

Lesson Plan #1: Podcasts & You

Rationale: Occurring during the early or research phases of the unit, this workshop session will focus on components of an existing podcast episode that youth will choose from a pre-determined and gathered selection. Youth will be given a worksheet to help guide their note-taking and identification of storytelling and interviewing tactics and strategies, and build on their knowledge of the language arts and journalistic dimensions for their later construction of a narrative. This workshop session and activity can be done individually, with students working independently, or in small groups based on their overlapping interests.

Grade Levels: Youth in grades 2-5. Near-peer mentors / facilitators are transitional-age, between ages 16-24.

Curriculum Areas: Language arts and grammar, journalism, narrative writing and storytelling.

Outcomes: Students will be able to:

- Understand and identify perspective (first-person, third person, etc.) in storytelling
- Understand and identify concepts like motifs and themes, tone, persuasive language
- Develop skills in conducting research or building a narrative template for their own creative expression or journalistic reporting

Preparation & Prerequisites: Facilitation team will need to collect a wide range of podcast episodes vetted for consumption by children and which convey the variety of possibilities for their storytelling projects, from narrative based (fictional and non-fiction) as well as those that skew closer to reportage, case study, or human interest story. Facilitation team will also need to produce a modifiable worksheet pre-loaded with guiding questions and prompts to support students note-taking.

Material & Equipment:

Paper
Computers
Headphones
Worksheets (additional to paper)
Writing utensils

Time Needed: 50-80 minutes

General Step-by-Step:

- 1) First discussion prompt as a large group: "What kinds of things are in podcasts? What are the usual things you find in a podcast?" Record responses on a surface/board visible to all and accessible for remainder of workshop session. [Examples of expected responses: hosts and guests, real world events, personal stories or testimonies, humor,

conversation, questions you have to think about...] Add more to supplement and help segue into workshop session activity

- 2) Second discussion prompt as a large group: "What kinds of podcasts are there?" Record relevant responses to the same surface/board.

Notable types for the activity being led:

Non-fiction stories with one host or host+guest

Interviews or panel discussions on a topic / analysis

Fictional stories

 Comedy/humor

 Horror

 Drama

- 3) Point out the groupings (based on the above) and ask kids to self-select into one of them to listen to a podcast episode solo or within a group and to note-take through the worksheets. Near-peer mentors will also split accordingly so that there is one facilitator sitting with each grouping to lend support.

Worksheet questions include:

Who is hosting? Is the story they're telling their own?

What kinds of things are hooking you into the story? Is there a metaphor or motif they are using to pull you in as a listener? How did they introduce the story?

Did the story migrate between tones or genres? (did they mix comedy and drama? suspense?)

Are they trying to convince you of something? How did they do that?

What are the major parts of their story? Did they use references to unrelated things to help paint a picture for you?

- 4) Once groupings or solo kids have completed their worksheets and/or episodes of their podcast, they will engage in small group conversations about the things they found and compare their notes.
- 5) As a large group, discussion about the various elements of storytelling, journalistic design, and language will be amplified.