

Lights, Camera, Media Literacy!  
*Ken Burns' EMPIRE OF THE AIR*

As you view this documentary about the history of radio, listen closely for the following phrases and statements which are listed in sequential order. When you hear the phrase or statement, place a checkmark next to it.

- \_\_\_1) "furniture that talks."
- \_\_\_2) "brought the world into their living rooms."
- \_\_\_3) "**Lee deForest**, a poor clergyman's flamboyant son"
- \_\_\_4) "**Edwin Howard Armstrong**, a brilliant withdrawn inventor"
- \_\_\_5) "**David Sarnoff**, the hard-driving immigrant from Russia"
- \_\_\_6) "idealism & imagination, greed & envy, ambition & determination, genius"
- \_\_\_7) "Inventors were America's great heroes." (*note: picture of Edison*)
- \_\_\_8) "They called him monkey face."
- \_\_\_9) "He was an outsider wherever he went."
- \_\_\_10) "He would one day hold more than 300 patents."
- \_\_\_11) "He received just one vote as most likely to succeed...his own."
- \_\_\_12) "Radio waves had been discovered in 1887"
- \_\_\_13) "In 1896, *Guglielmo Marconi* sent a wireless dot and dash signal 9 miles across Salisbury Plain in England."
- \_\_\_14) "In 1900, deForest patented a devise that improved reception of weak signals."

- \_\_15) "Marconi soon surged ahead again, successfully sending the single letter '**S**' across the Atlantic."
- \_\_16) "Soon the deForest station at Coney Island successfully relayed 572 words to Ireland."
- \_\_17) "the first bride ever, wooed and won by wireless"
- \_\_18) "Meanwhile the world was beginning to learn that deForest had based his great success on someone else's invention."
- \_\_19) "All he had left was \$1000 and a small invention his ex-partner thought worthless...It was the audion tube."
- \_\_20) "He now resolved to carve out for himself what he called an invisible *Empire of the Air*."
- \_\_21) "the first person in the world to have her voice broadcast by radio"
- \_\_22) "He also became the first disc jockey."
- \_\_23) "Howard Armstrong should be remembered as the greatest inventor of the 20<sup>th</sup> century."
- \_\_24) "He was a true genius."
- \_\_25) "This is coming through the air!"
- \_\_26) "He commuted to and from Columbia University on a red motorcycle."
- \_\_27) "Regeneration was the single most important advance in the history of radio."
- \_\_28) "The chief inspector pronounced it the most remarkable receiving system in existence. The inspector's name was David Sarnoff."

- \_\_29) "He reached this country when he was 9 years old, an immigrant boy who didn't speak a word of English. Within 30 years he was president of one of the most powerful companies in America...RCA."
- \_\_30) "Soon he became Marconi's personal messenger."
- \_\_31) "On Sunday, April 14, 1912 the British liner Titanic struck an iceberg in the North Atlantic."
- \_\_32) "Newspapers hailed him as the boy wonder of radio."
- \_\_33) "One person talking to millions...He foresaw that clearly."
- \_\_34) "In 1915, deForest took Armstrong to court... launching what would become the longest patent suit in history."
- \_\_35) "Sarnoff was so successful during the war that when the new Radio Corporation of America (RCA) absorbed American Marconi, Sarnoff became its general manager."
- \_\_36) "The day of the lone inventor was already coming to an end."
- \_\_37) "Armstrong's superheterodyne captured radio waves of very high frequency and combined them with waves of a lower frequency to produce an entirely new wave."
- \_\_38) "Armstrong's superheterodyne radio sets would be RCA's biggest success and would propel the company to pre-eminence in the new field of electronics."
- \_\_39) "For the first time in history, one person with a microphone could speak to many, influence them, perhaps change their lives."
- \_\_40) "I probably gave up practicing the piano, because I didn't have to make my own music anymore."
- \_\_41) "In 1926, David Sarnoff helped forge the first radio network. He called it the National Broadcasting Company...NBC."

- \_\_42) "Ladies and Gentlemen, The President of the United States"
- \_\_43) "Let us unite in banishing fear."
- \_\_44) "American politics would never be the same again."
- \_\_45) "After dozens of experiments involving sets built with hundreds of tubes, Armstrong discovered wideband frequency modulation. Listeners would call it **FM**."
- \_\_46) "Others would later claim that RCA had stolen some of the critical inventions that made television work." (*Our TV unit will cover this.*)
- \_\_47) "**AM** was too well-established."
- \_\_48) "Armstrong's downfall, I'm afraid, came as a result of his inability to compromise."
- \_\_49) "World War II would be a war of radio voices."
- \_\_50) "When people speak of *The Golden Age of Radio*, they're speaking of the shortest golden age in history."
- \_\_51) "Armstrong's widow Marion took up her husband's cause and won every one of his patent suits, though it took her 15 years to do so."

Write your spontaneous thoughts after seeing *EMPIRE OF THE AIR*....

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