Student-Friendly Podcasts for Classrooms and Families - 015

In this episode I share a handful of my favorite student-friendly podcasts for classroom use and to recommend to families. You'll hear how to access these podcasts, reasons why I love each one, and where to go to easily bring them into classrooms or share links with your school community!

Hello there! My name is Monica Burns, I'm a former classroom teacher and now I spend my time sharing tips, strategies and activity ideas to make easy EdTech integration a possibility in your classroom. You may be familiar with my books, like Tasks Before Apps or my blog ClassTechTips.com. Whether we've met at a conference or special event, you've followed along with my EdTech tips for years, or simply joining in for the first time today, I'm so glad you're here!

Each week I share popular content from my blog. I read aloud a blog post, add a few extra things, and try my best to bring the content to life for you — all in audio format.

In this bite-sized podcast you'll get some quick info and actionable tips to energize and elevate teaching and learning!

You can head to my website classtechtips.com/podcast for all of the show notes. That's where you'll find the transcript for each episode, links to resources, and any of the free downloads I mention.

This week's podcast is titled Student-Friendly Podcasts for Classrooms and Families. Some of the ones we'll look at on this list are great for supporting English Language Arts, while others have clear science connections. Depending on how you introduce them to students, some might be a better fit for younger or older kids, or might feel better for recommending to families if you're not sure you have time to explore them in your classroom.

Podcasts are a fantastic way for learners of all ages to explore new topics. As adults, we might listen to a podcast as part of your daily commute or workout routine, but these audio clips can also inspire young learners. Podcasts are audio (and sometimes video) recordings similar to a radio broadcast or television episode. They might include a discussion on a topic, an interview with a notable person, or coverage of a special event. If you're here, you already

know this, but I always like to establish definitions or way of explaining something in case you have similar conversations with colleagues or students.

Although most popular podcasts can be accessed from the iTunes Store on an iPhone, iPad or computer, or another mobile store like Google Play, Spotify, or Stitched, many podcasts can be streamed from a web browser to play on any device connected to the Internet. So when we look at this list of favorites together, you can access them pretty much anywhere you're listening to this podcast today.

Helpful tip: Some podcasts can also be downloaded so users can listen to them offline – perfect for low or no internet classrooms.

MUSIC

In *Taming the Wild Text: Literacy Strategies for Today's Reader*, Pam Allyn and I share some of the reasons we love podcasts. The book also includes a lesson plan and activity for students. Here is an excerpt from *Taming the Wild Text*:

"Technology tools place a wide rangeof multimedia into the hands of bothteachers and students. Multimediacan include video, images, text, andinteractive diagrams. Podcasts are aform of multimedia that can place audiorecordings at students' fingertips toconnect children to a world of information. Listening to an episode of a science podcast can inspire students to read about a new topic. A podcast episode can also connect students to an instant read aloud full of sound effects and captivating narration. Children of all ages can access stories and information through video content. High-interest media can grab the attention of students, provide background knowledge, extend thinking, and reinforce content. Strengthen listening skills with students of all ages by effectively introducing multimedia use." (p. 53)

Podcasts are the perfect medium to help students practice listening comprehension skills,

explore stories and learn more information. So If you're looking to set up listening stations in your classroom or simply want to share a list of favorites with families, here are a few podcasts worth checking out.

MUSIC

First on the list is *Circle Round. Circle Round* is a children's storytelling podcast that shares folktales tailored for a modern audience. With dozens of episodes, you can jump in right away and listen to them in any order. I recently listened to "The Unwelcome Guest" and absolutely loved it!

Rebecca Sheir, the host, writer and producer behind the *Circle Round* podcast reached out to me to share her work and that's how I first became familiar with it. I had lots of questions for Rebecca, and she was kind enough to provide answers that I featured on my blog last year. In the show notes I'll link to the interview in case you want to hear directly from Rebecca. Remember the show notes are at classtechtips.com/podcast

Although you can access Circle Round on a podcast app, I love how it is also accessible straight from their website. This means you can share a link with students and they listen from any device. You can also download this podcast as a file so if you're wifi is a little spotty, students can listen to it when they are offline.

This modern, and musical take on folk tales is definitely worth checking out. You can search for Circle Round on your favorite podcast app to find it.

MUSIC

With short, engaging episodes, this podcast – with dozens of episodes to jump into – is a fantastic choice for students, this next podcast on the list is a great choice for classrooms and families. Wow in the World tackles topics and questions related to a range of topics. The hosts Guy Raz and Mindy Thomas wonder aloud as they think about a wide array of issues and phenomena in different corners of the world. From exploring why onions make people cry to why flamingos are pink in color, the topic of each podcast may vary, but it's all under the umbrella of wondering about our amazing world.

You don't have to listen to the podcast episodes in a particular order. This makes it easy to dive into the list right away. You can scroll through the episode list to search for a topic related to student interest. Alternatively, you could search for an idea you'd like to explore with your class. You might know a student in your class has a specific interest in a particular topic. For example, if they are always choosing books about worms or slugs – you might recommend a specific episode to a student or their family to explore.

In the classroom, the Wow in the World might connect to areas students are super interested in learning more about. With this podcast for kids, you might decide to choose

an episode to explore that connects to a specific topic you will investigate in your classroom. One example I love is the 3D printing episode. It provides background information on how 3D printing is different than traditional paper printing and provides context for how 3D printing is used in various industries. In addition to spotlighting the power of 3D printing in medicine, students will learn about the implications of 3D printing has for creating products in outer space.

So we took a close look at these two favorites, Circle Round and Wow and the World, now lets add a few more to the list and finish up with steps to make this easy.

MUSIC

Here are a few more to add to our list of "Kid-Friendly Podcasts for Classrooms and Families" and I'll include all of the links in the show notes for this episode.

Storynory

This podcast features a new read aloud story each week with an archive of dozens to explore. You'll find classics like Cinderella and Snow White in their list of most recent recordings.

Sparkle Stories

The Sparkle Stories podcast features original stories each week. This relatively new podcast has seven stories on their list so far.

Brains On!

This science podcast features episodes that address questions your students might have, and ideas to make them wonder about the world around them. You'll find episodes featuring titles like, "How do you catch a cold?"

Stories Podcast

From Halloween tales to Jack and the Beanstalk, the Stories Podcast shares familiar and new tales with kids. It's a great choice for introducing students to classic stories like Hansel and Gretel.

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Just like everything we talk about on the podcast, and if I've visited your school or we've met at a conference, you've probably heard me say this too.... Remember to place "tasks

before apps" when choosing what to share with students. Maybe you want to build listening comprehension or build background knowledge.

In an upcoming podcast I'll share more about activities to use with podcasts so if this idea piques your interest make sure to subscribe wherever you're listening to today's episode.

MUSIC

So let's make this EdTech easy...

1. Identify what you would like to share with students or families
2. Decide on the best way to play an episode or share a link
3. With students provide an opportunity to respond, with families ask for podcast feedback
4. Keep your eyes peeled for new opportunities to use these resources to boost comprehension and engagement

I'm sure you have a favorite podcast to share with students and families too -- and I'd love to hear about it! Tag me in a tweet or Instagram post where you share your favorites.

I love bringing you free resources like this podcast to energize and elevate teaching and learning! Can you do me a favor? If you like the podcast, leave a review on iTunes, Spotify or wherever you're listening to this... tell a friend about the podcast, or post a link to the episode on your social media. And if you'd like to stay connected follow @classtechtips on Instagram or your favorite social network. I visit schools and conferences all over the world, so if your organization is in need of professional learning -- just send a message my way!

See you next week with more easy EdTech tips!