

Creating an audio postcard and posting it on a podcast hosting site

Thierry Soubrié, e-lang citizen team

Teacher Sheet

Task

Your students will be given the following task.

You want to share your travel impressions, the emotions and feelings you feel in a place you are attached to, or even talk about the different moments that make up your day.

To do this, you are going to make an audio postcard, a genre that mixes voices and sounds present in your environment. This will require you to pay close attention to your soundscape. You will have to record sounds and combine them with a personal comment. You will then publish it on a podcast hosting site of your choice.

Websites

<u>Audioblog d'ArteRadio</u> (before posting you need to create an audioblog on the site) or <u>SoundCloud</u> are sites where you can listen to and upload audio postcards. Audioblogs are spaces on a server where people can upload and distribute their audio files.

We can access a selection of audio postcards in French: https://soundcloud.com/sutheland/sets/cartes-postales-sonores.

Soundbanks (if required): BBC Sound Effects, La sonothèque.

CEFR level - For A2 level and above







Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacy

	Dimensions addressed	Possible specific objectives
Digital citizenship	Ethical and responsible	Use sounds that you have recorded yourself in your environment or retrieved from copyright-free sound banks.
Technological literacy		Use sound editing software. Discover different ways of sharing a podcast (see, for example, "Podcast, mode d'emploi" in the audioblog of ArteRadio - in French).
Meaning- making literacy	Media literacy	Become familiar with this digital genre, identifying and respecting its characteristics.

Main language activity

- Oral production: recording the audio postcards.
- Written production: writing the synopsis.

Intercultural/Multilingual aspects

An audio postcard can take the form of a diary in which the emotions felt while discovering another country and/or culture are reported. It can also mix several languages, especially if they are present in the environment.

Possible steps

The steps below can be considered in a different order than the one suggested. Depending on the level of the learners, some may be omitted.

- Get learners to listen to sounds picked up outside the school and ask them to identify them.
 These may have been recorded by the teacher or by the learners themselves. What are they?
 Where were the sounds recorded?
- Discover the audio postcard genre. The discovery of this social practice can be carried out from different sources. Who are the authors of the audio postcards? What are their goals?







- Listen to sound postcards found on the Internet. Which cards do learners prefer? Why? This
 first listening task is a way to make them aware of the different elements of a sound postcard
 and their articulation (sound atmosphere, music, voice), the variety of themes addressed, the
 different roles adopted by the authors, the part played by emotions, the different sub-genres
 (reports, poetic creation, daily narrative, etc.), etc.
- Carry out an analysis of the genre from transcripts of audio postcards in a table (the table can include the various elements found in the audio postcards such as text, sounds, music, etc.).
 How are emotions expressed? How involved is the author? How is the text organised? What do music and sounds bring to the text, and vice versa? Etc.
- Learners can be trained to use editing software, such as Audacity (https://www.audacityteam.org/) or Garage Band (software provided free of charge by Apple for devices of this brand).
- Give learners the opportunity to practise editing. Give them three files (a soundscape/background noise, a voice recording and a piece of music) and ask them to put them together, finding the best possible balance between the sounds. Then share the productions with the rest of the class. What difficulties did they encounter? Did they enjoy doing this job? What rules have they set themselves in terms of editing (what place should be given to music, sounds, voices, how and when to switch from one to the other?)?
- Draw up a "checklist" of all the aspects to consider when creating an audio postcard, concerning
 the following elements: capturing sounds, editing, writing the voice-over or recording. When
 drawing up this checklist, take into account the general conditions of use or the rules available
 on the site you choose to publish the audio postcard.
- Learners can then start work on their audio postcard (individually or in groups). They can first start hunting for sounds with their telephone! Back in class, they can select the best ones based on their project. They can then write the text (the teacher can proofread at least once so that learners can improve their text), and then record. Before moving on to editing, it is best to ask them to make a storyboard. They will thus be able to reflect on the best way to combine the sounds (and the music if they wish) with the text/voice-over.
- Once ready, they can share their productions online on the chosen podcast hosting site.
- Everyone listens to the productions of others and reacts to them by liking and making comments. Also, encourage learners to occasionally check to see if they have received comments and, if so, to respond to them.
- Ask learners what this work has meant to them. Which was most difficult (recording, writing
 the text, finding ideas, etc.)? What was their favourite activity? Did they learn anything about
 themselves or about their peers in the process? Has this work changed their outlook on the
 world? Had they ever thought of using digital tools for this kind of production?

NB: several steps of this task could be carried out in cooperation with colleagues teaching IT, music or Arts: work on sound editing software, or recording for example.







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Student Sheet

Task

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Objectives

Digital citizenship and literacy

While completing this task, you can:

- be more attentive to your surroundings;
- learn to mix personal voice-over and soundscape/background noise and find a balance between the two;







- change the way you (and others) perceive the world;
- understand that the interplay between words/voices and sounds is a powerful tool for creativity and for conveying meaning.

Intercultural/Multilingual aspects

An audio postcard can take the form of a diary in which the emotions felt while discovering another country and/or culture are reported. It can also mix several languages, especially if they are present in the environment.

Hints

Keep in mind who you are addressing

There is no ideal or essential platform for the publication of sound postcards. They are generally published on podcast hosting sites, personal sites or even the website of radio stations, often in the context of competitions. The creation of an audio postcard is, above all, a writing and editing activity, where the sounds captured and the writing process feed off each other. There is no specific audience for this type of production. It is up to you to imagine your audience and to develop their interest, for example during a stay abroad or, once you have returned, by regularly publishing impressions of your trip.

Work on the language-related aspects

The audio postcard is a relatively loose genre, with very few set norms. You can express yourself whatever your language level, even if only through sound editing (some audio postcards contain no voice-over, just recorded sounds). They are generally short, a minute or two can be enough. A few words can also be enough. But an audio postcard can also take the form of a report, in which you can express yourself more, presenting more elaborate thoughts. Finally, the postcard lends itself very well to poetry writing! It is up to you to adopt the genre that suits you.

For you to think about

While completing this task, you can reflect on the following:

- Has your perception of the world changed?
- Do you think you are more aware of sounds around you?
- How do you see audio postcards in relation to other forms of online participation in which you may already engage (common features, main differences)?



