

Profile

Second course, Fourth grading period, Weeks 5-6

Over-the-fence conversations, stories overheard riding a school bus or waiting in a line, articles about the latest on today's celeb-of-interest, persons in the news — people are inherently interested in people. In this lesson and end-of-term project, students bring together the skills they have learned to pitch a story and produce a profile.



Enduring Understanding

With perception, vividness of details and wise choice of actualities, a person can be brought to life on air. Reporting precision, focused research and compelling writing take listeners on a journey with the subject who is profiled.



Essential Question

How does one produce a profile that presents the “real person” and highlights the strongest aspects of the person’s character and activities?



Objectives and Outcome

- Students will hone their observation, interviewing and production skills.
- Students will interweave stories, personal examples and ideas with factual information to produce profiles of individuals.
- Students will produce promos that accurately reflects the profiles that will be aired.



Suggested Time

Two initial weeks and end-of-year project two weeks



Resources and Materials

How to Produce a Story

(www.wamu.org/youthvoices/how_to/produce_a_story/)

Charles, a graduate of Youth Voices, gives some tips based on his experience preparing “The Digital Divide.” After reviewing his tips, listen to his radio feature.

Youth Radio: California “Fathers at Work” Program (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1965773>)

2006 Edward R. Murrow, Feature Reporting — Region 7
Jazz Trumpeter Maynard Ferguson



Procedure

1. Play a profile that you believe will capture the interest of your students. As students discuss the content of the profile, keep notes on their observations, the audio (quotations, ambience, commentary) they mention and on their reaction to the subject of the profile.

Ask students to listen a second time to the profile, but this time as an editor. Ask students to discuss the pros and cons of the profile's content as if advising before the piece goes to final edit. Areas to consider:

- Has the individual being profiled been clearly identified? Too late?
- What do listeners learn about this person, her ideas, values, aspirations, life and thoughts?
- Do you need an outside voice to put the person or individual's actions in context? Why or why not?
- Is the person set in a larger context?
- Does the profile connect to a larger issue? Should it?
- What would the inclusion of ambience add to the profile?
- What works? What is too long? Boring? Unclear?
- What is missing?

If students do not include some of the areas that you recorded in your notes of their original discussion, point these out.

2. Play and discuss a profile that was produced by a youth reporter (See "Resources and Materials"). This profile should illustrate points covered in the discussion but also illustrate other aspects of a profile. A Youth Radio, Youth Voices and Radio Rookie profile will also provide an example of what another student has produced.

3. The subjects of profiles can be selected because they
- Standout for particular actions or accomplishments — award winners, school record holders, community service projects completed;
 - Are newsmakers;
 - Seem so "average," but have an interesting personal story, hobby, activity or attitude;
 - Represent a particular type or group of individuals — scholar-athlete, unmarried parent, international student, homeless, flood victim;
 - Are randomly selected – the "every person has a story" concept.

The representative profile requires considerable research, if done well, so we suggest that be a third or fourth course assignment. The "every person has a story" approach is used in "The Live Interview Show" lesson (Fourth course, First grading period). So we will focus on the other possibilities in the remainder of this lesson's steps.

4. Teachers should cover the requirements of the profile and the timeline for completion of the project's steps. Give students "Profile Checklist." This project begins in the fifth week of the grading period, but will not be completed until the end of the term. Teachers may wish to add specific dates for completion of certain steps.

The importance of this project should be apparent to students. It is serving as the end-of-year project so it is to exhibit all the skills gained over the two courses of radio production. Teachers will need to determine if the project is sufficient for a final examination or if it will be accompanied with a written examination.

5. The completed profile should be 5-7 minutes when produced. The following are suggestions and steps to follow:

- Each student should find his or her person to profile, but teachers might establish some parameters. For example: must be a freshman; may not be a friend or acquaintance; must be a student at this school; must be a member of one of the following clubs or organizations.
- If students cannot decide whom to profile, they might list the pro/con of three persons who fall within the category. Considering all requirements, each student will select someone to profile.
- One of the first steps must be to contact the proposed profile subject to get his or her agreement to be profiled.
- Teachers may wish to create a permission form for parents/guardians to sign, granting permission to profile their son or daughter.
- Teachers need to remind students of the respect to be shown for cultural and religious differences, protocol for recording individuals and parental permission required.

6. Give students “Profile Checklist.” The following steps are outlined in the handout. After receiving the person’s agreement to be profiled, students will conduct the initial, informal interview, from which three themes should emerge. This might be a 10-minute, off-tape conversation. Students will brainstorm three stories to produce; the three themes should be put in writing and turned into the teacher. From these, the student will select one to pitch.

Examples of themes for one student might be:

- He is very active in his church youth group and choir.
- He is working on his Eagle Scout project.
- He spends any free time he has at school in the Computer Lab; he is writing to his family and friends overseas.

7. Students will present and pitch their stories to either a student group, members of the radio staff or the teacher. Since the teacher has the three themes in writing, he or she might ask why another more promising theme was not pitched.

8. Based upon the responses received, students will hone their stories and proceed to conduct audio interviews and observe the subject. In addition to one to two taped interviews with the person being profiled, interviews should be conducted with

- Parents or siblings
- Club adviser and members
- Team coach and teammates
- Employer and fellow employees
- Other individuals who are pertinent to the focus of the story

Background research should include a minimum of three interviews with others who know the individual and two observations of the person being profiled. In addition to taking notes during the observations, the tape should be running during these activities. This may yield the profile subject's interaction with others as well as ambience.

9. Students should write focus statements. At this step, the focus statements should be more concrete:

- My profile will explore how Jenny's activities in school are helping her decide on her next step — work, military or college.
- The profile will reveal how Jenny's behind-the-scenes drama production work allows an introverted student to make friends and be part of our school.
- A student who appears to live only for computer science at school has a rich heritage and humanitarian projects in his home country.

10. Students will begin production of the story: Logging tape and pulling cuts, determining the opening scene and completing an outline of their stories in writing.

Teachers will need to determine when and how many progress reports they want to be sure that students are staying on task. Progress reports also help students communicate any problems they are facing and allow teachers an opportunity to help.

11. Students will choose audio cuts, write the script and have it reviewed. They will then review their tape choices and write the next draft that will be edited with a production team, partner or teacher. The final script will be written and production of the profile completed.

12. When the profile is complete or near completion, students should write and produce :29 promos. This promo should be ready for "broadcast" one week before the end of the term. It will relate to the class what to anticipate hearing in the examination period. If you have a radio station, it can be used before the profile is broadcast.

Students must put their promo and profile on two separate CDs.

13. The final profiles will be shared with the class during the examination period. Teachers may also ask students to prepare final profiles as podcasts. Each student should be reminded to keep an audio portfolio of his or her work.



Homework

Each student will consider three individuals to profile and prepare a pro/con list or prepare a pro/con list of the possible areas to focus on if the person to be profiled has been determined. Each student will write a statement of the three themes that might be explored in the profile. Each student will prepare a pitch for the feature.

Each student will conduct observation(s) and audio interviews that cannot be completed during the school hours. Each student will write drafts of the script in class and at home. Each student will write a promo for the profile.



Assessment

Completion of pro/con list, three story themes, pitch and progress report(s). Teachers will assess student's progress in mastering skills through the drafts of the script, observation of the student in production meetings and at the workstation, and in other steps of the project.

Students will complete a self-evaluations of the completed profiles. Teachers will complete an evaluation of the profiles. Teachers will complete an evaluation of the promos. Teachers will evaluate students' ability to juggle the activities necessary to complete this assignment on time with skill.

If students are required to keep portfolios, they should add the final audio products to their portfolios with related supporting documents (taped interviews, research documentation, record of time spent on project from start to finish). Include the final scripts with actualities typed out in full.



Academic Content Standards

Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes. (Standard 4, NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts)

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)

Explain how irony, tone, mood, style, and "sound" of language are used for specific rhetorical aesthetic purposes. (DCPS English Language Arts, 12.LT.5)

Critique how the author interweaves personal examples and ideas with factual information to achieve the purpose of explaining, presenting a perspective, or describing a situation or an event. (DCPS English Language Arts, 12.LT.9)



Industry Standards and Expectations

Develop and deliver formal and informal presentations using appropriate media to engage and inform audiences. (F02.4, Career Cluster Project: Communications Skills)

Demonstrate how to obtain information to use in writing a story. (Performance Element, Pathway KS Statement: Demonstrate writing processes used for various journalism media. States' Career Clusters, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium)

Apply active listening skills to obtain and clarify information. (F02.6 Career Cluster Project: Communications Skills)

Use correct grammar, punctuation and terminology to write and edit documents. (F02.3, Career Cluster Project: Communications Skills)

Demonstrate promoting productions. (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)

Apply knowledge of audio equipment for productions, including basic recording equipment, equalizers, mixing consoles, and quality-monitoring equipment. (Performance Element, Pathway KS Statement: Apply Knowledge of equipment and skills related to audio production, States' Career Clusters, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium)

Profile Checklist

The following steps need to be completed in preparing and producing your feature.

- Interview One completed with person to be profiled.
- Transcribe the interview
- Initial research completed: Clubs, sports, work, outside-of-school activities
- Brainstorm three story ideas (*individuals or types*), including pro/con considerations

- Select one story idea to pitch
- Write pitch
- Pitch story idea to _____ .
- Revise or hone the focus

- Observe the subject

- Interview Two completed with _____ .
- Transcribe the interview
- Interview Three completed with _____ .
- Transcribe the interview
- Observe the subject in a second location (*optional*)

- Background research completed

- Write a focus statement
- Pull cuts
- Determine the opening scene
- Complete outline of the story
- Write the rough draft of the script
- Edit the script
- Write the second draft of the script
- Edit the script with a partner and/or teacher
- Prepare the final script
- Voice

- Mix the final profile feature (*five to seven minutes, saved on two CDs*)

- Write and produce the promo (*29 seconds, saved on 2 CDs*)