

Logging Tape

First course, Second grading period, Week 5

Order is essential to a smooth-running radio station. Students should learn to organize the tapes they produce from their first experiences with a recorder.



Enduring Understanding

To work effectively in radio using tape, you have to be able to locate and wade through vast amounts of audio material quickly. Logging is the way to keep track of this efficiently.



Essential Questions

What is logging? How do you log tape?



Objectives and Outcome

Students learn to log tape and to find audio clips efficiently.



Suggested Time

Two days



Resources and Materials

- A pre-selected ten minutes of spoken audio, preferably a news conference. A copy of this audio should be loaded onto each workstation. (Audio may be recorded from local television, CNN, a National Press Club luncheon speaker, or the school's daily announcements. Anything is acceptable.)
- A projection system.
- A stop watch for every student in the class.



Procedure

1. Explain to students what a log is and why it must be kept. Why does a station keep a written record of its output? Who would a reporter log her tape?
2. Using an overhead screen the teacher begins typing and logging as the tape is played. It should look something like this:
00:01..... press conference ambience in room
00:20..... speaker is introduced
00:50..... speech starts
1:30 talks about (general three-word descriptor)
2:00 hot tape about (three-word descriptor)
2:30 clapping

3. The teacher logs the first five minutes stopping the tape to explain what she has been doing. Explain why each element is useful to locate. Use the audio workstation's internal clock to keep time for the log.

4. Students continue in groups taking turns to log for the remainder of the class. Students are given five minutes of audio to hand log using a stopwatch to keep time. Try to keep up as the tape flows. For those who cannot, have the tape loaded into a workstation in order to give them extra time to complete the in-class assignment.

Think of this as logging bullets of information. It should be quick and not wordy as the tape flows.



Homework

Have students practice logging by listening to a radio program of their choice. Or make it the evening news so the class can compare local, national and international coverage in their logs.



Assessment

Have students listen to a tape that you have logged. Students will be graded on time and content accuracy.



Academic Content Standards

Use general and specialized dictionaries, thesauri, glossaries, or related references as needed to understand the meaning of new words (DCPS English Language Arts, 9.L.9)



Industry Standards and Expectations

Understand content, technical concepts and vocabulary to analyze information and follow directions. (F02.1.2, Comprehend and use reading strategies to learn meaning, technical concepts and vocabulary, Career Cluster Project: Communications Skills)

Identify the basic functions and resources for editing. (Performance Element, Pathway KS Statement: Exhibit knowledge of editing audio and video productions, States' Career Clusters, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium)

The All News Format

First course, Second grading period, Week 5

For students on their way to producing a newscast, it is essential to understand how that newscast will fit into a station's overall format.



Enduring Understanding

It is essential to understand a station's individual needs and how its format is competitive in the marketplace of news.



Essential Questions

What is an all news format? What is involved in an all news station's overall programming plan?



Objectives and Outcome

Students will understand what is involved in the day-to-day production of an all news station on a rudimentary level.



Suggested Time

Two to three days



Resources and Materials

- A pre-selected all news station
- Means to access the station's Web site
- Pre-selected audio
- Guest speaker, a station representative
- A possible station tour for the class

"All News Format in Radio," *Announcing*, pages 181-183.



Procedure

1. Introduce students to or enhance their perspective on the all news format. Play several day parts of a pre-selected all news local station. View the station's Web site for an additional perspective on its mission, programming and personalities. (In Washington, D.C., teachers are encouraged to select WTOP.)

Discuss the station's different shows and staff specialties. What are the shows? When do they air? What do they cover? What are the station's hourly clock and the plan for the station's 24-hour schedule?

Who listens to news, talk and information formats? According to Arbitron data, these listeners are primarily in the “two oldest demographic groupings: 55-64-year-olds (19%) and those 65 and older (29%). The third highest listening percentage falls in the 35-44-year-old age bracket (17%). ... Just 1% of news, talk and information listeners are age 12-17 with only 3% being 18 to 24” (Arbitron, “Radio Today 2005,” page 43).

2. Give students their homework assignment — a listening log. See Homework section for details. Given the Arbitron data, this may be torture, but encourage students to be objective in compiling listening logs.

3. If time allows, invite a guest from the pre-selected station to visit the class the following day. Ask the station’s representative to describe the station’s mission, its day-to-day operation, its format and special programming. The representative may also discuss the station’s news competition in the local area. The station’s representative should help students understand each staff person’s role in running the station with particular regard to the station’s news programming.

If a guest speaker will be visiting the class, ask students to prepare three to five questions based upon their listening logs.

4. If you are able to arrange a tour of the local radio station, students should discuss the station’s programming in greater depth. Does the station usually run during the time that they will be touring the facility?

5. Without a guest speaker or tour to enhance this study, teachers should use students’ listening logs as a starting point to compare and contrast news coverage, the tone of the announcers and reporters and other aspects of delivery. Questions that may be covered include:

- What announcing techniques do they hear in the all news format?
- Is the delivery clear?
- How does the station keep coverage within an hour from becoming monotonous?
- Is there a balance between local, state, national and international news?
- Is there news for special interests within the community? For example, farm news, high school sports and VFW meetings.
- Why would a community want an all news station?
- Is this format appealing to high school students?
- From the commercials carried, to whom might they discern is the appeal? Use the Arbitron data here to confirm their appraisal.



Homework

If your textbook covers the all news format, have students read these pages.

At the end of the first class, assign students a listening log. They are to listen to an all news station at home for one hour. They are to make a list of what is covered and how much air time each selection or story is given. They count the station's call letter ID's given on the air. They are to compile as accurate a list of what happens as possible. It should look basically like this:

Started listening at 7 p.m.
 7:00-7:01 News headlines
 7:01-7:05 Newscast
 7:05-7:06 Weather
 7:06 ID

NOTE: It is best that students use a stopwatch to do this assignment.



Assessment

Students write a one- or two-page essay on some aspect of news coverage and/or critiques the station's format.

A student might also listen briefly to a station's competitor's all news schedule and compare it with the pre-selected station studied in class. In D.C., students might be comparing WTOP and WAMU, a public station that carries a substantial amount of news.



Academic Content Standards

Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts. (Standard 6, NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts)

Recognize strategies used by media to inform, entertain, and transmit culture (DCPS English Language Arts, 10.M.1)



Industry Standards and Expectations

Understand content, technical concepts and vocabulary to analyze information and follow directions. (F02.1.2, Comprehend and use reading strategies to learn meaning, technical concepts and vocabulary, Career Cluster Project: Communications Skills)

Analyze announcing competence. (Performance Element, Pathway KS Statement: Demonstrate the ability to deliver a broadcast production. States' Career Clusters, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium)