Podcast Audio

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| **Week Focus** | Create a basic understanding of podcast audio tools, needs, and methods. | | **Grade Level** | **6-12** |
| **Title** | Why does audio matter the most? | | **Duration** | **5 periods** |
| **Objective: *Students will be able to…*** | | **Assessment: *Students will demonstrate mastery of the objective by…*** | | |
| Describe the basic equipment needed for an audio podcast. | | Performing well in the vocabulary quiz. | | |
| Detail what it takes to make a podcast sound best. | | Proper execution of a basic recording. | | |
| List the basic audio elements of a podcast. | | Completing their podcast production plan. | | |
| **Materials** | ***Vocabulary Quiz***  ***Podcast Production Plan*** | | | |
| ***authentic and meaningful materials related to the learning objectives*** |
| **Day 1 - Why Audio Matters Most** | | | | |
| ***How will I go about teaching this lesson?***    ***What instructional methods and engaging activities will lead students to mastery of the learning objectives?*** | Warm-Up (10 minutes)  Ask: “What makes you stop listening to a podcast?”  Discuss common issues: poor sound quality, monotone voice, distracting background noise, etc.  Mini-Lecture: The Power of Audio (10–15 minutes)  Key points:   * Audio is the only sensory input in a podcast—no visuals to rely on. * Sound quality affects credibility and listener retention. * Tone, pacing, and emotion in voice convey meaning and mood. * Music and sound effects enhance storytelling and transitions.   Play short clips of podcasts with good vs. poor audio and discuss the impact.  Activity: Audio Breakdown (20 minutes)  Students listen to a 2-minute podcast segment and analyze:   * Clarity of voice * Use of music or effects * Emotional tone * Background noise   Use worksheet to guide observations.  Hands-On Practice (10–15 minutes)   * Students record a 30-second intro for their podcast using school equipment or mobile devices. * Focus on tone, clarity, and pacing. * Play back and self-assess or peer-assess using a checklist.   Exit Ticket  “What’s one thing you’ll do to improve the audio in your podcast?” | | | |
| **Day 2 - What equipment is needed for a podcast?** | | | | |
| ***How will I go about teaching this lesson?***    ***What instructional methods and engaging activities will lead students to mastery of the learning objectives?*** | Warm-Up (5–10 minutes)  Ask: “What do you think you need to record a podcast?”   * Create a class brainstorm list on the board or screen. * Compare student ideas with the actual list during the mini-lecture.   Mini-Lecture: Core Equipment Overview (15 minutes)   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Equipment | Purpose | | Microphone | Captures voice clearly. USB mics are great for beginners. | | Headphones | Helps monitor audio quality and avoid feedback. | | Audio Interface (optional) | Connects XLR mics to a computer for better sound. | | Pop Filter/Windscreen | Reduces harsh “p” and “s” sounds. | | Recording Device or Software | Examples: Audacity, GarageBand, Anchor, or mobile apps. | | Quiet Recording Space | Minimizes background noise and echo. |   Show real equipment if available, or use images/videos to demonstrate.  Activity: Podcast Setup Simulation (20–25 minutes)   * Divide students into small groups. * Each group sets up a mock podcasting station using available equipment or printed cutouts. * Assign roles: host, guest, sound engineer. * Practice a short 1-minute recording (real or simulated) focusing on mic placement and speaking clearly.   Exit Ticket  “Name one piece of podcasting equipment and explain why it’s important.” | | | |
| **Day 3 - How do you speak into a microphone properly?** | | | | |
| ***How will I go about teaching this lesson?***    ***What instructional methods and engaging activities will lead students to mastery of the learning objectives?*** | Warm-Up (5–10 minutes)  Ask: “Have you ever heard a podcast where the speaker sounded too quiet, too loud, or muffled?”  Discuss what might cause poor audio and how it affects listener experience.  Mini-Lecture: Microphone Basics (10–15 minutes)   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Tip | Why It Matters | | Distance: Stay 6–8 inches from the mic | Prevents distortion and keeps volume consistent | | Angle: Speak slightly off-center | Reduces popping sounds from “P” and “B” | | Volume: Use a natural speaking voice | Avoids shouting or whispering | | Pacing: Speak clearly and at a steady pace | Helps listeners follow along | | Breathing: Avoid breathing directly into the mic | Keeps audio clean and professional |   Demonstrate good vs. bad technique using real equipment or video examples.  Activity: Mic Technique Practice (20–25 minutes)  Students take turns recording a short script (e.g., podcast intro or elevator pitch).   * Use school microphones or mobile devices. * Focus on posture, distance, and tone. * Play back recordings and self-assess using a checklist.   Peer Feedback (10 minutes)  Students pair up and give constructive feedback on each other’s recordings.  Use a rubric or checklist to guide comments (e.g., clarity, volume, pacing).  Exit Ticket  “What’s one thing you’ll do differently next time you record with a microphone?” | | | |
| **Day 4 - What do I need to do to edit my podcast?** | | | | |
| ***How will I go about teaching this lesson?***    ***What instructional methods and engaging activities will lead students to mastery of the learning objectives?*** | Warm-Up (5–10 minutes)  Ask: “What do you think happens between recording a podcast and publishing it?”  Create a class list of editing tasks (e.g., cutting mistakes, adding music, adjusting volume).  📚 Mini-Lecture: Podcast Editing Essentials (15 minutes)  Tools Needed:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Tool | Purpose | | **Editing Software** | Audacity (free), GarageBand, Adobe Audition, or online tools like Descript | | **Headphones** | For accurate sound monitoring | | **Computer or Mobile Device** | To run editing software | | **Sound Library** | For music, transitions, and sound effects (e.g., FreeSound, YouTube Audio Library) |   Key Editing Tasks:   * Trimming silence or mistakes * Adjusting volume levels * Removing background noise * Adding intro/outro music * Inserting transitions or sound effects * Exporting to the correct file format (usually MP3)   Activity: Guided Editing Practice (20–30 minutes)  Provide students with a short raw audio clip (e.g., a sample podcast intro with mistakes).  Walk them through:   * Importing the file into editing software * Cutting out filler words or pauses * Adding background music or a sound effect * Exporting the final version   Reflection & Discussion (10 minutes)  What part of editing was easiest? Most challenging?  How does editing improve the listener’s experience?  Exit Ticket  “Name one editing tool or technique you’ll use in your own podcast and why.” | | | |
| **Day 5 - What audio is needed for your podcast?** | | | | |
| ***How will I go about teaching this lesson?***    ***What instructional methods and engaging activities will lead students to mastery of the learning objectives?*** | Warm-Up (5–10 minutes)  Ask: “What sounds do you expect to hear in a podcast besides the host’s voice?”  Create a class brainstorm list (e.g., intro music, transitions, sound effects, guest voices).  Mini-Lecture: Core Audio Elements (15 minutes)   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Element | Purpose | | Intro/Outro Music | Sets the tone and brand identity | | Voice/Narration | Delivers the main content and personality | | Sound Effects | Adds drama, humor, or realism | | Transitions/Stingers | Smoothly move between segments | | Ambient Sound/Background Audio | Creates atmosphere or context | | Silence/Pauses | Emphasizes points and improves pacing |   Play short clips from different podcasts and ask students to identify the elements used.  Activity: Audio Element Breakdown (20–25 minutes)  Students listen to a 2–3 minute podcast segment.  Use a worksheet to identify:   * What audio elements are present? * How do they affect the mood or clarity? * What would they change or add?   Creative Planning (10–15 minutes)  Students sketch out the audio structure of their own podcast:   * What music will they use? * Will they include sound effects or transitions? * How will they keep narration clear and engaging?   Exit Ticket  “Which audio element will be most important in your podcast and why?” | | | |
| **Reflection** | ***What did I learn about the students’ mastery of the learning objectives? What modifications, if any, will make the lesson more effective?*** | | | |
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