

Career Search

Second course, Fourth grading period, Weeks 2-3

Students who become familiar with a wide variety of job titles and the associated job descriptions in the radio broadcasting/journalism industry will better understand the industry and its potential as a place of employment. In this lesson, students will use various methods, including online research and interviews, to discern the educational requirements, work environment, salary expectations and employment outlook for two careers associated with the radio industry.

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Enduring Understanding

On-air talent is the most visible career in the radio broadcasting/journalism industry, but certainly not the only one. Enabling a student to make basic career path decisions requires that the student also understand the variety of other positions involved in producing radio programming and operating a radio station.



Essential Questions

What careers are available in the radio broadcasting industry? How can one find information about the necessary training, work environment, salary and employment outlook for a career? What do they do in an average day, week, and month?



Objectives and Outcome

- Students will become familiar with a wide variety of job titles and the associated job descriptions in the radio broadcasting/journalism industry.
- Students will use various methods to discern the educational requirements, work environment, salary expectations and employment outlook for two careers associated with the radio industry.
- Students will use different sources to research a career in the radio industry.
- Students will use software for electronic note-taking.
- Students will evaluate and synthesize the information they have gathered to communicate their discoveries about the career.
- Students will reflect on the information they have gathered and its relation to their own career possibilities.



Suggested Time

Two weeks



Resources and Materials

“Broadcasting,” U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Career Guide to Industries (www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs017.htm)

Help wanted or classified columns in professional journals

Corporation for Public Broadcasting Jobline (www.cpb.org/jobline/index.php?mode=search&job_field=Radio)

Current (www.current.org/jobs)

Internet for open search OR selected sites saved offline to be presented to class with a computer/projector

“Professional Opportunities,” Writing for Television, Radio and New Media, pages 406-422

“Career Advancement,” Announcing, pages 327-348

“The work of the producer,” Radio Production, pages 276-285



Procedure

1. Find out students’ perspective on employment in the radio broadcasting/journalism industry. Ask students what jobs they would like if they worked for a radio station. Compile a list of job titles on the board. How narrow or varied are the ones listed? If the jobs do not reflect the different “behind the scenes” positions, the business side, or the engineering and technical sides, you might ask students where they could look for additional positions, especially if every person in the class will be assigned to research a different job.

Teachers might be prepared with professional journals that list openings, the classifieds from your local newspaper or a career publication from your school’s guidance or career center. “Job Openings at ABC Radio” is provided to illustrate the type of information that may be found on a station’s Web site. Students will probably notice immediately that salary is not listed online. Why might this be?

Inform students that the class will compile a list of 20 or more positions available in the radio broadcasting/journalism industry. For each position the class will find a job description, work environment, training required, salary expectations, and employment outlook.

Introduce/review Internet search techniques and electronic note-taking.

2. The instructor will review and/or demonstrate the process of conducting a focused Internet search using Google or another search engine. Review should include:

- Wording the query
- Limiting results
- Evaluating sponsored links

As a demonstration, have students type in “radio” as a query and note how many results are returned. Then type in “jobs in the radio industry” and note the limited results. Be sure to differentiate sponsored links, ones which pay to be listed near the top of results or to the side in a special section, from academic, government and business sites.

Note: This lesson is designed for the whole class to use a computer lab with Internet connection to conduct an open-ended search. This may be modified if that situation is unavailable or impractical. Teachers could save selected sites off-line and then present to the class with a computer/projector set-up. Teachers could also print copies of Web-based information and use it as material for collaborative learning groups.

3. Together the class will compose the list of positions. Assist students in brainstorming various queries to focus on the needed information to make sure they are finding government statistics, station Web sites that list job postings and professional organizations and journals. Prior to the lesson, teachers should test various queries to know which ones will bring in the desired sites. Some helpful links which teachers can lead their students to discover:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>
<http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos087.htm>
<http://www.careerpage.org/joblist.htm>
<http://www.fox8live.com/www/Jobs/Jobs.aspx>
http://www.etv.state.ms.us/employment/job_descriptions.htm
http://salary.com/home/layoutscripts/homl_display.asp
<http://jobprofiles.monster.com/>
<http://www.current.org/jobs/>

4. Students should compile bibliographies. Be sure to clarify the number and type of sources you want to see reflected and if you want all sources consulted or only those that are utilized in completion of their projects. Review the information that is needed for citing an Internet source. Most styles will require: URL, page heading, author (if there is one), sponsoring organization, copyright or last update, and date the student accessed it. At this time, teachers may also wish to review bibliographic format for books, journals and personal interviews.

5. Instruct/demonstrate how to have both the Internet browser and a word processing program (Word) open at the same time or even both visible in a split screen at the same time so that students can read the information and then immediately record the source citation and take notes in his own words on the information. This is electronic note-taking. Depending on the technology goals of your school system, teachers may wish to extend this lesson; demonstrate how to create a table and have students put their assignment into a table with headings for each column.

6. Computer Lab assignment: Each student is to conduct searches and take electronic notes about job opportunities and careers related to radio broadcasting/journalism. Teachers can set specific objectives for the assignment with consideration to how many students are in the class, whether a computer lab is available, and various standards/goals that can be met through this assignment.

The following is a sample of instructions for the assignment: Using a search engine locate the following information about 6-10 different job titles associated with radio broadcasting/journalism. Put the information in a 6-column table. The column headings will be Job Title, Job Description, Source of Information, Training/Education, Starting Salary, and Other Information. Encourage the more advanced students to be alert for more than one source relating to the same job title so that all the information in the table can be completed. Students should watch for confirmation and contradiction among sources. Have all students print out their e-notes for use in class the following day.

Collaborative Discussion Groups

7. Organize the class in groups of three. Each group member will have a role: leader, secretary, or reporter. Set a 10-minute time limit for the group. Assignment: The leader will take his printout and read each title and information. The secretary will take notes by checking off on his/her own paper the jobs being read and adding any titles/information not already there. Repeat with other notes taken by the group. If your computer lab is networked, an alternative would be for individuals to print their lists for a participation grade and for group members to send their research to the group secretary to merge files. Together the members can view the screen to identify duplication, to revise a particular job description to strengthen it by combining findings and to quickly locate missing types/categories of jobs.

The end product will be one set of notes that includes all the information collected by that group. At the end of 10-15 minutes, each group's reporter will "report out" to the class. Teachers will meanwhile be compiling a master list of job titles on the board or on paper for visual reference or group reporters could be going to the board or a class computer to input the jobs that are not already listed.

8. From the class's compiled list, students will select two positions to research more fully. All employment positions need to be selected for research before a particular job may be researched by a second student.

Further research and informative/reflective writing

Note: This step in the assignment should span a few days to allow time for students to contact people and receive replies. The research could be completed both during class time with students searching on computers, reading materials from the career center and reviewing material in textbooks and as homework with students conducting phone interviews (if phones are not available for this to be done during the class period) and reading.

9. Students should review the information that they or members of another group gathered. This is the database from which all other research will be confirmed and built. The research will include further online searching as well as any of the following that the teacher desires to use:

- Personal interview with a person at a local radio station who holds that position,
- E-mail interview or phone interview with same,
- Bio of a person who holds that job for a local station posted on the station's Web site,
- Format of the station,
- Interview with a long-time radio employee (perhaps retired) who has progressed through multiple jobs to a high level.

Teachers may wish to review interviewing techniques emphasizing opinion and personal experience questions that will add to the factual research. Teachers may need to demonstrate the navigation of a radio station's Web site to find information that would help with this assignment. The site for WMAL (<http://www.wmal.com>) is a good sample.

10. Each student will choose information from the two positions that were researched to write an informative/reflective essay. See "Put It In Writing." This student handout explains the assignment and gives a sample outline for guidance. Any rubric for grading an essay can be applied to the writing if desired. If a rubric is used, it should be shared with the students at the time the assignment is made.



Homework

See note under the “research and reflection” segment (#8) of this lesson. Compile a bibliography of the student’s research, not the group’s research.



Assessment

Observe students while they are doing searches and e-notetaking. Both evaluate their effectiveness and assist them in learning to conduct efficient, documented research.

Review student printout of information about job titles (perhaps in table format). Completion of a bibliography that meets format and other requirements. Observe and assess students’ level of involved participation in groups. Quality of a reflective essay about the job based upon the research gathered.



Academic Content Standards

Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience. (Standard 7, NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts)

Students use varied methods and sources in research and writing. (DCPS United States History, Historical Inquiry, Analysis and Judgment; Content Standard 2)

The student follows consistent practices in quoting, paraphrasing, or citing sources used (DCPS United States History, Historical Inquiry, Analysis and Judgment; Content Standard 2, Essential Skills)



Industry Standards and Expectations

Identify and explore career opportunities in one or more career pathways. (F09.3, Career Cluster Project: Communications Skills)

Explore career opportunities in audio and video technology and film. (Pathway KS Statement: Audio and Video Technology and Film, States’ Career Clusters, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium)

Analyze various careers and their job descriptions in media companies, including radio and television stations, newspapers and newsmagazines, video production houses, and Internet news outlets. (Performance Element, Pathway KS Statement: Explore career opportunities in Journalism and Broadcasting, States’ Career Clusters, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium)

Employee Handbook, a job posting or any form that indicates what computer/word processing/e-mail and other skills that are required for employment at a local station willing to share it.

Job Openings at ABC Radio — Washington, D.C.

A visit to www.wmal.com on July 12, 2006, yielded seven listings — national sales manager, account executives and anchor/reporter positions. Below are two of these listings to illustrate the responsibilities, skills and qualifications required in this market.

WRQX Account Executive

Responsibilities: The sale of commercial air time to local businesses and advertising agencies. Includes: managing current accounts and agencies; developing new advertising accounts; selling promotional and marketing events; formulating non-traditional accounts to generate new avenues of revenue; managing A/R, developing research and sales material pertinent to selling station.

Required Qualifications:

Education: High School Degree.

Work Experience: Minimum 2 years sales/promotion/marketing experience.

Desired Qualifications:

Education: College Degree.

Work Experience: Broadcast preferred.

Technical Skills: Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel; Tapscan, Qualitap, Maximiser.

Application Process:

Send resumes to Cathy Whissel: 4400 Jenifer Street NW, Washington, DC 20015

Fax: 202-686-3091 - Email: Cathy.J.Whissel@abc.com

Notice that the following position is primarily for the television station, but radio and Web work and editing skills are expected of someone holding the anchor/reporter position.

WMAL Anchor/Reporter

Responsibilities: Write and anchor newscasts in a busy news/talk show environment. Duties also include enterprise and investigative street news reporting for both radio and website as well as occasional talk show personality duties.

Required Qualifications:

Education: Bachelor's degree

Work Experience: Minimum 3 years major market on-air experience

Technical Skills: Digital audio editing skills

Non-Technical Skills: Strong on-air news delivery and writing skills; current valid driver's license

Desired Qualifications:

Work Experience: Local DC area news experience

Technical Skills: Familiarity with Comrex Hotline and/or Matrix remote broadcast equipment

Application Process:

Please send Tape or CD with resume to: WMAL News Director, 4400 Jenifer St, NW, Washington, DC 20015

Put It In Writing!

Now that the class has identified many job titles associated with the radio industry, it is time to choose two different jobs and dig a little deeper with some personal interviews.

Assignment

1. Choose two job titles in the radio industry that interest you.
2. Complete a personal interview with a person who is employed in that position. Note: This interview may be accomplished in person, by phone or via e-mail. Maintain verification information: date of the initial contact, date and time of the appointment/printouts of the e-mail exchange, audio tape (if recorded), and a copy of the thank you note sent to the interviewee.
3. Do additional Internet research on these two careers including but not limited to colleges that offer the required training, professional organizations, and the employment outlook for this job.
4. Write an informative essay to present an overview of two jobs in the radio industry, their visibility and their place in an environment of changing technology and convergence. A basic outline, below, is provided to help you begin organizing your essay. Use accepted conventions of writing (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, sentence structure).

Sample Outline

Title

- I. Introduction — Careers in the radio industry in two particular positions
- II. First career to be discussed
 - A. Job description/duties
 - B. Salary and benefits
 - C. Required training
 - D. Advantages/disadvantages (from interviews)
 - E. Number usually hired at a station
- III. Second career to be discussed
 - A. Job description/duties
 - B. Salary and benefits
 - C. Required training
 - D. Advantages/disadvantages (from interviews)
 - E. Number usually hired at a station
- IV. Employment outlook — future of these positions in an environment of changing technology and convergence
- V. Conclusion — may be more personal, reflecting your personal reaction to the information and what it means to you and your own career possibilities
 - A. Would you consider either of these positions to meet your career goal? Explain.
 - B. What aspect(s) of these jobs appeal to you or how did getting this behind-the-scenes view of radio influence your radio listening and own productions?