



## USING THE OHIO STORY IN THE CLASS ROOM

### **Audience:**

Grade 4, Social Studies

### **Objective:**

Introduce students to 4 or 5 persons or events of importance in Ohio history including one sample within 50 miles geographically of the school

### **Supplies:**

Radio

Old-style broadcasting microphones

Costume feature indicative of episode character

Scripts for narrator/characters/instructor (permission given to reproduce)

Dial telephone (for commercials)

Objects relative to story (construction paper or computer image printouts)

### **Procedures:**

1. In a previous class session, introduce the Ohio Story Scripts web site ([www.ogsarchive.org](http://www.ogsarchive.org))
2. Describe how people got their news and entertainment through radio in the days before television and the computer
3. Look over the episode list under the Finding Aid tab for subjects that you plan to study during your Ohio history term
4. Have students try using the search box (top right) or explore the Browse Items tab
5. Choose 4 or 5 persons or events including one story that was centered near your school – 1 or 2 is just fine if you wish to dedicate just one session to the subject.
6. Borrow an old radio (that works). You may need an extension cord and a 2 to 3 prong plug for the outlet.
7. Check with the school AV person to see if they still have two old-style broadcasting microphones. These are for show and do not need to work.

8. Read the selected scripts and bring one or two costume items that represent the character to be portrayed (Example: an inverted pan hat and apple for Johnny Appleseed)
9. Also hunt for an old dial telephone – also just for show
10. Photocopy 4-5 copies of the script for the particular episode
11. See if there are any objects mentioned in the episode that could be held up for the class – either for a better understanding of the subject, or to provide humor
12. Get a volunteer narrator, another to do the commercials, and more for each character. You can get more students involved by assigning one commercial to each or changing character actors between commercials
13. You can do one radio episode each day for a week, taking 5-10 minutes, just as the Ohio Story radio program aired in the 1940s and 1950s.

### **Main Activities:**

Students simply portray characters in the radio episode by reading the parts.

1. Have the real radio tuned to a good music station
2. Turn the sound way down and say that we are interrupting your regular programming for today's episode of the Ohio story
3. Narrator reads part
4. Student interrupts with the Ohio Bell commercial (the program sponsor) and can hold up and dial the rotary telephone
5. Narrator and various characters read their parts to complete the episode
6. Instructor follows along to keep things moving, make corrections to vocabulary, explain terminology, point out additional information for facts mentioned
7. Non-speaking students can hold up the construction paper/computer image printout props in the background when those items are mentioned in the script
8. Narrator announces future episode at the end – this wording can be changed to reflect the actual choice that your students have made for the next episode
9. Real radio music comes back on at the end
10. Scripts can be edited and shortened by instructor to meet time specifications

### **Additional Reading/Web Resources:**

1. Students can be assigned relative sections of the two textbooks that accompanied the Ohio Story Radio Scripts – The Ohio Story (1950) and Out of the Midwest (1953) – Further Reading tab at [www.ogsarchive.org](http://www.ogsarchive.org)
2. Instructor can locate appropriate web sites on the given topic and encourage students to review on their own or in the class
3. If the topic is a local site or historic person relative to your community, students could be encouraged to visit the site, or someone knowledgeable about the subject could speak in the classroom
4. Many times, educational handouts can be supplied relative to these topics, especially if a museum or natural resources park is connected with the subject

**Cooperative Learning:**

Working together to put on what is a radio play, students will learn about the topic from each other. They are more likely to remember the facts by seeing Ohio history in action.

**Independent Practice:**

1. The [www.ogsarchive.org](http://www.ogsarchive.org) web site is open to the public. Students should be encouraged to browse the site for other areas of historical interest on their own time.
2. Students could read over their sections of the episode in advance to get a better understanding of the topic, although that isn't necessary. Often the actor concentrates on the reading activity and in the end has less of an understanding of the topic than the casual student observer who does not participate.

**Reflection:**

Ask students what they have learned. Why is this person or episode important to Ohio history. What items in the script might have been more reflective of life in the 1950s than today? Do we still get commercials as we watch educational television and how do they impact learning? How are these 5-10 minute radio shows similar to the short news pieces that we get on television, YouTube, and Facebook today? Is this a good way to learn about Ohio history?

**Assessment:**

An informal, short oral quiz could close each session. Facts highlighted could be included in your regular written testing. Encourage students to choose subjects in areas already required in your Ohio history guidelines.