

Lesson 6

Script Writing



Podcast Tips & Script

The first step in creating a podcast is to choose a topic and then create an outline. The next step is to write a script for your podcast. While there are certainly some types of podcasts that don't have detailed scripts, such as those containing interviews, most others do. Why are scripts so important when creating podcasts? There are a couple of good reasons:

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- You avoid what is known as “Red Light Fever”. It is very common to make mistakes when you first start podcasting – especially when you see that red recording light go on. It is also common to use “filler words” such as “like,” “um,” “so,” and “yeah.” When people record a podcast without a script, they may need to record themselves several times because they make mistakes during the recording. To illustrate this, record yourself talking about a specific topic – something as simple as “What did you do last weekend?” Most people add lots of “likes,” “um’s,” and “so’s” when they speak without a script, and many also make mistakes. Did you? It’s easier to make mistakes, and more frustrating, when you know you’re being recorded. Now, try writing down on paper what you did last weekend, and then record that. If you’re like most people, reading something that is written down eliminates most of those “like,” “ums,” and “so’s,” and you probably made few, if any, mistakes.
- Writing a script makes your podcast more organized and clearer. Writing your outline probably took you some time. Writing a script takes time too. Reading and recording the script is probably the easiest part of creating a podcast.
- It is always a good practice to use the Draft>Edit>Revise process when writing a script. Your first draft is just that – a first attempt. You should always read over your first effort so that you can see what you need to fix, add, or eliminate. The best option is to share your work with a friend, parent, classmate, or your teacher for their feedback. After the editing process, you should be able to revise your script to make it even better. You may need to repeat that process a few times before your script is ready to be recorded.

Now that you see why it’s important to write a script and to use the Draft>Edit>Revise process, here are a few helpful tips to keep in mind when writing a script:

- Make your podcast sound like a casual conversation rather than a report. It makes it much easier to listen to.
- Note when you want to add music or sound effects while writing your script.
- Add performance notes to your podcast. For example: who is speaking each part, when you need to pause, breathe, stress certain words, or change the pace of your delivery.
- Set the scene for your listeners. If you are talking about a specific place or event, use descriptive words so the listener can picture that place or event in their mind’s eye.
- Don’t talk too fast! It’s common for students to read their scripts as fast as they can. Speaking too fast makes it difficult for listeners to understand what you are saying.
- Come up with a title for your podcast that is both interesting and informative. Be creative!
- Be yourself! Podcasts are best when listeners can relate to the hosts and guests.



Script Template Example:

The following is an example of a podcast script that will hopefully help you begin your own script writing process.

My Podcast Episode 1: Up, Up & Away!

[Podcast Theme Music plays]

Me: Welcome to Episode 1 of my podcast. This week we will be talking all about hot air ballooning – an incredible way to see the landscape around you while floating silently in a basket hundreds of feet above the ground. This past summer I had the amazing experience of going on a hot air balloon ride with my parents. It was something that my father always wanted to do, and my mother bought him a ride for his birthday. I was lucky enough to tag along for the ride.

[Pause]

In this episode I will be talking all about how hot air balloons are built, how they fly, why they make them so colorful, and where you can go to experience a hot air balloon ride for yourself. I will be joined by the pilot who flew our balloon, and he will tell us everything you ever wanted to know about this amazing form of travel.

[Podcast Theme Music fades]

[Sound effect of wind]

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Me: Have you ever wondered what it feels like to fly? So have I. As far as I can tell, riding in a hot air balloon is as close to that feeling as you can get. It's so quiet up in the sky. So peaceful. The only thing you can hear is the roar of the flame that heats the air inside the balloon, wind, and occasionally some birds.

[Sound effect of birds]

Me: This week I am joined by Skye Pilot, the person who flew the hot air balloon I rode in with my family. Skye has been flying hot air balloons for nearly 25 years, and she is kind of an expert on the history and operation of hot air balloons. Welcome to the show, Skye!

Skye: Thanks for having me. I am so excited to share my passion for hot air ballooning with you and your listeners.

Me: And we are happy you are here! Please tell us Skye, how did you first get interested in hot air ballooning?

While you may not have to write down your guest's responses for a podcast script, the example above includes lots of information, such as when the music starts, who is speaking, sound effects, and so on. With this much detail, the actual recording process for your podcast will be much easier and less time consuming.

The best way to get started with writing your script is to take the outline that you wrote for Lesson 5, copy and paste it into a new document, and start writing!

Task:

Using word processing software like *Microsoft Word*, *Pages*, or *Google Docs*, write a script for a 10-minute podcast episode based on your topic and outline from Lesson 5. When complete, hand in to your teacher to begin the Draft>Edit>Revise process.

If you are working in groups for this project, divide up the outline equally so that you can all write the script together. It is best to use something like *Google Docs* to collaborate as you will be able to see what everyone has written during the process.