

HAIGHTS CROSS COMMUNICATIONS **PRESS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RECORDED BOOKS PARTNERS WITH SAN DIEGO SCHOOL TO STUDY IMPACT OF INTEGRATING AUDIOBOOKS INTO READING CURRICULUM

Study Shows Significant Fluency Gains in Samuel Gompers Secondary School Reading Class that Combined Recorded Books and Print Text

Prince Frederick, MD – December 9, 2003—Recorded Books, LLC, the premier publisher of unabridged audiobooks since 1979 and a fully owned Hights Cross Communications company, has announced the results of pioneering classroom research into the impact of integrating professionally narrated audiobooks into a traditional print-based reading curriculum.

Recorded Books partnered with Samuel Gompers Secondary School in San Diego, CA, during a six-week summer school reading course this past June and July 2003. In the study, one group of 50 eighth grade students spent 45-minutes each day reading their printed book along with listening to the professionally narrated audio recording of the same text. A control group of 30 students used only the printed text in their reading class.

Post-tests of both groups were conducted to determine gains in reading fluency levels achieved by each group. Test results revealed gains of 31.9 correct words per minutes (CWPM) for the students who listened to professional narration while following along in their print text, compared to gains of 20.4 CWPM for the control group who used only their print text.

David Berset, Recorded Books President, stated: “We believe this unique study suggests that combining a high-quality, professionally narrated recorded book with conventional text-based reading instruction adds depth and vividness to a student’s ‘experience’ of the reading text. The addition of the “modeled” readings on recorded books led to impressive gains in fluency for these struggling readers. Making audiobooks available in classrooms and school libraries is a modest, but potentially high-payback, investment in improving students’ reading skills and enjoyment.”

According to Donald R. Mitchell, Principal of Samuel Gompers Secondary School: “When I heard the results of how Recorded Books helped our struggling readers, I was very pleased. These 80 eighth grade students were two to three grades behind in their literacy skill development. Not only were the students excited over the excellent book selections, but they also enjoyed the opportunity of being able to listen to good young adult literature during their independent reading time. Our entire literacy staff is a strong believer in Recorded Books. Thank you for the opportunity to show that our diverse student population can shine and demonstrate their mastery in developing literacy skills.”

Samuel Gompers Secondary School serves nearly 2,000 students in grades 7-12 within the San Diego City Schools.

About Recorded Books, LLC:

Recorded Books, LLC, a division of Hights Cross Communications, was founded in 1979 and is the world’s largest independent publisher of unabridged audiobooks. Recorded Books provides unabridged books on cassette and CD for consumer markets, libraries, and schools. For more information, visit www.recordedbooks.com.

About Hights Cross Communications:

Founded in 1997 and based in White Plains, NY, Hights Cross Communications is a premier educational and library publisher dedicated to creating the finest books, audio products, periodicals, software and online services, serving the following markets: K-12 supplemental education, public and school library publishing, audiobooks, and medical continuing education publishing. Hights Cross companies include: Sundance/Newbridge Educational Publishers (Northborough, MA), Triumph Learning (New York, NY), Recorded Books (Prince Frederick, MD), Chelsea House Publishers (Broomall, PA), and Oakstone Publishing (Birmingham, AL). Hights Cross investors include Great Hill Partners and CSFB (formerly DLJ Merchant Banking Partners, L.P.) For more information visit www.hightscross.com.

Safe Harbor Statement: This press release contains forward-looking statements. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terms such as “may,” “will,” “should,” “could,” “would,” “expect,” “plan,” “anticipate,” “believe,” “potential” and similar expressions intended to identify forward-looking statements. These statements reflect our current views with respect to future events and are based on assumptions and subject to risks and uncertainties. These risks, uncertainties and other factors may cause our actual results, performances or achievements to be materially different from those expressed or implied by our forward-looking statements. Factors that may cause our actual results to differ materially from our forward-looking statements include, among others, changes in external market factors, changes in our business or growth strategy, or an inability to execute our strategy due to changes in our industry or the economy generally, the emergence of new or growing competitors and various other competitive factors. In light of these risks and uncertainties, there can be no assurance that the events and circumstances described in forward-looking statements contained in this press release will in fact occur. You should read this press release completely and with the understanding that our actual results may be materially different from what we expect. We will not update these forward-looking statements, even though our situation may change in the future. We qualify all of our forward-looking statements by these cautionary statements.
