

Lights, Camera, MEDIA Literacy!  
Lesson Plan # 24

**Topics:**

**Journal Writing**  
**Ken Burns' *EMPIRE OF THE AIR***  
**Radio Advertisements**

**Outcomes:**

Students will follow organizational procedures.  
Students will *see, hear, and use* applicable vocabulary.  
Students will identify key phrases and sentences while viewing *EMPIRE OF THE AIR*.  
Students will create a radio advertisement.

**Materials:**

Writing journals  
LCD projector  
Chart paper  
Post-its  
Individual student pocket folders

**HANDOUTS:** Ken Burns' *EMPIRE OF THE AIR*  
Radio Show Sponsor Ad

**DVD:** *EMPIRE OF THE AIR*

**New Vocabulary:** patent

## Sequence of Events:

### I. Journal Writing (15)

1. Prompt:

What are your feelings about how radio works?

### II. EMPIRE OF THE AIR: Part One (100)

1. Ask students if anyone has heard of Ken Burns or The Ken Burns Effect?

*Explain that Ken Burns is one of the most famous documentary filmmakers of our day. He is given credit for the documentary film effect that zooms into or out of a still photograph. This effect, named after him, is on most editing programs.*

2. Tell students that Ken Burns created a PBS documentary about the dramatic beginnings of radio in this country. Show them the webpage: <http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/empire/sketches/> Ask students which of the four men listed has been mentioned in this class (*Marconi*). Tell them that the other three men are as much a part of the beginnings of radio as Marconi and that their stories are fascinating. They will see just part of the 2-hour documentary in this session and finish watching in the next session.
3. As they watch *EMPIRE OF THE AIR*, they will be listening for key phrases and sentences. Review directions on the handout.

#### HANDOUT: Ken Burns' EMPIRE OF THE AIR

4. Watch until completion of #28 (bottom of second page of the handout).
5. Discuss student reaction to what they have just watched and clear up any confusion or misconceptions. If anyone is curious about a crystal radio set, perhaps volunteers might work on one you have provided for the class. *Note: This requires keen fine motor skills and lots of patience.*

### **III. Create a Radio Ad (70)**

1. Assign groups the task of creating radio show sponsor ads.
2. Review directions together:

#### **HANDOUT: Radio Show Sponsor Ad**

3. As groups finish, allow them to listen to the radio shows from the CD: "The Golden Age of Radio."

### **IV. Reflection (15)**

1. Direct students to the hanging chart paper labeled:

**What did you learn about Lee deForest and Edwin Howard Armstrong?**

2. Hand out Post-its on which students write and post.
3. Review the comments on the Post-Its with the class, so students have a sense of what was learned. Make sure to clear up any misconceptions.