

# Lesson Plan: Become a Podcast Producer

**Student:** Paxton (Age 13, Homeschool)

**Subject Focus:** English Language Arts, Oklahoma History, Technology Integration

**Week:** August 18 - August 22, 2025

**Lesson Goal:** This week-long project is designed for an auditory learner interested in online creation. Paxton will research, write, record, and produce a short, narrative podcast episode about a significant event in Oklahoma history. The focus is on creative application, critical thinking, and technical skills rather than memorization.

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## Materials and Resources Needed

- A computer with a reliable internet connection
  - Headphones (to help focus on audio details)
  - A microphone (a computer's built-in mic, a smartphone, or a simple USB microphone are all great options)
  - A digital or physical notebook for brainstorming, outlining, and scriptwriting
  - **Audio Editing Software (Free):** [BandLab for Education](#) or [Audacity](#). (BandLab is web-based and very user-friendly for beginners).
  - **Royalty-Free Sound Resources (Free):** [Pixabay Music](#) and [Freesound](#) for sound effects.
  - **Research Hub:** [Oklahoma Historical Society's "A Very OK Podcast" and resources](#).
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## Alignment with Oklahoma Academic Standards (2025-2026)

This lesson integrates several 8th-grade standards for deeper learning:

- **ELA 8.2.W.1:** Write a well-developed narrative with a clear plot, engaging characters, and sensory details (achieved through scriptwriting).
  - **ELA 8.1.SL.1:** Actively listen and speak clearly using appropriate conventions (achieved through analyzing podcasts and recording narration).
  - **ELA 8.4.R.1:** Locate, organize, and analyze information from multiple sources to support a claim or topic (achieved during the research phase).
  - **Social Studies 8.4.1:** Examine the causes and effects of the Land Run of 1889 and the impact of the Dawes Act on tribal sovereignty (providing a core topic for the podcast).
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## Daily Lesson Guide

### Day 1: Monday, August 18 - The World of Audio Storytelling

**Learning Objective:** Paxton will analyze the key components of an engaging audio story and select an Oklahoma history topic for his podcast episode.

- **Warm-Up (15 mins):** Listen to a 5-10 minute segment from a professional podcast. We recommend an episode from "The Past and The Curious" or the Oklahoma Historical Society's "A Very OK Podcast".
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- **Guided Discussion (20 mins):** Let's talk about what we heard.
  - What made it interesting to listen to? (The narrator's voice, music, sound effects, surprising facts?)
  - How did the sounds help you picture the story in your mind?
  - What is the difference between reading a story and hearing it told this way?
- **Activity: Topic Exploration (25 mins):** Explore the Oklahoma Historical Society website. Brainstorm a list of at least three possible topics for a 3-5 minute podcast. Ideas include:
  - The Chaos of the Land Run of 1889
  - The Story of Bass Reeves: Lawman of the West
  - Surviving the Dust Bowl in the Oklahoma Panhandle
  - The Rise of the Oil Barons
- **Assessment (Formative):** Paxton will make a 1-minute audio recording on his phone or computer explaining which topic he chose and why he thinks it will make a compelling audio story, referencing one of the podcasts he listened to as an example.

## Day 2: Tuesday, August 19 - Research Detective and Story Architect

**Learning Objective:** Paxton will gather key facts and interesting details from at least two credible online sources and structure them into a narrative outline.

- **Instruction (15 mins):** Let's talk about finding good information online. We'll focus on using the Oklahoma Historical Society's online encyclopedia and one other reliable source (like a museum website or educational resource). The goal isn't to find every fact, but to find the *\*story\**: who are the main people (characters)? What happened first (beginning)? What was the most exciting part (climax)? How did it end (resolution)?
- **Activity: Research & Outlining (45 mins):** Paxton will conduct his research, gathering notes. Then, he will create a simple story outline.
  - **Beginning:** Hook the listener and set the scene.
  - **Middle (Rising Action):** Build suspense. Introduce a problem or exciting events.
  - **Climax:** The most dramatic moment of the story.
  - **End (Resolution):** Explain what happened as a result and leave the listener with a final thought.
- **Assessment (Formative):** Paxton will share his completed outline, including the key facts he plans to use for each section and a list of his two sources.

## Day 3: Wednesday, August 20 - Scriptwriting Studio

**Learning Objective:** Paxton will write a complete script for his podcast, transforming his outline into engaging narration and including cues for sound effects and music.

- **Instruction (15 mins):** Let's focus on "writing for the ear." This means using a conversational tone (write like you talk!), short sentences, and vivid, descriptive words. We will introduce a simple two-column script format:

AUDIO CUES (Music/Sound Effects)	NARRATOR SCRIPT
<i>[Intro music - dramatic and hopeful - fades in and then fades to background]</i>	On April 22nd, 1889, the Oklahoma plains weren't quiet. They were buzzing with the energy of fifty thousand people...
<i>[SFX: Sound of a cannon firing, followed by galloping horses and cheering crowds]</i>	At the stroke of noon, a cannon blast echoed across the territory. The great Land Run had begun.

- **Activity: Write the Script! (45 mins):** Using his outline from yesterday, Paxton will write the full script. Encourage him to read his lines out loud as he writes to make sure they sound natural. He should add ideas for sound effects (SFX) and music in the left column.

- **Assessment (Formative):** A completed, typed script ready for recording.

## Day 4: Thursday, August 21 - Lights, Mic, Action!

**Learning Objective:** Paxton will record his narration with clear enunciation and expression and gather the audio assets (music, sound effects) needed for production.

- **Warm-Up (10 mins):** Vocal warm-ups! Practice reading parts of the script in different tones: excited, serious, mysterious. This gets the voice ready for recording.
- **Activity 1: Recording Narration (30 mins):** In a quiet space, Paxton will record his script using a computer or phone. The key is clear, steady pacing. It's okay to make mistakes! He can simply pause and re-record the line. He should save the final audio file.
- **Activity 2: Sound Scavenger Hunt (20 mins):** Using the free sound websites (Pixabay, Freesound), Paxton will find and download the music and sound effects he planned for in his script. He should organize these files in a folder for easy access.
- **Assessment (Formative):** A folder containing the main narration recording and all downloaded sound/music files.

## Day 5: Friday, August 22 - The Final Mix & World Premiere

**Learning Objective:** Paxton will edit his audio files into a single, polished podcast episode and reflect on the creative process.

- **Instruction (15 mins):** A quick tutorial on the chosen audio editor (BandLab is recommended for its simplicity). We'll cover the three most important steps:
  1. Importing and layering tracks (one for voice, one for music, one for SFX).
  2. Using the "volume" tool to make sure narration is clear and music is in the background.
  3. Trimming clips to get the timing just right.
- **Activity: Edit and Produce! (45 mins):** This is where it all comes together! Paxton will assemble his podcast. He'll layer his voice, add his intro/outro music, and place his sound effects to match the script. When he's happy with it, he will export the final project as an MP3 file.
- **Assessment (Summative): The World Premiere!** We will listen to the final podcast together. After listening, we'll have a brief discussion:
  - What was your favorite part of making this?
  - What was the most challenging part?
  - If you made another episode, what would you do differently?

The final MP3 file serves as the main assessment, evaluated on clarity, creativity, and effective use of audio elements to tell a story.

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## Differentiation and Extension

- **For Extra Support:** Provide a pre-written script outline or a curated list of 5-10 sound effects to choose from. Work together on the first few edits in the audio software.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Encourage Paxton to create his own sound effects (Foley art) using items around the house, write and record a 30-second "advertisement" that fits the historical theme, or design "cover art" for his podcast episode using a free tool like Canva.