

Teacher Resource

Fictional Podcasts

Focus Questions

1. Briefly summarise the BTN *Fictional Podcasts* story.
2. *Mackaroy Uncovered* is the ABC's first fictional podcast. True or false?
3. What is *Mackaroy Uncovered* about? Write your own synopsis.
4. What is a fictional podcast?
5. How did families listen to radio plays in the 1930s and 40s?
6. What happened after the radio drama *War of the Worlds* was first broadcast?
7. Why did its author Orson Welles apologise to people?
8. What are some advantages of podcasts over television?
9. How are radio plays from the 1950s similar or different to podcasts of today?
10. What do you like about podcasts?

Activity

Class discussion

Students will discuss the BTN *Fictional Podcasts* story in pairs and then share their thoughts with the class.

- What do you know about podcasts?
- Share with the class your favourite podcasts. What do you like about them?
- What elements make up a podcast (e.g. sound effects, music, interviews)?
- How can stories we hear (like in a podcast) sometimes be more powerful than stories in film or TV?

Activity

Glossary

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN *Fictional Podcasts* story. Students may want to use pictures and diagrams to illustrate the meaning and create their own glossary. Here are some words to get them started.

Fictional	Podcast	Audio
Audience	Sound Effects	Radio play

Key Learning

Students will plan, write and create their own fictional podcast for a specific audience. Students will explore the elements and techniques of effective storytelling.

AC Curriculum

Media Arts – Years 3 and 4
Plan, create and present media artworks for specific purposes with awareness of responsible media practice.

Use media technologies to create time and space through the manipulation of images, sounds and text to tell stories.

Media Arts – Years 5 and 6
Plan, produce and present media artworks for specific audiences and purposes using responsible media practice.

Develop skills with media technologies to shape space, time, movement and lighting within images, sounds and text.

Media Arts – Years 7 and 8
Plan, structure and design media artworks that engage audiences.

Develop and refine media production skills to shape the technical and symbolic elements of images, sounds and text for a specific purpose and meaning.

Activity

Mackaroy Uncovered

As a class listen to the first episode of the new ABC podcast [Mackaroy Uncovered](#) – a fictional podcast written for kids. Students will take their own notes as they listen to the podcast, on the content and its production elements. After listening to the first episode students will then respond to the following:

- Write down what you know about Tang and Mitch so far? Describe each of the characters.
- Write down five things you would like to know about Tang and Mitch.
- What images did the podcast evoke? Describe and illustrate an aspect of the story.
- What techniques do the writer's use to create suspense in the story? Think about the words and sounds that are used.
- What other production techniques used within the podcast did you notice?
- What questions remain unanswered at the end of chapter one? What questions would you like answered? Swap your questions with other students in your class and try to answer each other's.
- Predict what you think will happen in the story. What clues are there in chapter one?
- How many cast and crew do you think were involved in the making of the podcast? Go [behind the scenes](#) to see who made the podcast and what their roles were.

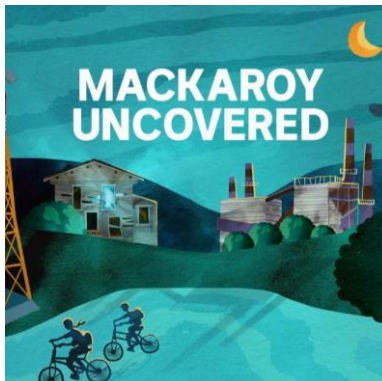
Activity

Explore podcasts

Students will explore and listen to a podcast that has been written for kids. Students can choose one of the following ABC podcasts or choose another podcast that interests them.



[Fierce Girls – ABC](#)



[Mackaroy Uncovered – ABC](#)



[Short & Curly – ABC](#)

After listening to an episode of their chosen podcast, students will then respond to the following questions:

- What did you like or dislike about the podcast?
- What did you notice about the sound quality?
- Did you notice anything about the voices or content?
- What sound effects did you notice? Describe them.
- How many stars would you give it out of 5?
- Write a review of the podcast. Include an illustration with your review. It could be a poster or a sketch of one of the characters from the story.

Short & Curly Resources

The ABC has developed [classroom resources](#) to support the Short & Curly podcast. The classroom resources are available as a PDF document, as an editable Word document or as a PowerPoint.



Activity

What makes a good podcast?

Students will plan and create their own fictional podcast or alternatively create a podcast about a topic of their choice. Begin by clarifying student's understanding of what a podcast is and what makes a podcast successful. Working in pairs, ask students to discuss and record their responses to the following questions:

- What are the main elements of a podcast?
- What makes a good podcast?
- How are podcasts made?
- Do you listen to podcasts? What podcast topics interest you?

Make your own podcast

Students will use the following to help guide the making of their podcast. Students will work together in groups of 2-3 and produce a two-minute podcast.

Pre-production

- Topic – what is your podcast about?
- Collaborate – who will you work with to make the podcast? What are your roles?
- Name – give your podcast a name.
- Audience – who will listen to the podcast? How will you keep your listeners engaged?
- Format – will there be a host? What will you include in your podcast? Will it be a series of episodes?
- Research and writing – decide on your content and write a script. Write a synopsis for your podcast.
- Rehearse – practise speaking and rehearse the content aloud before recording your podcast.

Recording

- Hardware and software – what equipment will you use to make your podcast? What software will you use to record your podcast? Make sure you have the required hardware and software – you will need a computer or Smartphone with a microphone and software such as the free [Audacity](#) or [Podomatic](#). Some Mac's come with [GarageBand](#) which is well suited to making podcasts.
- Sound – where will you record the podcast? Make sure it is in a quiet place. If using your smartphone, make sure you know where the microphone is on your phone.
- Record your podcast! Playback (using headphones) your recording to see how well you did.

Post-production

- Software – what software will you use to edit your podcast?
- Sounds effects – consider using a mix of digital sound effects found on the internet and sound effects made using your own props.

Publishing

- Publish – publish your podcast live. Consider using [Buzzsprout](#) to publish your podcast or a paid service like [Libsyn](#).
- Promote your podcast – Your school's website is a good place to start as well as their newsletter and social media sites. BTN would also love to share your podcast, just email a link to BTN@abc.net.au

Activity

How to build stories

Storytelling is key in the making of a successful fictional podcast. Start this activity by asking your students what they think a story is, recording their ideas during the discussion. Talk to students about the elements and techniques of effective storytelling.

In pairs, students will make a list of useful tips for story writing, including tips on how to build character development, plot tension and narrative.

Use the ABC Education's Digibook [How to build Stories](#), which explains how to build your own stories, using tricks to create exciting characters, plots, settings, genres and language.



Activity

Creative writing

Before writing their own fictional podcast, students will choose one of the following three activities to help start the creative writing process.

1. A BABY AND A DINOSAUR!

Write your own short imaginative piece about a baby and a dinosaur. Start by brainstorming possible scenarios. Remember to bring danger in from where the reader is least expecting it. Experiment with different narrative structures such as flashback and multiple perspectives. Consider making a quick [8 page mini-book](#) from one piece of paper to present your story.

2. FIND STORY IDEAS

Look through recycled newspapers or magazines for interesting pictures. Alternatively choose your favourite realist painting. Look for pictures that catch your eye and provide strong visuals of characters and settings. Choose one picture to help spark a story. Respond to the following questions: What's happening in the scene, when is it happening, who are the characters, what are they doing? Once you have brainstormed some ideas, begin writing your story about the picture.

3. FOLDING STORY BASED ON THE EXQUISITE CORPSE

Exquisite corpse is a method by which a collection of words is collectively assembled. Each collaborator adds to a composition in sequence, either by following a rule, or by being allowed to see only the end of what the previous person contributed

The instruction provides outline details for writing a narrative, but it could also be used for writing a poem. If writing a narrative, students will write a beginning, middle (with a complication) and an ending (with a resolution). Students will work in groups of three to create their folding story, using the following steps.

How to:

1. Fold an A4 piece of paper into three equal parts.
2. The first person begins writing the beginning of the story on the first section of the paper. The **last word** they are going to write should be written onto the next section.
3. The second person uses the word that is written as the start of the second section (middle) of the story – it should include a complication. The **last word** they are going to write should be written onto the next section.
4. The third person uses the word that is written as the start of the third section (ending) of the story – it should include a resolution for the story.

5. NOW – SHARE!

Reflect

Reflect on the activity by responding to the following questions:

- What did you enjoy about this investigation?
- What did you find surprising?

Useful Websites

Mackaroy Uncovered – ABC

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/mackaroy-uncovered/>

Podcast Kid – BTN

<https://www.abc.net.au/btn/classroom/podcast-kid/10530902>

Fierce Girls – ABC

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/fierce-girls/>

Radio Plays – BTN

<https://www.abc.net.au/btn/classroom/radio-plays/10532028>