While traditional publishers continue to focus on digital rights management, copyright and related legal issues, small digital publishers and software developers are changing the definition of books as we know them: book, (bok), n., 1. a written or printed work consisting of pages glued or sewn together along one side and bound) covers.

Well, that won’t exactly fly anymore, will it? All of those books on gutenberg.org, texts archived on Google Books, etc. wouldn’t apply here. Maybe this definition of “e-book” will be more accurate?
e-book, (ē bok), n., 1. an electronic version of a printed book that can be read on a computer or handheld device designed specifically for this purpose.

“Ancient version of a printed book”— Where does this leave books like Al Gore’s Our Choice, which was originally designed as an app for tablets and mobile devices? In this case, the printed version of the book actually followed the digital version—an inverse of the above definition!

The technology behind Our Choice—and other “native digital” books—allows creators to build content-rich, interactive stories driven by:

- Multimedia—Video, sound, web content
- Augmented Text—Reactive/explanatory
- Achievement—Incorporates goals, gaming
- Participation—Reader assists narrative
- Multiple Narratives—Alternate storylines and endings
Interactivity is a trend which long predates the creation of digital books:

- Multimedia
  - Book trailers

- Augmented Text
  - Works of Mark Z. Danielewski

- Achievement
  - Gamebooks, Strategy

- Multiple Narratives
  - Choose-Your-Own-Adventure

- Participation
  - Anti Coloring Book, Mad Libs

Some examples of interactive digital books shared at Tech Speed Dating:

- Our Choice
  - Al Gore
  - Push Pop Press

- Stride & Prejudice
  - Jane Austen
  - No Crusts Interactive

- DEVICE 6
  - Simogo

- The Elements: A Visual Exploration
  - Theodore Gray
  - Touch Press

- Joe Dever’s Lone Wolf
  - Bulkypix

- Don’t let the Pigeon Run this App!
  - Mo Willems
  - Disney

Ideas for your library:

- Lend preloaded digital devices inside/outside the library.
- Start an “App Club” where people highlight their favorite apps.
- Use an app as a read-along in storytime.
- Create a “What’s next in digital publishing” web site/newsletter/bookmark.

Presented by LibraryLinkNJ, the New Jersey State Library, and the New Jersey Library Association:
Technology Speed Dating Parsippany Public Library, January 14th, 2014
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