

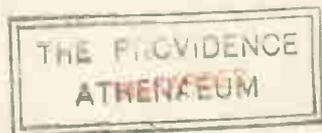
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How to Use Radio

**An Outline of Practical Suggestions For
The Teacher and the Radio Chairman**

By

Professor KENNETH L. BARTLETT



Presented in the Public Interest by

Station W E A N

How to Use Radio

By

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Syracuse University

With a Foreword by

DR. JOHN W. STUDEBAKER

U. S. Commissioner of Education

Published by

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Washington, D. C.

For Those Who Would Inspire A Richer Community Life

THOSE who would inspire a richer community life; those who would develop a deeper understanding of the social and civic problems confronting their neighbors; those who would extend the frontiers of knowledge beyond the class room—the broadcasters of America welcome you to our studios and place in your hands this Manual of Radio Use that you may the better accomplish these worthy objectives through radio.

For in American Radio we have something beyond the opportunity of listening—*we have also the opportunity to be heard.*

If there were no other distinction between the American System of Broadcasting and that of other lands, this one distinction in itself is sufficiently significant. It is the distinguishing mark of our democracy, one which American Radio vigorously and wholesomely reflects.

Our thanks go out to Professor Bartlett for his very capable work in compiling this Manual, so that educational and public service institutions in hundreds of communities throughout the nation might have the technical information and assistance with which to achieve broader results from radio.

As new developments in the Radio Art unfold, the Manual will be revised accordingly.

NEVILLE MILLER, *President,*
National Association of Broadcasters.

Washington, D. C., 1938.

FOREWORD

EVERY radio station should be the voice *of* the community as well as a voice directed *at* the community. The basis for that statement is to be found in the instruction of the law. And because this voice is inevitably a chorus composed of the voices of schools and charities, colleges and clubs, public services and sports, leaders and laymen; a chorus swelling with all the magnificent variety of free American life, I welcome this helpful working guide. I am sure that it will aid the many voices of our communities to become clearer and more understandable to listeners.

To educators and other citizens to whom it is addressed I say: be humble in the presence of a microphone. We must begin in the kindergarten of a long process of training and experience to master the new, difficult art of radio. Take the advice of this manual to heart. Study and practice!

To radio station staff members I say be patient and helpful with the public servants, educators and citizens who come to you. Yours is the task of teacher and counselor.

As chairman of the Federal Radio Education Committee it has been my duty and pleasure to work for closer cooperation between broadcasters and educators. Therefore I am glad to recommend this manual as another practical guide to the goal toward which we all march side by side; that radio in the United States, under the present general conception of the "American system of broadcasting", shall ever broaden its service in "the public interest, convenience and necessity."

J. W. STUDEBAKER,
United States Commissioner of Education.

Part I

INTRODUCTION

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Importance of American Broadcasting	9
What Educational Groups and Civic Organizations Can Contribute to Radio	10
What Radio Can Do for Education	12
The Problem of Adapting Educational Material to the Air	12

Importance of American Radio Broadcasting

TO SOME, the importance of broadcasting in the United States is best illustrated by the size of the radio audience. Reliable figures indicate that twenty-seven million families own approximately thirty-seven million radio receivers; that approximately seventy-five per cent of these are "on" every day; and that the average set operates 5.1 hours daily. A radio set has almost become a twentieth century necessity.

To others, and greater in significance than the mere size of the audience, is the fact that radio here, in contrast to radio in other nations, is *free*—free in the sense that, apart from the laws of libel and slander, and in matters of good taste, the individual can say what he pleases without government interference; free in that there is ample opportunity for the exchange of opposite ideas; free, too, in the sense that most sections of the country offer daily service, 18 hours a day, from one or more stations and this without tax on the listener. This bringing of men and events into the home by stations offering almost continuous service puts a greater premium on creative and critical effort than any single development since the invention of the printing press.

To still others, the importance of radio is not so much in the size of its audience, or even in the freedom of the people who use it, as in the mere nebulous factor of the response people have to what they hear. Here more than elsewhere is where the educative factor occurs. Thorough studies of the effect programs have on listeners are now being completed. Until those in charge have made their reports we must depend upon existing data.

We know, for example, that radio has become our favorite recreation; that it has "psychologically cemented" the family circle at a time when an evening at home for the whole family was almost unheard of; that most people would rather hear a speech than read one; that it is a source of discussion at the family table; that it has given the public school an unusual and striking supplementary teaching device and that through education-on-the-air the desire of all educators to have the educational process continued long after school days are over has been enhanced. It has changed our social environment, conditioned behavior, and has become a powerful factor in moulding public

opinion. We know, too, that irrespective of whether educational groups use radio, radio will continue to have educational effect.

While radio has gone far in nineteen years, its educational programs have frequently lagged. This was partly because the medium was new and there were few interested in trial-and-error testing, and partly because educators and civic groups assumed that the old forms of presentation would be sufficient. Now we know that the best results are obtained when educators and civic groups combine their knowledge, background and traditions with the knowledge and background of the broadcaster. The radio station is aware that if its programs are to reflect local as well as national interests; to present all sides and not just one; to disseminate worthwhile information and not just entertainment; to mirror present tastes and develop others, it must work with the school and other civic groups. Progressive educators, too, are increasingly aware that if we are to touch those fifty million Americans whose education does not extend beyond the eighth grade and widen the influence of thought, they must take advantage of the audience radio can give.

In short, if radio is to serve, there must not only be a mutual understanding between the two, but we must recognize the general importance of radio in the past and present and its educational importance in the future.

What Educational and Public Service Organizations Can Contribute to Radio

ONE of the most obvious things that educational and public service organizations can contribute to radio is to offer worthwhile material that will reflect local and sectional interests. Every school and civic organization has material that is newsworthy and significant. The problem is to see it.

An individual who spends a lifetime at an occupation, acquires a knowledge and a philosophy that is worth listening to. Students digging up this information and adapting it to the air, not only learn the technique of broadcasting—which might be incidental to the educational process—but, more important, begin the process of integrating many different classroom subjects.

Persons in charge of local Public Health Units, the Parent-Teachers' Association, Children's organizations, Y. W. and Y. M. C. A.'s, Community Chest Agencies, the Red Cross, Missions, Libraries, and all kinds of social service agencies have worthwhile information that is directly applicable to the community or district. Colleges and universities might offer educational radio fare at a more advanced level, such as the interpretation of world and local events, round-tables or forums for the discussion of public issues, explanation of the new things in science. Programs of this kind help locate talent and give it an opportunity it might not otherwise have. Such contributions, well handled, not only have intrinsic merit, but go far in giving stations a more varied offering. It helps balance serious entertainment with light entertainment; local interests with national offerings; amateur performance with professional. In fact, it makes local groups articulate and does for radio the things the weekly newspaper does for Journalism and the Little Theatre does for Drama.

Educational groups might provide "Follow-ups" for their own and national programs. The educational program is only the start of the process. The effect occurs in the home and unless some method is provided for individuals to "follow-up" what they have heard, much of what has been done may be lost. Making books available in local libraries, or periodically arranging discussion groups to carry on where the programs left off, etc., are obviously things that can better be done by schools and organizations acting within their own community.

In many ways, the most important contribution the Educational Group can make to radio is to pave the way for the broader acceptance of the educational program. The President of the National Association of Broadcasters, Mr. Neville Miller, has said:

"Radio is, after all, a mirror of the genius, of the talent and the thought of the American people. Its level can be no higher than the general level of education and culture in the country. It will never be any better as an educational medium than the educators who use it; it will never be any better as a vehicle of drama than the playwrights and actors of the theatre; and it will never be any more intelligent as a forum on public affairs than the people who do our thinking on public affairs.

"If we would increase and widen the cultural and educational effectiveness of radio, more than the allotment of time and the development of new program techniques are called

for. We must, through the spread of education to all sections of our population, pave the way for the acceptance of such programs. Let me make the point clear: radio will continue to do its part to elevate the level of American taste; to popularize things cultural; to bring the questions of the day straight and instantly to the American fireside, *but radio cannot do the job alone.*"

It should be remembered that radio programs, by and large, have not generally had the advantage of *professional criticism*. Literature of all types and kinds has had its professional critics and classroom criticism. Standards have been developed. In radio this has not yet occurred on a broad and significant scale and the result has been that listeners seldom take the trouble to evaluate a program. It is either "good" or "bad" and dismissed as such. Every program is not built for the same audience. Purposes and types differ and until a listener has evaluated a program on the basis of the audience for whom it was intended, and the type of thing it purports to be, he has not judged it wisely. An occasional discussion of the better programs in the school, radio discussions by dramatic and literary groups and Parent-Teachers Associations and the like, is an effective method in developing standards and appreciation for the better programs. The providing of worthwhile material, educational "follow-ups" of national programs, locating talent and giving experience that might otherwise be lost, making schedules reflect civic interests, and paving the way for the broader acceptance of educational programs are only a few of the things that education and civic groups can contribute to the radio station.

What Can Radio Do for Education

THE radio station offers to the educator its facilities and its audience, and in so doing, widens the scope of the educational institution's work. It breaks the barrier of the classroom and presents an auditorium of great though indeterminate size. It enables the school and civic group to have an opportunity to enter the home and present its material there.

Licensed to serve public interest, it makes an effort to give the public what it wants. In offering its facilities it attempts only

to protect its audience from programs that are not interesting to the audience for whom they are intended. Built up over a long period of time, and from approximately fifteen thousand programs a year that presumably give the station a certain personality, that audience is the most valuable thing the station possesses. Without it the station could not exist, and so it is to be expected that the station will do everything in its power to protect that audience. This means offering its facilities to the worthy and rejecting those programs that are of questionable taste or those not carefully prepared.

In addition to the necessary equipment, stations also have specialists with years of radio programming experience who assist in putting the program on the air. These specialists are available for the asking. They will meet with your committee, advise, and take your program through rehearsal. They are the station's representatives in all matters of detail.

The Problem of Adapting Educational Material to the Air

BOTH the educational institution and the civic organization on the one hand and the radio station on the other have something to offer in making education a more important force in radio—and vice versa! But, it's more than a matter of the station offering time and the other materials. Somehow the material will have to be adapted to the medium and by someone who understands both. The function of this little book is to offer the school and the civic organization an outline of some of the things to be considered.

For those anxious to do something soon, a conference with the station will provide the necessary details that a sketchy outline of this nature cannot do. For those interested in investigating the possibilities of Education-by-Radio further, the many books in the field, college courses, plus experience in high school and university Radio-Workshops will provide the necessary trial-and-error demonstration.

One thing must not be lost sight of, however: present-day American radio, to the listener at least, is an entertainment

medium. This does not necessarily mean that it is not educational to the listener. *It means that education must be interesting, provocative, and, therefore, though incidentally, entertaining. One significant difference between the sponsor's program of education is that the former is entertainment for entertainment's sake with the education an unnecessary, though desirable attribute, while the latter is primarily education with entertainment a necessary, though secondary attribute. Both must be entertaining. Both need not be educational. In that sense, radio is still to the listener an entertainment medium and programs should be planned with that in mind.*

Part II

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

CONTENTS

	PAGE
The "Planning Committee"	17
Material That Makes a Good Program	17
Purpose and Audience to be Reached	18
One Person Responsible for the Program	18

The “Planning Committee”

THE first step in planning an educational program is the setting up of a “Planning Committee.” Its object is to determine policy, define perspectives, discuss procedures, and appoint some one person to be in charge and carry out its plans. It should consist of representatives of the organization and the person from the local station in charge of educational and public service programs. Occasionally, a disinterested outsider is included to represent the type of audience you want to reach.

The advantages of such a committee are so obvious and numerous that they need hardly be listed. It makes for more ideas and a more balanced perspective, diffuses responsibility without losing it, is an aid in avoiding charges of favoritism and prejudice, and enables the organization, after the series starts, to evaluate the program and check its progress. Almost all the nationally-known educational programs on the net works have policy committees composed of distinguished leaders of thought. Local educational and civic organizations will find a small but interested committee, rather than a single person, a real help.

Material That Makes a Good Program

PEOPLE who work with projects a long time are apt to become so familiar with the subject that they “can’t see the trees because of the forest.”

We are interested in the unusual, the timely, and that which is made significant. The mere fact that the organization “has a campaign on,” or that “we should have something,” or “others broadcast, why don’t we?” are poor excuses unless accompanied by something significant and worthwhile. *Programs that utilize local color, local personalities and reflect local interests are always better than the ones that imitate someone else.* The ability to see the unusual in the commonplace, the broadcasting of that which is vital and dynamic—that which people are interested in, makes good radio material. The Committee should not placidly assume but rather objectively ask *whether it really has something to say that a large number of people want to hear.*

Purpose and Audience to be Reached

THE purpose should not only be clearly and concretely stated, but the audience you want to reach fairly well defined. This means visualizing the individual you want to listen, and analyzing the response you want him to have

- (a) two minutes after the program starts;
- (b) immediately after it is over; and
- (c) a week or two later.

The desire here is not to make educational-programming difficult, but to *make it easier by aiming at a target rather than shooting blindly in the dark*. Much wasted effort and lost audiences might be avoided if the *purpose* and *audience* had in the *beginning been more clearly defined*.

This also involves the question of whether the purpose of the program is to *teach* or to *stimulate* further activity. The function of educational radio is both, but because of the limitation of time and its inability to provide visual images and two-way conversation, there has been an emphasis on the latter. In either case the educational offering should not attempt to cover too much or be too thorough. Accuracy, and material properly related and not out of proportion or over-simplified, is more of the essence of radio education than a broad purpose analyzed with minute detail. An individual who can high-light significant authentic material and has a speaker's knowledge of arousing interest will stimulate a desire to learn sooner than the person who proceeds to teach with the thoroughness of the scientist or has a pedantic, academic approach.

One Person Responsible for the Program

THE person responsible for the program should not only be the contact between the station and the committee but he or she will have to complete plans and execute details. These include, among other things:

- (a) A detailed outline for the entire series.
- (b) Write or otherwise provide the scripts of each program.

-
- (c) Arrange with the station representative for the auditions and rehearse each program.
 - (d) Write the continuity.
 - (e) Inform the station of the musical selections to be used well in advance.
 - (f) Provide the publicity.
 - (g) Arrange meetings of the Committee to evaluate what is being done.

As a leader, he or she will probably assign some of these duties to others, but in most cases the burden of work, particularly detail, will fall on the group leader.

Part III

HOW TO PREPARE THE SCRIPT FOR THE AIR

CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. The Radio Educational Drama	23
a. Preparing the Script	24
b. The Audition	26
c. Casting the Show	28
d. Sustaining Interest	29
e. How Long a Series?	30
f. Developing a Style	31
g. Publicity	31
h. Program Evaluation	32
2. The Talk	36
a. Selecting the Subject	33
b. Choice of Material	35
c. Outlining the Talk	36
d. Writing for Speaking	37
e. Delivery	37
3. Techniques of the Conversation Program	39
a. Round Table Discussions	39
b. Questions and Answers	40
c. Symposium	40
d. The Interview	40
4. Music	41

The Form

IN PLANNING the individual program, one of the first questions to determine is the form of presentation best adapted for the material. Consideration should be given, also, to the general abilities of the personnel available for the programs.

There are four general forms of radio programs:

1. The Radio Drama
2. The "Conversational" Type Program
3. The Musical Program
4. The Radio Talk

The Radio Educational Drama

EDUCATIONAL material should be dramatized *only when it has dramatic value*. Radio dramas attempting to moralize or bend-over-backward trying to demonstrate the work of an agency become so obvious that attention is drawn *from the subject to the poor presentation*. This is both poor drama and bad radio. If the material has dramatic value and will stand on its own merit, it will probably make a good program. The announcer or guest speaker at the beginning or end can make such adjustments as are necessary to the sponsoring organization and even these should be used sparingly.

When the material lacks plot or is more of an illustration than a drama with action, struggle, suspense, and climax, it can probably better be used in some other form of radio presentation outlined later on.

The full-length drama is the most difficult type of radio exposition but it is here that little theater organizations, high school dramatic clubs, the English class, college graduates and others anxious to develop civic interests and even "hobbies," have an opportunity to cooperate with the radio station in contributing worthwhile educational and public service programs.

One of the best radio plays on the networks was written by a druggist who had had no previous dramatic experience. Radio adaptations of classical literature, free from copyright, and studied in the high school, makes an interesting assignment. So, too, the *dramatization of local history*, which is one of the

most valuable services the high school radio group can contribute to its community. Material supplied by Community Chests, Health Associations, P. T. A.'s, the Red Cross, the Boy and Girl Scouts, Safety Clubs and the like offer the would-be radio dramatist an opportunity to be of service and civic organizations a chance to popularize their material.

Preparing the Script

A NUMBER of very good books on radio drama are now on the market.* They should be made available and persons interested should read, study, and then listen to see how the techniques described are performed on the air. A few suggestions will introduce the more complete texts:

1. Radio is the *only* medium where drama is attempted solely on the basis of sound. Here the actor has no stage, no scenery, no make-up, no costumes to help him. He is not seen. His voice must portray his character, his moods, his action. Music—sound, the narrator's description *alone* set the scene.

This means fewer characters and more distinctive types; greater attention to *character-portrayal through voice*; greater freedom in changing scenes and correspondingly less attention to the time-space limitations of stage-drama.

2. In beginning a radio play, write a synopsis of each scene. In doing this the action and the characters should be visualized *in detail*. The writer should be sure that the synopsis, later the play, has conflict, suspense, minor and major climaxes; that each scene *advances* the action; that each character is well-motivated and that it is written around a central character or idea. After the initial ardor has cooled, the writer might try it on a friend to see if the plot interests him.

3. The dialogue must not only be real but must also describe *what is going on*. Characters should be called by name until established; language, along with voice, should indicate age, nationality, social status, type of person; movement and sound effects that are not instantly intelligible must be described; speeches must be short; and much must be done in a limited time.

4. Sound effects bring realism to radio and are used to give the scene dimension and color. If you need a fire crackling, savage drums, marching soldiers, a wedding march, a train, a

* The U. S. Office of Education, Washington, has a most valuable and comprehensive Bibliography. Other material available is discussed on page 43.

baby crying, an army tank or a calliope, specify it in the script, in the margin.

While the more difficult things should be avoided, the determination of what can and cannot be done will have to be decided by the station program director.

5. *Effective transitions*, many times, are the difference between amateur and professionally turned-out programs. This means the getting from one scene to another or from one element of the program to another. It may be done by an announcer or narrator, incidental music, sound effects, or by a short pause. If a narrator or announcer is used, it should be sparingly (to prevent the transition from becoming jumpy or interruptive). If music or sound-effects are used, they will be faded in and out—with the *opening* dialogue of the next scene or the *closing* dialogue of the preceding scene, providing the listener with a knowledge of *what is taking place*. Music must be in the mood of both scenes. If sound effects are chosen, they should have a certain clear-cut deliberateness about them that gives the listener a sense of movement, a mood and/or a picture-dimension of the following scene. In dress rehearsals, *emphasize smooth transitions*. They make or break your show.

Other equally obvious things include a description that sets the opening scene, read by the announcer or narrator, an opening dialogue that gets the play under way rapidly; a dramatic impact (“punch-line”) *at the end* of each scene, and an adequate climax.

Radio drama technically well-written and produced, which reflects local atmosphere and situation has, on the whole, been quite neglected.

Because it is an intrinsically valuable form and because it offers education a way of popularizing its material and because the writing and producing of a play, even though it never gets more than an audition, is “educational in itself,” the radio drama is significant. Also it presents a method of getting close to the subject; *re-enacting* actions rather than telling about them as in a speech.

The term “radio continuity” refers to the written parts and sequences in the program—the introduction of a speaker, the setting of a play, the announcement of the musical selections to be played, the signing off of the program. Aristotle, long before radio, defined continuity as “that in which adjacent parts have their units in common.”

The person or group offering a program to a station must provide it with a "continuity." Before final copies of your continuity are stenciled, check with the station program director for the style preferred.

Summary

If, in reading this outline on preparing the script, the prospective radio writer becomes conscious only of rules and *neglects* the *spirit* and *content* of what he wants to say, then the outline has failed. As a matter of fact, there are a number of effective writers and speakers on the air who disobey—or never knew—most of the suggestions just given. Some possess unusual writing or delivery styles of their own; they see the unusual in the commonplace; they think clearly and understand what people are interested in. This unbeatable combination gives radio programs variety, but they are not necessarily to be imitated. They are but exceptions and not the guide posts.

In the final analysis, the radio writer in preparing his script or outline should be himself. After the first draft has been completed he might check this outline and make those changes that occur naturally. The others might be developed later. The purpose of the outline is to provide a series of guide posts and not a beaten path.

Audition

NORMALLY everyone, except those individuals selected for their name-value, should be chosen by audition. An audition is made necessary by the fact that when an individual's voice is *subtracted from the other elements of his personality*, it sometimes sounds differently. The audition makes the selection more objective and decides it more from the point of view of the listener. This procedure has long been a part of the professional program and is a common experience in the lives of even the best-known radio performers. No one should be sensitive about competitive auditions for they are a fundamental part of all radio programs.

What to Look for in the Audition

Well-conducted auditions do not cause hard feeling if it is made known ahead of time that the decision will be based *strictly on the voice*—not the person. It simply comes down to the question, “What voice do we want to be our representative in thousands of homes?” To avoid prejudice, those taking the audition might be given numbers to disguise identity and, thus, make the choice solely on its merit. The question next arises as to what the Committee will look for? Here are a few suggestions:

1. An individual who has a *sense of communication*. I do not believe that a *good* voice is *necessary*. Many a well-known artist does not possess a “good” radio voice, but because of different and peculiar voice traits is still highly acceptable. Then, too, the goal in educational radio should remain substance over delivery. Nothing said nicely, in my opinion, is worse than its converse. However, it should not be a question of one *or* the other. If the authority is not newsworthy and therefore cannot stand on his own for that reason; or if the voice is positively bad and not just “not good”; or if the person listening to him cannot understand him but can understand the same material when read by another—the authority should be the first to ask someone else to present the material for him. The idea that the person writing the script must necessarily speak it, or because a person is chairman of the Radio Committee and “should do it” are unwarranted assumptions and an introverted approach to the problem of selection. The audition is for the purpose of deciding objectively who is best. After all, programs are built for listeners and not for performers. As a teacher, I am well aware of the obligation, occasionally, of using someone I wouldn’t by choice select. But this business of building programs so that the performer might develop some needed personality trait or later become a great artist is something that should be done very conservatively. Radio is too public to rehearse with, and if this is a desirable teaching device, then the school should build an audition channel to take care of such situations.

In selecting speakers for straight program speaking, the very good voice may be as ineffectual as the person with a very poor one. If he “purrs you to sleep” the result will be only slightly different from the one who haltingly and monotonously reads you to a point where you click the dial. The point here is that the person should not be chosen for his voice alone but for his *ability to communicate*. If the Committee responds to the manner, to the exclusion of the content, that individual

should not be chosen. If they respond to "substance" though not to the voice, the first obstacle has been overcome.

2. If the individual is to conduct interviews, or is a part of a round-table, or is to act as a "chairman" or "editor", the Committee should look for someone who is more than a good reader. He should be able to extemporize. If it is for a series rather than a single broadcast, and if the person is to be dealing with inexperienced speakers themselves not used to extemporaneous or impromptu speaking, it is generally better to select someone from the station staff who has experience. *Most programs need the steady hand of someone who has become acclimated to radio.*

Casting the Show

The Casting of a drama is a problem quite apart from Committee considerations and should be done by the persons directing or producing the play. Presumably this implies experience. If, however, the school has an audition channel and the dramatic director wants to select a temporary cast before reaching the studio, it is well to remember that mature voices and good dialect and authentic accents are hard to find. *Boyish* voices in *mature* character roles are discerned quickly. It is dubbed "amateur" and dialed off. A middle-aged man can have a high soprano and a 19-year-old boy a full heavy bass. Because of this, care should be taken *not* to promise anyone a part until he has had a studio audition under the direction of the station program director. If no one quite fills the bill the matter should be taken up with the station. They will be glad to supply someone from their files, but no changes will be made except through consultation with the person representing the educational group. In the words of one station, however, "Take no chances, please!"

In developing expression, different directors use different methods, and it is not the function of this outline to mind their business for them. For those not used to working in the field of radio, and merely as a start, I would suggest the group *first* read the play aloud and without expression for the sake of the story. *Then* let each work out his own interpretation. On the *next reading* corrections and additions should be made by the director. If the individual will *by voice* and *action* only live the part during rehearsal and broadcast, little more need be said. Sound effects can be developed separately without the aid of the cast. The whole must be rehearsed in whole or in part before the dress rehearsal.

Always rehearse! The amount of time spent depends so much upon the speakers and the program that it is almost impossible to make any generalizations. Amateur groups tend, on

the whole, I think, to try too difficult material with too little rehearsal. Where ten years ago a university would broadcast a discussion without any, and a drama with a one hour rehearsal, it now auditions and rehearses *everything!* Discussion groups meet several days before the broadcast and determine the subject. Later they meet to organize the material and frame a temporary outline. *Hours* and *days* before the program they meet in the "Workshop"—each with a copy of the outline—and run through the program just as it will be broadcast. A "production man" times each section so that they will know whether they are running ahead or behind. High school groups can organize accordingly.

Drama requires hard work but it is divided: a sound effects technician knows from the index of sound effects on the script what is expected of him; engineers have the continuity well-marked for "fades" and incidental music, if recordings or an orchestra are used; the producer—the person in charge—has, by rehearsal time, selected his cast and they have been through the script for expression. Since these are generally done separately, the final "dress rehearsal" is made the day of the broadcast.

Rehearsals are not only necessary in *timing* a program and in *acclimating* the artists to their material, but are also necessary for the *engineer* so that he may get a balance on voices. He "sets a level". Without it, ONE VOICE WILL BOOM through the radio set and the next CAN HARDLY BE HEARD! To balance different types of voices, he sometimes places individuals at varying distances from the microphone. Follow his directions.

Sustaining Interest

THE question of whether there should be one or a series of programs depends upon the purpose and the problem of sustaining interest. Most educators and civic groups in asking for time seek too much. Few realize until too late the lightning-like rapidity with which one week follows another, the amount of material a fifteen-minute period will use and the amount of preparation required. Radio is a hungry monster. It consumes more creative material, both musical and written, than any media in the history of the world! Do not attempt a *series* unless you have sufficient material to sustain interest over a period of time. Consult your station program man.

Consider this too: a single station in the course of a week will average more than 300 programs and over a year better than 15,000. If there are three stations in the community this means approximately 1,000 programs a week that listeners may select. *You have competition!*

Nine years ago a University had the privilege of using 17 hours a week on a commercial station. Year by year since then, and this by choice, it has used *less* and *less* time on the air and *more* and *more* time in rehearsal. *An interesting program once a year is better than one a week, poorly done.* The one will get a positive reaction where the 52 will lose thousands of friends.

A series tends to develop followers, release those not interested, and broaden the scope of what the organization can do. At the very least there should be a well-outlined plan. If there is a lack of response it can be abandoned, but if it succeeds the organization will know where it is going.

The success of the radio station rests on its listener-appeal. The success of the educational program depends on its ability to hold interest, and it should be developed into a series only so long as it sustains that interest, which means *that audience.*

How Long a Series?

How long . . . how frequent . . . and length per broadcast depends on the material. The most successful programs require the full time of three to a score of people for one broadcast a week. *Unless educators are willing and able to spend time and effort, the more conservative the figure for the series the better.* (There is no cost for station time. It is *given* to recognized educational and public service institutions by the radio station.)

Number of broadcasts and length per program varies directly with the number of persons and the amount of time each can spend. One 15 or 30-minute period a week requires real work. Two or three 15-minute periods requires a "staff". One, two, or three 5-minute periods will often suffice. Occasionally a 35-word announcement will accomplish the purpose.

Developing a Style

CLOSE observation to radio programs will disclose that most of them follow the same pattern from week to week.

If the program doesn't develop a formula for each broadcast, a personality should be substituted. For example, the *same* individual to *introduce* the speaker, *conduct* the interview, *chairman* the round-table, *explain* the setting for the drama, etc. Such a person provides the *unity* between what has gone before and what will follow.

Publicity

PUBLICITY for the series should be undertaken by the sponsoring organization in cooperation with the station. Publicity is desirable in notifying the people who might not otherwise know of the program of the station, the day, the hour, the subject. Daily and weekly newspapers, posters for bulletin boards, announcements in church and school programs, or attractive color tabs that may be clipped on outgoing mail are only a few of the possibilities. Care should be taken to see that the title can be listed in the newspapers' daily schedule.

Though the station will include the program in its press release, in most communities the educational organization should be the one to talk with radio editors. And, by all means, do not be unreasonable. Yours is not the only program on the air and newspaper space is valuable. An objective approach, with *newsworthy* material, a visit that gets to the point, will go farther in getting a short note in his column than pages of mimeographed material.

With the single exception of a very good program which people talk about, adequate preliminary announcements will do more in building up the desired audience than anything else. In like manner an effective follow-up that makes the individual do *something for himself* makes the program more truly "educational" (meeting for discussion, books made available on the "radio shelf" in the library, supplementary material or visual aids sent out by the organization).

Program Evaluation

IN SOME ways the most important function of steering a series of programs and one that is frequently omitted, is to provide for a periodic check-up by the committee in charge. While the success of the program rests solely with the public, the responsibility rests with the persons on the program and the committee. A committee that periodically "checks up" is a help to those doing it (provided, of course, that the criticism is evaluation in terms of purpose and not just prejudiced criticism). It makes for something of a *connecting link* between the program and its desired audience. Specifically, the object is to see that the program is reaching its desired audience and having the desired effect. If after a reasonable opportunity it is not, it should be discontinued or the program changed. Critical, fair and honest evaluation by station and committee makes for a more cooperative feeling and better programs to serve the listening audience.

Summary

THE question of whether busy people take the time to plan in so detailed a manner is a fair one. The answer is whether Education can afford not to. A radio appearance is one of the most public performances one can ever make. You are a guest in people's homes and the smallest audience is many times as large as the largest local hall. You cannot avoid the fact that for many, the only association they have with your organization—the only thing they know about it—is what they hear on the radio. Radio time is an opportunity. Through your own station and through the National Association of Broadcasters, this opportunity now is yours. One further thought: the more thorough the effort the greater the possible good.

The Talk

NO organization should hesitate to ask an effective speaker who can write pungently and clearly and who can read it naturally, in a pleasing, sincere and convincing manner, to give a *talk*. Neither should one hesitate to have a well-known authority, or a man whose name has news value, or a prominent public servant give a speech. Even though they do not speak as effectively as the best, their reputation, background, material or official position will compensate for any lack of "voice-personality". Many believe there is probably too much "talk" on the air today and much of it ineffectual, but the radio talk—as a form—is still the quickest method for the dissemination of information, and the most intimate.

Most important, of course, the talk *must communicate the subject to the listener*. This normally requires an animated conversational mode, a voice that is not objectionable, emphasis that does not draw attention to itself, a relatively rapid delivery of about 150 words a minute (this varies with different individuals, and in the main the speaker should be natural until told to speed up or slow down) and a sincere deep-seated motivation that shows emotional as well as intellectual response to the material.

While this outline carefully segregates script from performance, and in some instances encourages the two being done by different individuals, the two during a broadcast are inescapably joined. One never knows content *except as the speaker's delivery communicates it to him*. So, in preparing the manuscript, it is well for the speaker to imagine the situation and speak the language aloud as he writes it. To write it as he speaks it! Strict conformance to the rules of grammar is not necessary—(and I write as a teacher!)—repetition, if not overdone, will help make it clearer; too many words with sibilant sounds (s's particularly) may result in indistinctness. Again the admonition to write it by speaking it. And now for more specific suggestions.

Selecting the Subject

THE selection of a subject is usually dictated by the organization, the occasion, or the person's experience, but the adaptation of that subject to its audience requires a number of additional considerations:

1. *Pick a purpose.* Subjects are broad and frequently indefinite. The audience wants to know quickly what "you're driving at" and "where you're going". Their patience, like the speaker's time, is limited and there are no rules of etiquette in the home preventing their "walking out". After ten years of teaching speech to college students, I am convinced that one of the basic difficulties is that they choose to talk "about the tariff", or "about football", or about "American Literature", rather than to the more specific purpose of "the tariff on beef is too high", or "football isn't worth the cost", or "Ralph Waldo Emerson, his place in American Literature". The purpose may be to persuade, inform, or amuse; it may be general or specific, stated or implied; but it should be present and indicated in the introduction.

2. *The subject should be made significant, timely or unusual.* Specialists tend to assume or over-estimate the importance of their subject to the listener. Even the most important subjects are not immediately significant or timely to many. Hence an *introduction* that shows the scope and importance of a subject or ties up with material people have been reading or talking about is almost an essential. The speaker ought to contribute something that has news-value. Often he can "peg" a non-timely subject on a timely event.

3. In selecting the purpose, *attempt to cross your knowledge with the interest of your intended audience.* This is considerably easier on the platform where the audience is seen and whose interests may be fairly uniform. On the air, however, it is one of the most difficult things to do. Lacking experience, the best plan is to ask the type of person you want to listen what they want to know about the subject. If they are typical (and it's useless unless they are), this will help bridge the gap. Lack of interest in a well-delivered and well-thought-out speech by an authority is frequently caused by his failure to *cross knowledge and interest.*

4. *Select a purpose that can be accomplished in the time allotted.* The speaker knows before he begins that he cannot expand as much on the air as in an auditorium. Listening at home is not well-adapted to long speeches and the competition between programs is keen. As a frequent listener to speakers in both situations, I confess to a feeling of satisfaction when

listening to a radio talk, that I know before the speaker begins, that he cannot presume upon my time and run over the time-limit. The shorter periods, I suppose, do impose hardships—but I wonder if the speaker's hardship is not the audience's gain? As an occasional radio speaker I, even now, question *my* saying what I want to say "in fifteen minutes", but I know perfectly well that no one minds but myself! Having adjusted the purpose to the time, the time restriction is probably more "asset" than "liability".

Choice of Material

1. Use frequent illustration. Human interest stories, case histories, even humorous episodes, when well told, will add more to a talk than an extra fifteen minutes. Needless to say, the illustration should illustrate—i.e., personalize or prove a point. Used just for its story effect, it is apt to be a waste of time. A re-reading of the old reliable "Acres of Diamonds" will demonstrate the point.

2. Statistical information should be used conservatively and then symbolized in *word pictures*, rather than given as a monotonous recital of figures no one can remember. A few figures to prove points and show exactness will suffice for the popular talk and if more are needed, these should be mailed out as supplementary material to the broadcast.

3. A limited amount of material may be quoted from copyright sources. It should be indicated, however, and credit given. Long poems or material that goes to the essence of the copyrighted selection require the publisher's permission.

4. Avoid trite statements and too frequent generalizations. Unless the speaker is in an important position and is making an official pronouncement or is a well-known authority, a maximum of fact, reason, and illustration is better than a speech filled with personal opinion. Another suggestion is to be specific. Schopenhauer pungently observed: "Intelligent people use the more concrete. . . . General words are a resource of those who seek to veil unpleasant facts. They hide poverty of thought in richness of language, give obscurity an air of cleverness and shallowness the dignity of an oracle; cover the intention to say nothing with the appearance of having said much." The more reasoned, specific, and impersonal the approach, the sounder the argument will be.

5. *Offer an opportunity for further study.* A short talk cannot be very thorough. If the program is genuinely educational it aims, among other things, to *stimulate an interest* so that the listener will do something for himself—read, discuss, act! Every opportunity should be made to have him find out for himself—to critically evaluate rather than blindly accept what he has been told. *The real educational process starts when the broadcast is over.*

Outlining the Talk

1. The first page is the most important. It is during this time that dials are turned and listeners casually or curiously sample the offering to see if they are interested. By an arresting fact, an illustration, a general statement that indicates the significance or timeliness of a subject, a humorous incident, a bit of poetry, or a rhetorical question, the speaker must challenge attention and interest. During the first two minutes of the broadcast he should state or imply the problem. One of the differences between a newspaper reporter and an old-fashioned public speaker is that one gets started quickly by putting the most important *first*, whereas the speaker, in the good old-fashioned way, leaves his best material for the last. Modern radio speakers now are more likely to work the other way around!

2. An outline should be used, instantly intelligible and easy to follow. Topic sentences, summarized in the beginning and occasionally numbered, should be *re-stated* occasionally in connection with the central purpose. This makes the talk more intelligible for late tuners. There, too, should be a rather rapid progression from one idea to another. A sense of pacing, an illustration, and short paragraphs are aids in moving the script along.

3. The purpose of the conclusion is to make the speech sound finished. Here, more than anywhere else, is where the inexperienced radio speaker becomes the most nervous. An announcer is getting ready to “take it away”; another program is getting ready to start; his wife is worried for fear he’ll be cut off; the organization’s president is afraid he won’t get to the point they asked him to add; if he finishes early they will exclaim “Why, you had plenty of time”; if he finishes late the engineer will have to politely cut him off the air; and for the first time during the broadcast even the engineer is paying attention! Truly, it is enough to shake the most stout-hearted of men.

Again, though, this is a matter of experience in talking and watching the clock at the same time. Many speakers in rehearsal place the time at the bottom of each page and check it against the studio clock page by page as they read. In this way they know whether they are running ahead or behind. A paragraph or two toward the end that *may* be omitted and a finishing paragraph or summary statement that *may* be moved up will help.

Writing for Speaking

1. Type, double or triple space, on paper that *will not rattle*. *Do not clip the ends together*. Number the pages. Send one to three copies, depending on the individual station requirements, to the station well in advance of delivery. The station, *as well as the speaker, is held legally liable for what he says*.

2. Language better suited for silent reading than for *hearing* does not make an effective radio talk. *Avoid complex sentences*. The *sound*, not the sight, of words must form pictures, provoke thoughts, create moods, describe color and action. Action verbs, descriptive adjectives and adverbs, specific statements, analogies, are a few of the characteristics of "vivid style"—so long as they are not overdone. When language draws attention to itself it becomes an end and not a means; it prevents rather than aids communication. Awkward but sincere naturalness is almost always better than artificiality of any kind, and this applies not only to written style but to every possible kind of radio effort. The adult speaker should write a style that he can speak. It should be distinctly *his*. Within this realm of naturalness he should be encouraged to follow the outline. The high school or college speaker, still without a style of his own, should be encouraged to follow the outline more closely, or else await the time when he is better prepared to go before an audience.

Delivery

“MIKE-FRIGHT”, talked about so much, is little more than the nervousness that precedes any public speech. Both are manifestations of the same thing and the speaker, by practice and experience, can get over the worst manifestations of either. It has been my experience that most effective speakers are nerv-

ous whether in front of a microphone or in front of an audience. The only difference between them and the less experienced speaker is that they are still in control of their facilities and are neither surprised by, nor afraid of, being nervous. They expect to be. They can still do exactly what they want to do.

I suggest that the speaker read the speech aloud several times before rehearsal; visualize his audience at home, in cars, in shops, casually listening—waiting for something that will enable them to listen without conscious effort. If necessary ask two or three individuals to sit in front of you and talk to them—forgetting the microphone. *Think ideas and use the prepared manuscript as an aid and not as a prison.* Conscious only of subject and listeners, the speaker may tend to forget self and in this way overcome the worst manifestation of “mike-fright”.

The speaker should talk with *motivated enthusiasm*. Lazy readers and expressionless speakers—along with their opposites, the over-enthusiastic individuals and the ones who over-emphasize—are not the types of speakers who are likely to affect behavior. A script in the hands of some speakers seems to induce them into a dispassionate and monotonous drone. Perhaps this is because the speaker fails to see his audience and sense its response. The speaker should be forewarned about this.

Underline important words; mark off minor pauses with single marks (/) or (—) and major pauses with double marks (//) or (— —). An occasional change in volume, holding the tonal quality of a key word *longer* and changes in rate, will sometimes help. The important thing, however, is to *lift* the talk off the paper and *project* it by voice animation so that it is sincere and natural. A speaker motivated to his subject is more likely to have this delivery than one who is not. Simple enthusiasm is not enough. It must be motivated enthusiasm.

Tendencies toward over-emphasis will be detected by the listener almost immediately. The seeming artificiality of some women speakers and tendencies to “talk down” to an audience are parts of this same trouble. Caused by a number of things, it is generally characterized by too abrupt changes in volume, too obvious rising and falling inflections. Even though radio tends to accentuate over-emphasis, I suppose it is better in modified form than none at all.

A matter of great concern to the inexperienced is where to stand or sit. This is a matter that the engineer or person in

charge of the program will explain before rehearsal. Until then, the best advice is to suggest that the speaker take a position not more than two feet from the microphone, relax (but not too much), and read with clarity and expression. Avoid clearing your throat or coughing at the microphone. The radio-projected sound of such is liable to scare little children—certain to offend and drive away listeners. Hold your paper up, but so that it does not break the line between your lips and the face of the microphone. If it does, your voice will be muffled, “distant”, hard to hear.

Summary

THE object of most radio addresses is to affect behavior. While it is still possible to generalize and stand on the fence and employ rhetorical devices, the old time oratory of bombast has given way to a quieter mode. Those listening-in are not as likely to be receiving the old stimuli that came when people were bunched together in a hall with rampant enthusiasms, humor, good fellowship and foul air on either side. A modest hope is that radio will put such a premium on time that there will be *less talking* and *more said*. That listening *in the home* may make listeners wisely critical! All of this is another way of urging the speaker to begin his preparation far enough in advance so that it may be laid aside overnight and returned to in the morning with the question, “*After all, have I really something to say?*” If you have, people will listen.

Techniques of the Conversation Program

Round-Table Discussions in which two, three, or four people participate are generally used in presenting controversial material and are almost always extemporized. If read they sound unnatural and there isn't the give and take of a good difference of opinion. The Round-table is to the conversation program what drama is to entertainment. Both should contain *conflict* (in the sense of presenting opposing ideas), and unless there is a real difference of opinion one could not unqualifiedly recommend the dialogue form. If everybody agrees, it sounds weak

and anemic, staged and artificial. If this is not always true, as in the case of persons, who though agreed, are continually *adding* new ideas and experiences, it is enough to sound a warning.

The round-table should create the illusion of living-room conversation. The participants should seem to be talking to one another as if no microphone were present. Long speeches or arguments should be banned; the speakers should call one another by name until established; their voices should be as different as possible, though their selection should be more on the basis of reputation and what they have to say than because of voice differences. A chairman, or someone in charge, to prevent haggling and to move the discussion along, is necessary. So, too, a rather carefully prepared opening and closing. If, when the time comes, the participants in a planned Round-table get "cold feet" and insist on manuscripts—unless they are very good actors and read well, it would be well to modify the form and make it **Questions and Answers** with an interrogator reading the questions, the participant reading the answers, and not attempt to give the illusion of spontaneous conversation.

Multiple Speaker or Symposium is in a sense only another name for the talk, except that it presents two, three or four speakers on the same program and with each reading a prepared three, five, ten, or fifteen minute *statement*. There is no attempt at conversation with one another . . . simply a succession of short speeches. Each explains his position. This is the more formal way of handling controversy and gets away from long speeches and provides a change of view.

The Interview, in my opinion, is one of the most effective and yet often most carelessly done forms for presenting information on the air. Through it, the effective interviewer can direct the path of an inexperienced speaker so that he covers the material desired. It can be prepared quickly and made to sound entirely natural. It breaks up what would perhaps otherwise be a dull and dreary talk. It places emphasis on things that might otherwise be lost in a maze of words. In the hands of an adroit interviewer—and its success depends *more on the interviewer* than the one interviewed—it is possible to hold to one phase of the subject only as long as interest is sustained and then switch to another phase and so on. Such *pacing* widens the audience base and avoids tiresome detail. It objectifies, too, the time to be used for different points and puts the problem in the hands of someone

not so closely identified with the subject but more closely in tune with the audience.

The difficulty of the interview form lies in the fact that few *adequately* prepare for it. Actually, the interviewer ought to represent the audience and ask questions that they would ask given the opportunity. In his hands, it succeeds or fails. If the subject has nothing to offer, the program should not be attempted; if it has, the interviewer must bring it out. The most popular question—the *attention-getter*—should come first. Questions by the interviewer should be varied with statements so as to avoid the effect of merely rotating questions and answers. Long answers should be varied with short ones and the whole carefully prepared, though not necessarily written, well in advance. An effective outline with care and attention to transitions is as important here as in the Talk or in the Drama. Depending on the subject, it might be “chatty” or possess a dignified, conversational informality. As an interviewer, remember not to talk too much or divert attention from the one being interviewed. *Be careful not to restate his answers unless absolutely necessary.*

Music

MUSIC, the universal language, is always “good radio,” if the music is “good music.” Where groups wish to present musicians of their own groups, little can be said here about *who* should sing or play but *much is to be said about the selections chosen and their relationship to programs that have talk and music together.* For some reason, amateur vocalists and instrumentalists invariably want to try the most difficult compositions. Arias from the operas and selections from the symphonies intrigue them. If it isn’t these, it is an exercise demonstrating excellence of technique—something far more interesting to watch than to hear. My experience with young musicians leads me to believe they are so engrossed in study that they lose touch with the type of thing audiences like. Most every musical or program director of a station can give expert advice on the selections to be used by the amateur singer or instrumentalist. Since all stations require the musical numbers well in advance of the broadcast (to be checked for copyright restrictions), I would suggest that the

amateur discuss his selections with the radio station person in charge, well in advance.

In a medium that may, on the very next program, offer an established artist, the singer or instrumentalist should attempt only those things which he can do the best. Even the most discerning lovers of classical music would rather have lighter music well-done, than a heavier selection ruined or poorly performed. A few of the better-known classical selections, the great amount of semi-classical music along with a number of American folk songs and some popular music offer an immense amount of material from which to choose.

If music is to be used in combination with The Talk—and the highly popular Variety Programs offer proof that the combination is effective—every effort should be made to see that the two are inter-related parts of the whole and not separate things by themselves. The person in charge of the program should see that the music is wisely selected and continuity used that *unites* the parts.

The radio station is perhaps the best developer of musical talent in the United States, but that is not an excuse for the amateur to use it as a practice room to vocalize high “C’s” on an unsuspecting public. The artist should be his own best critic on the range of his abilities.

Important note to the singer, musician or Glee-Club director:

Always rehearse in the studio from which you will broadcast.

The acoustics here are very different from those in your home or Assembly Room. You must modify your rendition accordingly—the station engineer is there to help you. *Always rehearse in the studio—always.*

SERVICES OF THE EDUCATIONAL RADIO SCRIPT EXCHANGE

The services of the Script Exchange, which was organized under the auspices of the Federal Radio Education Committee, are available to you free of charge. (The National Association of Broadcasters is actively allied with the Federal Radio Education Committee.) During the past two years hundreds of educational and civic organizations have received a total of more than 150,000 copies of Script Exchange continuities and 16,000 production aids. If you need practical assistance as you plan your radio broadcasts, perhaps the Script Exchange can help you.

1. INFORMATION SERVICE

(General information of all kinds pertaining to educational radio.)

Do you want to know—

Where to locate high schools, colleges, YMCA's, Boy Scout groups, Red Cross chapters, Little Theater Guilds, PTA's, libraries or other educational and civic organizations which have had successful experience on the air?

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Where you may receive good radio instruction?

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2. RADIO SCRIPTS

(A central clearing house for the exchange of educational scripts.)

Upon request you may receive a copy of a script catalog listing 181 educational scripts. The scripts deal with a large variety of educational subjects and utilize several techniques of radio presentation. You may feel free to adapt the scripts in any way to meet your needs.

3. PRODUCTION AIDS

(Practical suggestions regarding radio program production.)

RADIO MANUAL—General suggestions regarding the organization and production of radio programs.

RADIO GLOSSARY—Learn radio's own language.

HANDBOOK OF SOUND EFFECTS—General problems of sound effects; methods of simulating commonly required sound effects.

BOOK LIST—A bibliography including good references on script writing and program production.

WRITE TO

The U. S. Department of the Interior
Office of Education
Educational Radio Script Exchange
Washington, D. C.

