

AUDIOBOOK PROJECT WELCOME & PREP PACKET

   *for Indie Authors*



prepared by
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INTRODUCTION

Hi!

If you're reading this, then you're either interested in working on an audiobook project together, or you've downloaded this packet to get an idea of what to expect when working with an audiobook narrator on a future project. Either way, I hope that you find this guide helpful. If something isn't clear or you have additional questions, please send me an email at v@voicesbyveronica.com.

There's a lot that goes into the audiobook creation process before I get into my booth and hit that red Record button. To make things go smoothly, I need the following items from the author when we begin the project:

- A **PDF of the book**, with edit permissions unlocked on the file. I will only share the file with my proofer during the editing process, but I need to be able to edit the PDF to make notes and comments to optimize my performance.
- The **total wordcount for the script**. This provides a rough estimate of how long the book will be, as well as how long it will take me to record it.
- A **general summary of the story**, usually two to four paragraphs.
- A **list of characters** with key details to guide performance.
- **If the book is part of a series, additional notes** about characters' growth and development are important to guide performance choices.

Social media is a key component of many authors' marketing and reader, engagement strategies. As a narrator, I'm on some platforms more than others, but I'm happy to help authors with book-related content for them to share. I'm most active on Facebook and Instagram, with a lesser presence on Twitter and LinkedIn. I'm also very comfortable with Discord and doing live readings.

Depending upon how you work with social media, I can post during the audiobook creation process and share audio snippets, pictures, or quick videos of in-booth fun. Other ideas? Let's chat about it.

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CHARACTER SKETCHES

Who are the characters in your book? Getting to know characters before that first script readthrough can help create a better image of them for the audiobook performance. Consider a paragraph or two for each main character as well as key minor characters who are important to the story. Details like appearance, gender, ethnicity, accent, and backstory help the narrator craft their interpretation of the characters and prepare accordingly.

Different narrators have different strategies for discovering nuances about characters. For my part, having pictures (your 'perfect cast' or an inspiration board) is very helpful. YouTube videos are excellent when it comes to showcasing a particular speech pattern, accent, or even mentality.



CHARACTER INFO SHEET

- **Name, age, gender, appearance** – The general overview for major and minor characters with speaking roles. For non-human characters, make sure to mention actual age as well as what human age they appear.
- **Background** – Where are they from? Did they grow up there, or someplace different? What kind of education did they have? What kind of place do they have in society, and are they comfortable with it?
- **General attitude and speaking pattern** – Are they laid back? Anxious? Efficient? Easygoing? Give two or three adjectives to describe for to me. If they have an accent, what is it and how pronounced is it?
- **Your inspiration for the character** – This is where pictures, YouTube videos, and other links can provide a great reference.
- **Backstory/details not present in the first three chapters.** – Share the details! Narrators don't post spoilers, we just want to get inside your characters' brains and see what makes them tick.
- **Romance prospects** – In series, it helps to know if a character is going to be part of a romance in later books to guide the voice used for them.
- **Other inspirations** – Playlists, Pinterest boards, color palettes, whatever gives a sense of the character can be helpful. Share away!

If your book is nonfiction, you can still provide information about the people as well as the audience for whom the book is intended. Knowing the intended listener helps me adjust my performance accordingly.

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PRONUNCIATION GUIDES

In some genres like science fiction and fantasy, authors create names, places, and concepts that don't always get an entry in standard dictionaries. If you have names that could be mispronounced or have multiple pronunciations, pronunciation guides are necessary. When in doubt, spell it out ("Robert" is 'row-bear', not 'rob'-'bert') or record yourself saying the name.

If your characters speak multiple languages or use a lot of accents, mention that in the character sketches. If you used a particular resource when writing the book or are a native speaker of the language, offer that resource at the beginning of the project.

If your world has rules about speech ("Everyone from the Emerald Valley speaks with an American Southern accent, and everyone from Silver City speaks with a New York accent,") then include those in the story summary and character sketches.

STORY & SERIES SYNOPSIS

Narrators are fans of books. If we're working on a series, then this is the opportunity for you to tell me about your story, its development, the world it inhabits, your characters' dreams and motivations, and more. If the series is closed and has a definite end, let me know. I won't spoil anything for your readers or listeners, but it will inform my performance.

Imagine that we're going to sit down at your favorite coffee shop, café, or bar, and I want nothing more than to know how you put this amazing story together and brought it to life on the page. Let this be the permission to tell me everything you want about your story.

You can do this as a paragraph or two per book, or several paragraphs that describe the major and minor story arcs. Whatever helps you to best convey the flow of action and development of story is the best method.

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OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

Cover Art

The format for audiobook covers differs from the standard book cover, and should include the name of the narrator as well as the title of the book and the author. Good cover design is essential for audiobooks, so consider budgeting for a modified design based upon the original cover.

Once you have the cover art, please share it with me so that I can use it as part of my social media. At a minimum, I like to post about new releases on my feeds and use the extra-shiny covers as part of my promotion when I travel to conferences and author meet-ups.

Social Media

If you'd like me to promote the project on my social media feeds, please let me know what accounts and handles to tag for you. If we're working together on a project using my pseudonym (she does more of the spicy romance and sexy LitRPG style books), I'm happy to share those handles with you for promotion.

Need an audio snippet that's not part of the standard retail sample for promotion? Just let me know and I'll send it along with the completed audio files.

If you have a virtual assistant or superfan who manages this for you, please let me know so I can connect with them on these activities.

Interviews, Podcasts, and More

With enough notice, I am more than happy to join you on interviews, podcast episodes, FB Live, Discord, or many other promotional endeavors that you may have planned for your book. We can coordinate via email.

I don't travel very much at the moment (teenagers are darling yet needy creatures, and I have two of them at home), but when I do go to conferences, I love to meet up with "my" authors and share space on panels or at tables. You'll even get one of my special "Voiced by Veronica" badge ribbons!

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AUDIOBOOK PRODUCTION TIMELINE

Script and Materials Delivery

Once we've set delivery dates for the First Fifteen/First Chapter and the final audiobook, the author will need to send a PDF of the manuscript and any additional notes or materials to guide the prep process.

Author Responsibility: Send all materials to narrator via email.

Script Prep

I read through the script at least twice. The first time is for story and general character notes; this is the fun read. The second is a deep dive to highlight characters and annotate the script to help my performance; this is my strategic readthrough where the provided character notes, pronunciation guide, and additional materials play a huge role.

Author Responsibility: Be available to answer questions via email.

The First Fifteen / The First Chapter

I record the first fifteen minutes or the first chapter of the book for you to review. If there are additional characters who play a major role but don't show up in the first chapter, I'll record a piece for them so that you can hear the choices that I've made for my performance.

This step is important to the success of our project, as it's the time when you can provide me with any specific direction or feedback related to character interpretation and delivery. Once you approve the audio, I will move on to recording the entire audiobook.

Author Responsibility: Listen to the sample and provide feedback via email.

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AUDIOBOOK PRODUCTION TIMELINE - CONT'D

Narration

I record the audiobook, using the notes and materials provided as well as any feedback presented during the First Fifteen/First Chapter.

Author Responsibility: Be available to answer questions via email.

Proofing/Editing/Mastering

I send the raw audio to my engineering team. They edit and master the audio and proof the files against the script, then send me a list of corrections. I record the corrections and they incorporate them into the final files.

Author Responsibility: Be available to answer questions via email.

Upload/Deliver the Audiobook

Once the engineer finishes incorporating the edits into the audio, they deliver the files to me and I upload them to the designated site. If we're working through a group like ACX or Findaway, they will do a quality control check on the audio before putting it up for sale.

If you plan to distribute the audio yourself, I will upload the files to a shared space on DropBox and make that link available once full payment is received.

Author Responsibility: Approve audio and remit final balance to narrator.

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AUTHOR CHECKLIST

Email to narrator with the following:

- Script in PDF Format
- Word count for manuscript
- Summary of the story (2-4 paragraphs)
- Social media handles for author account(s) for promotion
- Any proposed marketing/promotion events to include the narrator

These items can be sent as email attachments or shared with the narrator via a service like Google Drive or Dropbox:

- Character sketches for major characters
(include minor characters who become prominent in later books)
- Pronunciation guide (if applicable)
- Full story synopsis (if applicable)
- Series notes (if the book is part of a series)
- Additional materials (links, playlists, images) to inform performance
- Cover art for audio that includes narrator attribution



Do you have questions that haven't been addressed here? Other ideas about marketing and promotion? Or maybe you want to know about bundling audio in series to maximize sales? Send me an email at v@voicesbyveronica.com and we'll keep the conversation going.

I look forward to working with you and bringing voice to your story.

~ Veronica Giguere