



## World War II through the Radio Waves

### Overview

Students will explore various components of World War II by creating an informative and creative 1940s radio broadcast that they present to classmates.

### Grade

8<sup>th</sup> grade

### Course

North Carolina, Creation and Development of the State

### North Carolina Standard Course of Study

- Objective 6.02- Describe the significance of major events and military engagements associated with World War II and evaluate the impact of the war on North Carolina.
- Objective 6.03- Examine the significance of key ideas and individuals associated with World War II.
- Objective 6.04- Assess the impact of World War II on the economic, political, social, and military roles of different groups in North Carolina including women and minorities.

### Essential Questions

- How did North Carolinians contribute to World War II?
- How did the role of women and African Americans change during World War II?
- What was the War Refugee Board?
- How were Jewish Americans affected by World War II?
- How did rationing affect Americans during World War II?  
What affect did war bonds have on funding World War II?
- Characterize the music of the 1940s.

### Materials

- Warm-Up Image, attached
- Project Assignment Sheet and Rubric, attached
- Internet access
- WWII radio recordings, available for download at sites such as:  
<http://history.sandiego.edu/gen/ww2Timeline/radio/0.html>  
<http://www.authentichistory.com/ww2.html>  
<http://www.umkc.edu/lib/spec-col/ww2/main.htm>  
[http://www.earthstation1.com/America\\_WWII.html](http://www.earthstation1.com/America_WWII.html)
- Broadcast Reflection Sheet, attached

### Duration

- 30 minutes for assignment introduction/explanation
- 1+ class periods for in class work time and preparation (teachers discretion)
- 1-2 weeks of homework time
- 1 class period for presentations

### Preparation

Students should have a basic understanding of the events of WWII, in which case this project can serve as a means of students developing a deeper understanding of various WWII components. This also works well as a culminating project on a WWII unit (See the Consortium's lessons *The Holocaust* and *The Atomic Bomb*).

### Procedure

1. Project the attached warm-up image, which is a 1926 ad from the *Ladies' Home Journal* for Atwater Kent brand of radio and have students discuss:



- What do you see? Summarize the images content. (encourage students to first point out all objects, symbols, text, etc.)
- What do you think this document/image is about?
- What year do you think this is from?
- What do you think the purpose of this is? Why was this created?
- What can this advertisement tell us about the time period in which it was created?
- What evidence helps you come to these conclusions?

Explain to students that throughout World War II, the radio was the main form of news and entertainment for American homes. According to a 1947 survey taken, 82 out of 100 Americans were radio listeners (Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old-time\\_radio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old-time_radio)).

Discuss:

- Why do you think so many Americans were tuned to the radio during World War II?
- Compare and contrast radio usage in society today to that of the 1940s. What purpose does the radio serve in society today? Do you think radio is the main form of entertainment and news today? If not, why not and what replaced it?
- How do you think the introduction of TV into American society changed us as a whole? Evaluate the effectiveness of TV as compared to the radio, for entertainment and for news purposes.

2. Hand out the attached assignment sheet and rubric, *World War II Through the Radio Waves*. Explain to students that they will be exploring a particular topic on World War II and educating classmates on this topic by creating and presenting a five minute radio broadcast. Go over the assignment and rubric with students, clarifying any questions.

3. Assign or allow students to choose their partners/groups and topics. If time permits, allow students to begin brainstorming and researching their topic and presentation. If possible, allow students access to the Internet or school library. Let students know how much time they will have in class for working on this project (teacher's should use their discretion in terms of how much time in and outside of class should be devoted to this assignment).

4. Guide students to websites where actual 1940s radio broadcasts can be downloaded and/or play a few clips in class so that they have an indication of a realistic 1940s broadcast.

### **Presentations**

5. Teachers have several options on how students present their broadcasts to class. By securing a recording device, students could record their broadcasts on tape then play the audio to simulate an actual radio show. Students could also present their broadcasts live from behind a visual barrier. The audience should not have any visual connection to the performance since the purpose is to present an auditory presentation.

6. Regardless of the presentation format chosen, review respectful audience expectations before students present their work to classmates. Also, hand out the attached *Broadcast Reflection Sheet* on which students should take notes on the topics they learn about, as well as make positive comments on the work of their classmates. After each broadcast, discuss the historical concepts of the topic and allow the audience to offer positive feedback to the presenters.

### **Culminating Activities**

- Hold an evening event for family members and the community in which students present their broadcasts.
- Have students teach younger students about World War II by traveling to an elementary school and presenting live broadcasts, or by sending elementary teachers the recordings to use in their classrooms.

### **Multiple Intelligences**

Linguistic  
Musical-rhythmic  
Logical-mathematical  
Visual-spatial  
Interpersonal  
Intrapersonal



Warm-Up Image

The *Literary* HOME JOURNAL September, 1926

# ATWATER KENT RADIO

*Read the headlines of  
the air - and choose whatever  
you like best*

**J**UST AS YOU scan newspaper headlines and select what you want to read, so with this ONE DIAL receiver, you sample the radio programs and select what you want to hear.

In a few seconds you can cover all that's on the air within range—and then you can settle down to the program you prefer.

Think of it! No hunting—no juggling—no delay. Merely turn ONE DIAL with the finger tips of one hand, and listen. Whatever is on the air and within range the ONE DIAL summons instantly—you can't miss!

Quick, sure and reliable in operation, powerful in performance, charming in appearance, compact in size, sensible in price. That's Atwater Kent Radio with ONE DIAL.

Any Atwater Kent dealer will let you try it with an Atwater Kent Radio Speaker. And you'll be glad you asked him to.

*Every Sunday Evening*  
—The Atwater Kent Radio Artists bring you their summer program at 9:15 Eastern Daylight Time, 8:15 Central Daylight Time, through:

wbat . . . New York	wccc . . . Memphis
wbat . . . Boston	wcfc . . . St. Paul
wbat . . . Cincinnati	wcag . . . Chicago
wbat . . . Washington	wcax . . . Buffalo
wbat . . . St. Louis	wbat . . . Detroit

*Write for illustrated booklet telling the complete story of Atwater Kent Radio.*

ATWATER KENT MANUFACTURING COMPANY, *Atwater Kent, President*, 4723 WISSAHICKONNE AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Atwaterkent.jpg>

**Assignment Sheet and Rubric:  
World War II through the Radio Waves**



Group Member Names: \_\_\_\_\_

**Assignment:** You and your partner or group members will create a five minute radio broadcast based on a topic assigned to you from World War II.

**Possible Topics**

- ~North Carolina in World War II
- ~African Americans in World War II
- ~Jewish Americans and the War Refugee Board
- ~Roles of Women in World War II
- ~War Bonds and Rationing in World War II
- ~Music from Britain, Germany, and America in the 1940s

**Requirements:**

- An **introduction** that welcomes listeners, gives them information about your station and who they are listening to, and provides an overview of the broadcast.
- **Accurate information** presented in an interesting way about your assigned topic.
- A **conclusion** that closes the story, thanks listeners, and has a creative “sign-off.”
- While information shared must be realistic and accurate to your topic, **be creative** in the way you convey the information over the air waves (i.e. an interview, sound effects, background music, throw in an advertisement appropriate for the time period, etc.)
- You must turn in a written draft of your broadcast on \_\_\_\_\_. Written drafts should be typed, should not contain any mistakes, and should be in script format with stage directions in italics (i.e. where sound effects or music goes in the program).
- You will present your broadcast to class on \_\_\_\_\_.

**Rubric**

Requirement	Points Possible
<b>Preparing radio broadcast</b>	
Used class time wisely	5
Group members worked well together	5
Followed directions	5
<b>Final radio broadcast as written</b>	
Has an introduction and conclusion	10
Contains an interesting story that is focused on assigned topic	10
Information shared is properly researched and accurate	10
No spelling or grammatical mistakes; typed and properly formatted	10
Creativity	5
<b>Performance of radio broadcast</b>	
Performance was at least five minutes	10
Performers used good presentation skills (volume, spoke clearly, showed emotion in voices, etc.)	5
Performers took presentation seriously and tried their best	10
Performance was organized and well thought out	10
Performance was creative	5
<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>100</b>



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**WWII Through the Radio Waves  
Broadcast Reflection Sheet**

Broadcast Topic	What I learned about this topic	What I liked about this broadcast