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## **New Teen & Adult Phonics (TAP) Library App Brings Gritty Themes to Decodable Texts**

**Offers an accessible and engaging digital alternative to “baby books” for older learners**

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Educational app developer Greg McDonald announced today the release of the Teen & Adult Phonics (TAP) Library app for iPad. TAP gives English literacy educators access to a collection of digital novels suitable for older students learning to read with systematic, cumulative instruction in phonics. The app is a collaboration with dyslexia and reading specialist Victoria Leslie who found there was little reading material available to support this instruction.

Leslie teaches synthetic phonics. A 2005 study<sup>(1)</sup> found that this is the most effective way of teaching reading and for the roughly 10% of the population who are dyslexic learners<sup>(2)</sup>, any other approach “can be disastrous,” Victoria warns. “Often teenage learners with significantly low literacy levels have never been exposed to the explicit teaching of synthetic phonics.”

“Decodable books,” she explains, “allow students to read using the level of phonic code they already know. This brings confidence. Of course, an older reader will respond better to material that does not appear to be aimed at young children.” And with themes ranging from unwanted pregnancy to financial ruin and genres that include dystopian science fiction, the TAP Library is indeed not for children.

From his first app (word-building sandbox Planet Lettera), Leslie knew McDonald to be an advocate for language and literacy and approached him in September 2017 with the idea of working together on material to motivate teenaged dyslexic readers. Together they designed and tested the app environment. Now, she writes the stories and he adds quality images and a touch of music...all of which can be turned off. “We wanted to give the user an experience different from a book but also recognize that for many of them, reading takes tremendous concentration. We designed the app to empower them to eliminate distractions.”

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The app is free to download from the Apple App Store. For each novel, access to the supporting materials, beginning pages and narrated introduction is free. Playing the intro to students allows educators to gauge interest in a given story. Each story is sold as a one-time in-app purchase costing USD\$2.99 (CAD\$3.99, AUD\$4.49, GBP£2.99). The developers plan to add one new title roughly every month. Complete details about the series are available at <http://www.FocusOnTAP.com>.

App Store URL: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/teen-adult-phonics-library/id1189152100?mt=8>

Media Kit URL: <http://www.focusontap.com/press/>

(1) Rhona Johnston and Joyce Watson, "The Effects of Synthetic Phonics Teaching on Reading and Spelling Attainment: A Seven Year Longitudinal Study", 2005

(2) Article "Written Language Disorders: Incidence and Prevalence" on the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association website

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