Unit 2: Introduction to Podcasting ~ Media Messaging: Constructing and Purpose

Content Area: **English Language Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 1**
Length: **9 week cycle class (40-45 days)**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

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Students will explore podcasting as a powerful medium for communicating ideas, sharing stories, and informing audiences. By analyzing mentor podcasts, students will examine how audience, purpose, structure, voice, and audio techniques contribute to effective communication. Students will then apply these understandings to research, plan, script, record, edit, revise, and publish an original podcast while demonstrating responsible and ethical digital communication.

Interdisciplinary Connections: This unit is designed to be part of a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including physical and social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship. During this course, students are provided with opportunities to develop skills that pertain to a variety of careers. When completing this course, students can make informed choices about how to and what to participate in today's dynamic world of social media.

Revision: July 2026

Standards

Information Literacy: This unit challenges students to locate, analyze, evaluate, and use information effectively. Information literacy includes, but is not limited to digital, visual, media, textual, and technological literacy. Lessons will include the learning and understanding how information is created and produced, critical and analytical thinking, evaluating and use of information resources, research processes and methodologies including identifying the difference between primary and secondary sources, discerning the difference between facts, points of view, perspectives and opinions, accessing peer-reviewed print and digital library resources, and the economic, legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of information.

The identified standards reflect a developmental progression across grades/ levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including social sciences, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness and global citizenship. The standards that follow are relevant to this course in addition to the associated content-based standards listed below.

Reading

- RI.CR.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what an informational text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.CI.7.2 Determine a central idea in an informational text and explain how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
- RI.PP.7.5 Determine how an author conveys or develops perspective or purpose in a text through distinguishing their position from that of others using evidence.
- RI.MF.7.6 Compare and contrast texts to analyze the unique qualities of different mediums, including the integration of information from multiple formats and sources.
- RL.MF.7.6 Compare and contrast texts to their audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia versions and analyze the unique qualities of different mediums.

Writing

- W.IW.7.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information.
- W.NW.7.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques and well-structured event sequences.
- W.WP.7.4 Develop and strengthen writing by planning, revising, editing, and focusing on purpose and audience.
- W.WR.7.5 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources.
- W.SE.7.6 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess credibility and accuracy; and avoid plagiarism.
- W.RW.7.7 Write routinely over extended and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Language

- L.SS.7.1 Demonstrate command of the system and structure of the English language when writing or speaking.
- L.KL.7.2 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- L.VL.7.3 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases.
- L.VI.7.4 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

Speaking & Listening

- SL.PE.7.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.
- SL.II.7.2 Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats.
- SL.ES.7.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the reasoning and evidence.
- SL.PI.7.4 Present claims and findings in a focused, coherent manner with relevant details and appropriate presentation skills.
- SL.UM.7.5 Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings.
- SL.AS.7.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when appropriate.

Career Readiness & Technology

- Standard 9.2 Career Awareness, Exploration, Preparation and Training
- Standard 9.3 Career and Technical Education
- Standard 9.4 Life Literacies and Key Skills
- CRP.K-12.CRP7 Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
- CRP.K-12.CRP8 Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- CRP.K-12.CRP11 Use technology to enhance productivity.
- TECH.8.1.12 Use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, synthesize, create, and communicate knowledge.
- TECH.8.1.12.F.1 Evaluate the strengths and limitations of emerging technologies and their impact.
- TECH.9.4.2.DC.3 Explain how to be safe online and follow safe internet practices.
- TECH.9.4.2.TL.7 Describe the benefits of collaborating with others to complete digital tasks or develop digital artifacts.

Essential Questions

- How does speech communicate ideas differently from written language?
- What makes podcasting an effective medium for sharing stories, information, and ideas?
- What makes a podcast effective in communicating its message to a listener?
- How does a creator's audience and purpose influence the style, structure, and content of a podcast?
- What strategies do podcast hosts use to engage listeners without visual elements?
- How can voice, music, sound effects, pacing, and silence enhance meaning and engage an audience?
- How can podcasting be used to tell compelling stories, inform audiences, or advocate for change?
- What are the key elements of effective storytelling in podcasts, and how can creators ensure their content is both informative and engaging?
- How can creators communicate ideas responsibly and ethically through podcasting?

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

Students Will Know

- The characteristics of different podcast genres and styles and how they are designed for specific audiences and purposes.
- The elements of effective podcasting, including structure, organization, voice, tone, pacing, interviews, recurring segments, music, and sound effects.
- How audience, purpose, and message influence the design and effectiveness of a podcast.
- The role of mentor texts in developing ideas and improving communication.
- The stages of the podcast production process, including planning, scripting, recording, editing, revising, and publishing.
- The ethical responsibilities of podcast creators, including responsible digital citizenship, copyright, attribution, netiquette, and online safety.

Students Will Be Skilled At

- Analyzing mentor podcasts to determine audience, purpose, message, and the techniques used to engage listeners.
- Using the MAPS strategy (Mode, Media, Audience, Purpose, Situation) to analyze podcasts and other digital media.
- Evaluating how podcast creators use voice, tone, interviews, music, sound effects, pacing, and recurring features to communicate meaning.
- Researching topics and selecting credible information to support podcast development.
- Planning, scripting, recording, editing, revising, and publishing an original podcast using digital production tools.
- Providing and incorporating constructive peer feedback to improve podcast content and production.
- Speaking and listening effectively to communicate ideas clearly for an intended audience.
- Reflecting on personal growth as a communicator and digital media creator.
- Using digital media responsibly by demonstrating appropriate netiquette, ethical decision-making, and safe online practices.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative.

The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments teachers may use in the classroom and the data collected by the district to track student progress.

Formative Assessments

- Teacher observations
- Class discussions and accountable talk
- Analysis of media messages and mentor podcasts
- Analysis of print, broadcast, social media, and podcast examples
- Quick writes, brainstorming activities, and podcast planning documents
- Individual and small-group conferences
- Research notes and source evaluations
- Script drafts and storyboarding/planning activities
- Peer review and self-assessment
- Reflective journals and learning reflections
- Entrance and exit tickets
- Presentations on participatory culture and social media platforms
- Podcast practice recordings and teacher feedback
- Collaborative discussions and peer critique

Summative Assessments, Including Alternative Assessments

- Analysis and deconstruction of media messages using the Five Media Principles
- Research and presentation on a social media platform and its role in participatory culture
- Annotated portfolio of mentor podcasts aligned to a selected audience and purpose
- Evaluation of mentor podcasts based on audience, purpose, organization, voice, and production techniques
- Original podcast proposal, planning documents, and script
- Production, editing, and publication of an original podcast
- Podcast reflection evaluating the effectiveness of communication, production choices, and audience engagement
- Digital portfolio documenting the podcast development process, including planning, revisions, peer feedback, and final product.

Developmental progression across years in both reading and writing is evidenced by multiple benchmark assessment screeners, administered three times per year. Follow up diagnostic assessments are used to target skill remediation. Student proficiency allows for additional or alternative assessment based on demonstration or absence of skill.

Benchmark:

- Benchmark reading and writing assessments, scored using rubrics, district-created and standards-aligned; based on NJSLA, reported twice per year
- Engage in text set analysis using visual literacy and close reading analysis strategies to compose a claim and use evidence as support
- Grade-level Standards-based Rubrics

Learning Plan

Instructional time will be dedicated to whole-class instruction, collaborative learning, workshop-based instruction, and independent podcast production. Students will explore podcasting as a medium for communicating ideas, telling stories, and engaging audiences while applying the media literacy concepts introduced in Unit 1. Through the analysis of mentor podcasts and the creation of an original podcast, students will develop skills in research, planning, scripting, recording, editing, revision, and publication. Teachers will model production techniques, facilitate peer collaboration, provide ongoing feedback through conferences and critique, and gradually release responsibility as students become increasingly independent podcast creators.

Instruction will generally follow the progression below, though pacing may vary based on student readiness and instructional needs.

Please review this scope and sequence and these sample lessons for more detail.

Instructional Progression

Module 4: Understanding Podcasting

- Why podcasting?
- The history and evolution of podcasting
- Broadcast media vs. podcasts
- The role of podcasts in sharing information, storytelling, and amplifying diverse voices
- Exploring current podcast genres and audiences

Module 5: Analyzing Mentor Podcasts

- Listening to and analyzing mentor podcasts
- Identifying audience, purpose, message, and structure
- Evaluating podcast techniques, including voice, tone, interviews, music, sound effects, pacing, and recurring segments
- Determining what makes a podcast engaging and effective

Module 6: Planning and Producing a Podcast

- Identifying a newsworthy topic or story
- Brainstorming ideas
- Considering audience and purpose
- Applying journalism ethics
- Planning and scripting a podcast
- Collaborating with peers to revise and improve ideas
- Recording, editing, and publishing an original podcast
- Reflecting on the effectiveness of the final product

Materials

The materials used in this course integrate a variety of leveled instructional, enrichment, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

Teachers must refer to the district-approved Core Book List while selecting whole-class or small-group leveled resources.

Instructional Materials

Students will utilize a variety of district-approved digital technologies to create, edit, publish, and evaluate original podcast content. Tools may include, but are not be limited to, Audacity, SoundCloud, microphones, headphones, recording devices, cloud-based collaboration and storage platforms, digital script-writing tools,

and other teacher-selected technologies that support audio production, communication, creativity, and responsible digital citizenship.

Teacher Resources

- Assessing Students' Digital Writing: Protocols for Looking Closely by Troy Hicks
- Everybody Writes: Your Go-To Guide for Creating Ridiculously Good Content by Ann Handley
- Writing Tools: Fifty Essential Strategies for Every Writer by Roy Peter Clark
- How to Write Short: Word Craft for Fast Times by Roy Peter Clark
- Writing for Digital Media by Brian Carroll
- http://www.edutopia.org/podcasting-student-broadcasts
  http://edtechteacher.org/tools/multimedia/podcasting/
  http://americanart.si.edu/education/resources/guides/podcasting_guide.pdf

Suggested Strategies for Accommodation and Modification

Content specific accommodations and modifications as well as Career Ready Practices are listed here for all students, including: Special Education, English Language Learners, At Risk of School Failure, Gifted and Talented, Students with 504.

Possible accommodations include:

- Access speech-to-text function on computer
- Use visual presentations of all materials to include organizers, charts
- Allow students to set individual goals for writing/reading
- Offer graphic organizaers, note-taking models, strategies for summarizing, and questioning techniques
- Offer oral assessments
- Supply study guide questions and access to class notes
- Work in partnerships
- Give responses in a form (verbal or written) that is easier for the student
- Take additional time to compete a task or project
- Scaffold by chunking material and texts
- Individualize reading choices based on ability and level
- Take frequent breaks
- Use an alarm to help with time management
- Small group and one on one assessment
- Mark text with a highlighter or other manipulative such as a post-it
- Receive help coordinating assignments
- Answering fewer questions or completing shorter tasks
- Modify the length and quantity of assignments to fit individual
- Differentiate roles in discussion groups
- Use digital technology, eBooks,, audio version of printed text

- Create alternate assignments or homework
- Provide distinct steps in a process; elminate unnecessary steps, as needed
- Use art, music, and film to convey alternate interpretation of literature and assessment
- Manage executive function by scaffolding process and amending deadlines

Possible modifications to content during writing workshop include, but are not limited to:

- Adhere to all modifications and accommodations as prescribed in IEP and 504 plan