Sample Chapter Selector Guide

Choose the Perfect Chapters for Voice Samples

Kelly Jean
Audiobook Narrator

WHY SAMPLE CHAPTERS MATTER

The chapters you choose for voice samples serve multiple purposes:

✓ VOICE DEVELOPMENT
Help me understand your characters and create authentic voices

✓ MILESTONE CHECK-INS
Give you confidence that the narration matches your vision

✓ RETAIL SAMPLE
The first 5 minutes becomes your Audible preview - your sales tool!

✓ MARKETING ASSETS
Selected scenes become promotional clips for social media

Choosing the right chapters ensures the best possible audiobook and maximizes your sales potential.

TYPES OF SAMPLES YOU'LL NEED

INITIAL VOICE SAMPLES (Pre-Production)

Purpose: Develop and approve character voices before full recording
Length: 3-5 minutes per main character
When: Before recording begins
Your Task: Review and approve voices

MILESTONE SAMPLES (During Production)

Purpose: Verify quality, consistency, and artistic interpretation
Length: 15-25 minutes at key checkpoints
When: 25% and 50% completion
Your Task: Provide feedback on any concerns

RETAIL SAMPLE (For Audible/ACX)

Purpose: Hook potential listeners and drive sales
Length: First 5 minutes (auto-generated by ACX)
When: Final Delivery
Your Task: Ensure opening is compelling

MARKETING CLIPS (Promotional)

Purpose: Social media promotion, ads, teasers
Length: 15-60 seconds
When: After Completion
Your Task: Identify swoon-worthy moments

INITIAL VOICE SAMPLES: CHARACTER INTRODUCTION

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN VOICE SAMPLE CHAPTERS

✓ CHAPTER INTRODUCTION
The first time we meet this character, or early in their arc
✓ PERSONALITY ON DISPLAY
A scene that showcases their core traits and speaking style
✓ EMOTIONAL RANGE
Includes at least 2-3 different emotions (happy, frustrated, vulnerable, etc)
✓ DIALOGUE-HEAVY
Plenty of spoken dialogue, not just internal monologue or description
✓ INTERACTION WITH OTHERS
Shows how they speak to different people (love interest, friends, enemies)
✓ REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOOK
Captures the overall tone and vibe of your story

IDEAL LENGTH: 3-5 MINUTES

This equals approximately:
- 450-750 words
- 1.5-2.5 pages (standard formatting)
- One complete scene or conversation

CHAPTER SELECTION CHECKLIST

For each main character, choose a chapter/scene that includes:

- ☐ Clear character voice and personality
- ☐ Dialogue (not just narration)
- ☐ At least 2 different emotions
- ☐ Interaction with another character
- ☐ Represetative of chaaracter's arc
- ☐ Early in book (first 25%)
- ☐ No major spoilers
- ☐ Showcases what makes this character unique

EXAMPLES OF GREAT VOICE SAMPLE SCENES

FOR THE PROTAGONIST:
- ✓ First day at new job (nervous but trying to appear confident)
- ✓ Confrontation with antagonist (angry, defensive strong)
- ✓ Conversation with best friend (relaxed, authentic, vulnerable)
- ✓ Meeting the love interest (flustered, attracted, guarded)

FOR THE LOVE INTEREST:
- ✓ Introduction scene from their POV
- ✓ Flirty banter with protagonist (playful, confident, charming)
- ✓ Moment of vulnerability (showing depth beyond surface)
- ✓ Protective moment (revealing their caring nature)

FOR PARANORMAL CHARACTERS:
- ✓ Using their powers (showcasing otherworldly qualities)
- ✓ Explaining supernatural lore (authoritative, knowledgeable)
- ✓ Struggling with their nature (internal conflict)

MILESTONE SAMPLES: QUALITY CHECK-INS

25% MILESTONE SAMPLE

Purpose: Early quality check and voice consistency verification
Length: 15-20 minutes
Content: I'll select from the first quarter of your book

WHAT I'LL INCLUDE:
- Multiple character voices
- Various emotional scenes
- Technical quality demonstration
- Pacing and tone samples

YOUR TASK:
Review for:

- [ ] Character voice match approved samples
- [ ] Pacing feels right
- [ ] Emotional beats landing correctly
- [ ] Technical quality (clear audio, no issues)
- [ ] Overall satisfaction with artistic interpretation

50% MILESTONE SAMPLE

Purpose: CRITICAL checkpoint before completing recording
Length: 20-25 minutes
Content: I'll select key scenes from the middle section

WHAT I'LL INCLUDE:
- Romantic/intimate scenes (if applicable)
- Character relationship dynamics
- Emotional high points
- Voice consistency check

YOUR TASK:
⚠️ **LAST CHANCE for major adjustments!**
Review for:

- [ ] Romantic chemistry working
- [ ] Intimate scenes handled appropriately
- [ ] Character growth reflected in voices
- [ ] Emotional depth and authenticity
- [ ] Any concerns before final quarter

IMPORTANT:
After 50% approval, only minor correction can be made without significant timeline impact.

RETAIL SAMPLE: YOUR AUDIBLE HOOK

THE FIRST 5 MINUTES ARE CRITICAL

ACX automatically creates your retail sample from the FIRST 5 MINUTES of your audiobook (including opening credits).

This sample is what potential listeners hear before buying!

WHAT MAKES A GREAT OPENING?

✓ IMMEDIATE HOOK
Start with action, conflict, or intrigue - not backstory

✓ STRONG VOICE
Showcase your narrator's skill and character voices immediately

✓ GENRE CLARITY
Make it obvious this is romance (and what sub-genre)

✓ EMOTIONAL CONNECTION
Give listeners a reason to care about the character

✓ COMPELLING NARRATION
Professional quality that makes them want more

✓ REPRESENTATIVE TONE
Matches the overall vibe of your book

EVALUATING YOUR OPENING

Ask Yourself:

☐ Does it hook listeners in the first 30 seconds?

☐ Is the protagonist's voice engaging and distinctive?

☐ Does it showcase the romance genre clearly?

☐ Would YOU keep listening if you heard this sample?

☐ Does it avoid info-dumps or slow exposition?

☐ Is there dialogue within the first 2 minutes?

☐ Does it create questions that make listeners curious?

COMMON OPENING MISTAKES TO AVOID

✗ STARTING WITH BACKSTORY
  "Ten years ago, Sarah had left her hometown..."
  → Boring! Start with present action.

✗ EXCESSIVE WORLD-BUILDING
  Long explanations of magic systems, history, politics
  → Save it for later. Hook them first.

✗ WEATHER DESCRIPTIONS
  "It was a dark and stormy night..."
  → Cliché and slow. Get to the character.

✗ WAKING UP SCENES
  Character waking up, getting ready, routine morning
  → Overdone. Start with something interesting.

✗ PROLOGUE CONFUSION
  Prologue with different characters/time period
  → Can confuse listeners about who to follow.

FIXING A WEAK OPENING

If your book starts slowly, consider:

OPTION 1: REWRITE THE OPENING
Best for: Books with slow first chapters
Action: Write a new, hookier opening specifically for audio

OPTION 2: START AT CHAPTER 2
Best for: Books where action starts in Chapter 2
Action: Skip Chapter 1, add brief context if needed

OPTION 3: ADD A TEASER PROLOGUE
Best for: Books with exciting moments later
Action: Pull a dramatic scene from later as a "teaser," then
"Rewind to where it all began..."

OPTION 4: CUSTOM INTRO
Best for: Series books or established authors
Action: Add a 30-60 second author introduction that hooks listeners

We can discuss these options during pre-production!

MARKETING CLIPS: PROMOTIONAL SAMPLES

PURPOSE OF MARKETING CLIPS

After your audiobook is complete, I'll create 3-4 promotional clips for your marketing use:

- 15-second teaser (Instagram/TikTok)
- 30-second promo (Facebook/Instagram ads)
- 60-second extended sample (YouTube/website)
- Audiogram snippets (social media posts)

WHAT MAKES A GREAT MARKETING CLIP?

✓ SWOON-WORTHY MOMENTS
Romantic, emotional, or sexy scenes that make readers want more

✓ NO SPOILERS
Intriguing but doesn't give away plot twists

✓ STANDALONE
Makes sense without context

✓ EMOTIONALLY COMPELLING
Makes listeners feel something

✓ SHOWCASES NARRATION
Highlights voice acting and production quality

✓ GENRE-APPROPRIATE
Clearly romance, clearly your subgenre

IDEAL SCENES FOR MARKETIN CLIPS

ROMANTIC MOMENTS:
✓ First kiss
✓ Declaration of love
✓ Tender/vulnerable confession
✓ Steamy/intimate moment (if appropriate for your audience)
✓ Reunion after separation
✓ Protective/swoony gesture

EMOTIONAL MOMENTS:

✓ Heartbreak or betrayal

✓ Moment of realization

✓ Powerful internal monologue

✓ Climactic confrontation

✓ Triumphant victory

CHEMISTRY/BANTER:

✓ Witty dialogue exchange

✓ Sexual tension

✓ Enemies-to-lovers sparring

✓ Playful teasing

✓ "I hate that I love you" moment

MARKETING CLIP WORKSHEET

Identify 5-10 potential scenes for marketing clips:

SCENE 1:

Chapter:_____ Page: _____

Type: ☐ Romantic ☐ Emotional ☐ Banter ☐ Steamy

Why it's great: _____

SCENE 2:

Chapter:_____ Page: _____

Type: ☐ Romantic ☐ Emotional ☐ Banter ☐ Steamy

Why it's great: _____

SCENE 3:

Chapter: _____ Page: _____

Type: ☐ Romantic ☐ Emotional ☐ Banter ☐ Steamy

Why it's great: _____

SCENE 4:

Chapter: _____ Page: _____

Type: ☐ Romantic ☐ Emotional ☐ Banter ☐ Steamy

Why it's great: _____

SCENE 5:

Chapter: _____ Page: _____

Type: ☐ Romantic ☐ Emotional ☐ Banter ☐ Steamy

Why it's great: _____

SAMPLE SELECTION WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to identify your sample chapters!

INITIAL VOICE SAMPLES

CHARACTER 1:

Sample Chapter/Scene: Chapter _____ , Pages _____

Why this scene: _____

_____

Emotions shown: _____

Key dialogue/interaction: _____

CHARACTER 2:

Sample Chapter/Scene: Chapter _____ , Pages _____

Why this scene: _____

_____

Emotions shown: _____

Key dialogue/interaction: _____

CHARACTER 3:

Sample Chapter/Scene: Chapter _____ , Pages _____

Why this scene: _____

_____

Emotions shown: _____

Key dialogue/interaction: _____

RETAIL SAMPLE EVALUATION

My book begins with:

☐ Action/conflict
☐ Character introduction
☐ Dialogue
☐ Internal monologue
☐ Description/setting
☐ Prologue
☐ Other: _____

Does your opening hook listeners immediately?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure

If no or unsure, would you like to discuss alternatives?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

MARKETING CLIPS

List 5 scenes that would make great promotional clips:

1. Chapter _____ , Page _____ - _____
2. Chapter _____ , Page _____ - _____
3. Chapter _____ , Page _____ - _____
4. Chapter _____ , Page _____ - _____
5. Chapter _____ , Page _____ - _____

QUICK REFERENCE CHECKLIST

BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR MANUSCRIPT:

☐ Identified voice sample scenes for each main character
☐ Evaluated your opening (first 5 minutes)
☐ Listed potential marketing clip scenes
☐ Noted any concerns about sample selection
☐ Ready to discuss alternatives if needed

REMEMBER:
- I'm here to help you choose the best samples
- We can discuss options during our consultation
- Your input ensures the samples serve your goals
- Great samples = better audiobook experience + more sales!

QUESTIONS ABOUT SAMPLE SELECTION?

I'm happy to help you choose the perfect chapters!

During our consultation, we'll discuss:
- Your book's opening and retail sample strategy
- Best scenes for chapter voice development
- Marketing clip opportunities
- Any concerns or special considerations

Let's make sure your audiobook samples work as hard as possible to showcase yor story and drive sales!

Kelly Jean
Audiobook Narrator

✉ Email: connect@kellyjeantaylor.com
🌐 Website: kellyjeantaylor.com