

In a group of three or four, you will make a podcast in which you nominate a word to be “Word of the Year.” In the podcast, you and your group will make your case and share your podcast with the rest of the class and a group of outside panelists. After hearing all of the podcasts, the class and the panelists will vote on which word has won the honor of “Word of the Year.” Each podcast will be eight to ten minutes long, and each group member will speak for at least two minutes (combined) in the podcast. Instructional Technology Manager Misty Berlin will provide support for us in making the podcasts.

Before we can start to do the work of making our own podcasts, we need to learn more about podcasts as a particular medium and as a particular genre.

1. What makes a podcast?
2. What makes a *good* podcast?

Your next assignment, then, is to go forth and find a podcast. What elements do you notice?

- ☞ Is there music? What kind of music? When is it used? When? How? Are there other sound effects? When/how are they used?
- ☞ How do the podcaster(s) let the listeners know what the focus of the episode will be? Do they start with a broad topic and then move to a more specific position/argument/opinion within that topic? How do they frame what their listeners will hear?
- ☞ What other voices do the podcasters bring in? Do they have guests? Do they interview people? Do they play clips from the news, film, TV, music, the street or the wilderness? How do they share data or histories or research?
- ☞ How clear are the podcasters—both in terms of voice quality and in terms of the information they’re giving? How hard do you have to work to understand what they are saying?
- ☞ Does the episode follow an organizational structure? What is it? How does the podcaster(s) let you as a listener know where you are (rhetorically, structurally) in the episode? What kinds of transitions do they use to move from one section to the next?
- ☞ How does the podcast end? Is there a conclusion? Are there questions? Is there an announcement about what will happen next? Other than the absence of sound, how did you know that the episode was over?
- ☞ Did the podcast make you think? During the podcast? After the podcast had ended? Did it stay with you? If so, how did it do that?
- ☞ What else did you notice that I haven’t mentioned here? What are some things heard that you would like to reproduce? What are some things you heard that you would like to avoid?

Please write answers to these questions and bring them to class on Tuesday, April 17, 2018. You’ll share your findings in a small group and begin to make a rubric that will guide us in making podcasts of our own later in the semester.