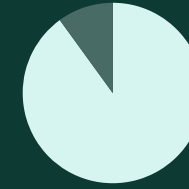


94% of students

said they felt very focused while using Epic with Zone Learn (vs. 18% students feeling very focused with their earbuds)



Brian's class experienced a 40% increase in the number of books finished



90% of students

of students said they felt very confident with their performance while using Epic with the Zone Learn Headset

## Results

"Pairing Zone Learn headsets with the Epic reading app vastly improved students' learning experience," said Lopez. "I can see that students are much more eager to listen to books and answer questions than before." During the study, Brian witnessed improved focus among students. In fact, **94%** of students said they felt very focused while using Epic with Zone Learn (vs. 18% students feeling very focused with their earbuds). One student said that Zone Learn, "helps me pay attention to the book."

Students also experienced fewer distractions while learning with Zone Learn. Over **90%** of students said that they could hear very well with Zone Learn (vs. 50% when using wired earbuds). Brian attributed this to the headphone's intentional design. "The little noises do not disturb them while listening to books on Epic because the headsets are pretty well insulated." Another student stated that they could "hear the books better."

Because of improved focus and fewer

distractions, students finished more books and experienced greater recall. "They are able to make better connections across stories than before," explained Brian. "They are able to retell more details from the stories."

As a result, Brian's class experienced a **40% increase in the number of books finished**. One student said, "I got more information and I could answer more questions" because of Zone Learn.

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The greatest takeaway, however, was students' boost in confidence. Brian said that many students felt more empowered with Zone Learn than before. According to survey results, **90% of students said they felt very confident** with their performance while using Epic with the Zone Learn Headset (vs. only 64% when using earbuds). Brian explained, "I often ask them questions that are not in the story, and I can see them trying with more confidence now." One student expressed that Zone Learn "makes learning more fun than before."

"In my teaching experience, a fundamental key to learning English is being able to hear the language spoken correctly in order to be able to understand the information being communicated," said Lopez. "By using Zone Learn with Epic, we were able to focus more on audio-based learning than ever before, allowing our students to further amplify their comprehension and communication skills."