

## Give your Students VOICE a Clever Way!

~ estimated 14-minute read ~

Encouraging and inspiring students to be their own media creators is a strong and important move into getting our students to feeling empowered in our media-laden society. Giving students a VOICE in different forms makes an impact in the 21<sup>st</sup> century classroom as well as on their excitement, motivation, and confidence.

Podcasts are a new rage and only getting more popular with people of all ages. Some 2021 published statistics about podcasts that may get your attention are:

- There are 2 million active podcast channels in the U.S.
- There are 48 million podcast episodes.
- 6 in 10 people over the age of 12 listen to podcasts.
- 3 out of every 4 people in the U.S. say they tune into their podcasts to learn something new.

Source: <https://www.oberlo.com/blog/podcast-statistics>

When we teach students how to create a podcast episode and even a podcast channel, the empowerment opportunity it offers can encourage our students in many ways to do well in the assessment and learning. Students cannot help but feel proud when they can listen to a podcast episode on their phones that they wrote, spoke, recorded, edited, uploaded, and promoted. To them, that is really cool! Because students feel empowered, proud, and confident in podcasting, podcasts make a great assessment in our classrooms.

Some other reasons why podcasts make an excellent assessment, either as an assignment or project are:

- Students are attracted to listening to podcasts, so a podcast assessment is relevant to their lives.
- Podcasts attract, engage, and enhance student motivation, and as a result, students are immersed in the creation of the end podcast product.
- Podcast production can tap into students' interests in diverse ways, especially if they are regular podcast listeners.
- Students learn while they are creating the podcast episode or channel and that learning is sustained long after the assessment is hosted.

- Creating podcast episodes puts the student in the role of the researcher, writer, planner, speaker, recorder, artist, editor, publisher, distributor, and promoter.
- Creating podcast episodes allows students to assess, learn, analyze, communicate, and evaluate using a variety of media formats.
- Students work with audio and visual media in the recording of the podcast episode sound file and designing the episode and channel cover art.
- Students use different software to record, edit, and upload their podcast episode recording as well as design their channel and episode cover art.
- When creating podcasts, students need to be cognizant of their audience if they want the podcast to be popular.
- Students learn to look at media licensing and provide attribution for the media.
- Along with speaking skills, students are using reading and writing skills with the episode script, description, and show notes.

The number one reason I enjoy assigning podcast episode assessments is:

- Podcast creation gives students an opportunity to problem-solve, critically think, create, “mediafy”, and apply knowledge in a clever, 21<sup>st</sup> century way. The real-world connection is oozing between the decibels for our students.

What impact does assigning podcasts do for students when podcasts are all the rage?

When students creating podcast episodes, the task gives students a way to demonstrate their knowledge in an auditory way. For me, as an auditory learner, I LOVE the thought of creating podcasts to share my message.

However, what if students do not like the thought of speaking publicly, especially if it is going to be shared online to a potential global audience?

I have found what works well for students who are apprehensive about recording (and hearing) their own voice in this contemporary form, are online text-to-speech tools such as, [voleeta](#), [text2speech](#), or [TTSFree](#). These online tools allow students to write, and then copy and paste their text into these online converters to produce an mp3 file as an end result. Another point to keep in mind is if students are hesitant to record their own voice, allow students to use these text-to-speech mp3 generators without hesitation. Offer it

initially as an option. What I have found to be the pattern is that once students create a podcast episode using one of these mp3 text-to-speech generators, the next time around in a podcast assessment, they want to use their own voice to create the podcast. Allow students to find their own comfort zone around podcast episode recording. This type of choice goes a long way and helps in relationship building as well.

I recommend starting out the podcast assessment process with your students in steps. Students, for the first podcast assessment, can use an easy voice recorder like [online-voice-recorder.com](https://online-voice-recorder.com) to record their first podcast episode. Students submit a recording .mp3 file to you for the first podcast episode assessment. Students get practice researching, writing, and recording a sound product.

For the second podcast assessment, students may use a free software like [Audacity](https://audacity.net) to record and add background music and sound effects to their recording, including an intro (a jingle introduction) and an outro (a jingle thank you for listening with rating and call-to-subscribe reminders), and then export the edited episode as an .mp3 file. Students, then, submit the podcast episode .mp3 file to the teacher for the second podcast assessment. Additionally, at the end of this step, they have created a complete podcast episode that you may upload to a class podcast channel.

In the third podcast assessment, students can repeat what they did for the second podcast assessment to create the podcast episode .mp3 file, but also have students create their podcast episode cover art. Using Canva to create cover art, makes this super easy and a quick step for students. Have students check out real podcast episode covers that are out there to help them design their episode covers. This step is one they enjoy! Students may also write a short description of their episode's content that you may place with the episode and cover art when uploading their episodes to the class podcast channel. You may post their episode .mp3 file, cover art, and description on the class podcast or you can teach students how to upload their podcast episode to the class podcast channel, along with including their description and cover art. Maybe you have a group of students upload their peers' podcast episodes in the class to limit the number of people going into the class podcast.

The fourth podcast assessment, you can assign students the task of creating their own podcast channel. They will need to think of a title for their channel, the purpose and intention of their podcast channel, and who their audience will be, as well as design cover art for their podcast channel. They can create a free podcast channel on [Podomatic](https://podomatic.com), which I also recommend teachers use to create class podcast channels. Now, Podomatic allows recording and editing right on the site, so at this point, students no longer need to use Audacity to record, add background music and sound effects, or edit their podcast recording. They can do all these steps in Podomatic. Once students have created their

own podcast channel, they may upload on their own channel their previous podcast episodes they submitted to you, if those episodes meet their podcast channel's purpose and intention.

In the fifth podcast assessment, students can repeat creating their podcast episode recording using Audacity (third podcast assessment) or Podomatic (fourth podcast assessment), they then upload the finished podcast episode recording to their own podcast channel, but what the additional part of the task in this assessment is that students PROMOTE their podcast episode on social media, using the right hashtags to draw in their audience. I recommend having students promote their podcast episodes and channels on your class social media. Have students complete an assignment that includes the media post text and the cover art to include in the post. Then, you post their promotional post without giving students credentials to the class social media accounts. Students can also create their show notes either in a document they save online and then link in their episode description, or they create a show notes webpage using [Google Sites](#) and include that link in their show notes. Show notes should include the episode title, description, sources of content or links mentioned in the episode, as well as attribution for the media (music, sound effects, and images). Images uploaded into Canva to include in their cover art would need attribution.

When students get to this point, they are usually *bubbling* with excitement because they view the assignment as doing a real-world cool media task, all on their own. And they should be proud. 57% of the population (<https://www.oberlo.com/blog/podcast-statistics>) may be podcast listeners but 57% do NOT know how to create podcast episodes and channels from start to finish.

Sites to use to create podcast episodes and channels are:

- [Online Voice Recorder](#)
- [Podomatic](#)
- [Podbean](#)
- [Alitu](#)
- [Anchor FM](#)
- [Buzzsprout](#)
- [Thinglink](#) – to create a narrated infographic podcast

Podcast assessments are one type of assessment students do not mind repeating, especially when they know they are going to increase their podcast creation skills in the next podcast assessment.

To help teachers to assign podcast assessments in their classroom, this month (January 2022) in my [EdTechEnergy Momentum EdTech Coaching membership](#), the EdTech assets are about **Podcast Creation Assessments**. The following resources are available to EdTechEnergy Momentum members:

- **WEEK 1:** Podcast Creation Assessment EdTech Coaching session in both audio and video formats (52:59 minutes)
  - 22-page Student-Created Podcast Assessment Notes Planner - pdf
- **WEEK 2:** Step-by-Step Guide with screenshots on how to create a podcast episode and channel using Podomatic (video tutorial and guide)
  - Step-by-Step Guide with screenshots on how to create a QR Code for podcast episode
- **WEEK 3:** Timesaving templates that provide teachers what they may use when assigning a podcast creation project or assignment to students. **TWO BONUSES INCLUDED!**
  - Podcast Creation Time-management Timeline
  - Podcast Creation Outline Graphic Organizer
  - Media Licenses TASL Attribution Cheat Sheet
  - Secondary Education Podcast Creation Rubric
- **WEEK 4:** Implementation Guidelines and Resources about Student Podcast Projects (Summative) or Assignments (Formative)
  - Podcast Creation Assessment Implementations and Resources Teacher Guide
  - Podcast Creation Assignment Blueprint
  - Podcast Creation Peer Review Template
  - Student Podcast Creation Reflection

If you are interested in joining the **EdTechEnergy Momentum EdTech Coaching membership**, click on the link below. The cost of membership is \$15/month or \$144/annually, saving you 20%.

Click here to join: <https://edtechenergy.thinkific.com/courses/edtechenergy-momentum>

Cancel anytime. Membership ends when the paid subscription time ends.

I put together a **Podcast Assessment Chart** of the suggested five podcast assessments above to begin your students' podcast process learning, including writing, speaking,

editing, posting, and promoting their learning.

Grab the checklist at the link at this link:

[https://engage.edtechenergy.org/podcast\\_assessment\\_chart](https://engage.edtechenergy.org/podcast_assessment_chart)

Podcast assessments can give our students a fun and super current way to share their voice, with the world. As a researcher, writer, speaker, editor, director, poster, and promoter, our students may experience a comprehensive media encounter in our classroom, which may ripple effect into a lot of new confidence and pride in our students.

**Please comment below—Will you use a podcast assessment in your classroom to empower your students and increase their 21<sup>st</sup> century skills? Or do you already assign podcast assessments and have a cool tip to include for us to learn from you! I would love to know!**

Share your ideas in the comments below. Or share them on social media and tag @EdTechenergy.

**Next blog topic:** Personalized learning. What exactly does personalized learning mean and how can we personalize our instruction, student learning, and assessment?

Enrollment is open to for my unique six-week EdTech secondary teacher professional development online course, called, **Engagement is the Name of the Gain**. I've included everything I and the teachers who I coached used to engage our students to high levels and will also save you a BUNCH of time planning and prepping.

What makes my EdTech PD course unique is my ENGAGE Framework, the integration foundation of my five EdTech engagement strategies. These strategies work because they're aligned to the HUMAN NATURE inside each and every student.

#### **What is included in my EdTech PD course?**

- 📖 The ENGAGE Framework
- 📖 5 step-by-step student EdTech Engagement Strategies!
- 📖 25+ EdTech Engagement video and audio Lessons!
- 📖 25+ EdTech Engagement Tutorials!
- 📖 20+ EdTech Templates!
- 📖 5 Engagement Strategy Action Plans to customize as your own & reuse over and over again!
- 📖 6 Engagement roadmaps to use when creating instruction, student learning & assessment!
- 📖 6 Time-saving blueprints to use when building your online pages in your LMS, learning management system like Google Classroom, Canvas, Schoology, or Moodle.

Plus, I've included 7 Bonuses just for YOU!

Check out everything you get to increase student engagement, save time, and get a better life-work balance! The strategies you learn in this course you'll use the rest of your teaching career.

Go to [bit.ly/edtechengagement](https://bit.ly/edtechengagement) to find out more! [bit.ly/edtechengagement](https://bit.ly/edtechengagement)

I'd love to see you in the course and help you transform the student engagement energy in your classroom!

[Convert Words to Time - Talk Time Calculator](#)