# Bookshare Helps Student Become Lifelong Reader

Bookshare, a Benetech initiative.

I want to say I first became aware of Bookshare around 6th or 7th grade.

At the time I was starting to do more reading. And my mom is a dyslexia therapist. And so, somehow between my vision teacher and her I got a, got connected to it.

And I was like, wow, this is like the best thing ever. So whenever I was 6 weeks old I was diagnosed with bilateral retinoblastoma, which is a pediatric cancer that affected both of eyes. And so from the result of that I have a prosthetic left eye, and 2400 vision in my right eye. Prior to Bookshare a lot of my issues were being very stationary. Because the, uh, mission that I use you can't move it. And it's in one spot. The way that you, I kind of had with the screen, my head and neck would kind of get to when I get headaches.

You know, I remember having Bookshare on my iPad for the first time, and realizing that I could sit on the couch. So now it's like, mom, I'm reading a book on the couch. And, mom, I'm in the car reading a book. So that was really fun to, you know, realize something so simple. But it was like the coolest thing ever. As I've gotten older I can stay in, you know, under CCTV and read print faster now than I could. But at the time I was still slower than most of the people that I was, you know, in grade level with.

And so as I got Bookshare and realized I can listen to things. It was just so much easier. It was a great feeling to know that, you know, I'm, you know, on level with everybody else now. And, you know, I'm ahead of people and so it was very nice to realize that and realize that this was something that's always going to be there.

This week is a pretty big week, um, today's Tuesday. And on Friday I leave for Lubbock to move into my college dorm, my freshman year, um, on Saturday. So it's pretty big stuff going on. I'm pretty excited. I would tell anybody who needs to apply for college be patient, you know, you can do it. And hold yourself to a state that you think you can maintain, and maybe a little bit of both. What you think you can, because I've always said, there's no reason why I can't do it the, the same as somebody else next to me or even better. Heading into college I know that I will use Bookshare for a lot of different things.

I will use it for textbook reading, and also I do like to read for pleasure. And so I know that I'll use it for that. But I think that Bookshare will definitely be a part of my life for the rest of my life.