



Castles for Children's Multicultural and Digital Experiences
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STEP-BY-STEP TEACHER GUIDE

Teachers' Guide 2nd Part
Organising Activities In and Outside the Classroom:
Learning Paths for Podcast Content Creation



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2. Organising Activities In and Outside the Classroom: Learning Paths for Podcast Content Creation

This section provides structured learning paths to support teachers in guiding students from initial exploration to the creation of meaningful podcast content. The proposed pathways are flexible and adaptable, allowing educators to respond to different classroom contexts, ages, and learning needs.

Each learning path follows a progression from **experience** → **exploration** → **interpretation** → **creation**, ensuring that podcast production is grounded in authentic learning.



Learning Path 1: Discovering Cultural Heritage through Exploration



Objective:

To introduce students to cultural heritage through direct experience and observation, fostering curiosity and engagement.

Phase 1: Preparation (Classroom)

- Introduce the concept of cultural heritage (e.g., castles, historical buildings, local landmarks).
- Activate prior knowledge through discussion: What is a castle? Who lived there? What stories might it hold?
- Encourage students to formulate questions they would like to explore during the visit.
- Introduce simple observation tools (notes, drawings, keywords).

Phase 2: Experience (On-site visit)

- Visit a castle or relevant cultural site.
- Encourage students to:
 - Observe spaces, materials, sounds, and atmosphere
 - Take notes, sketches, or photos (if possible)
 - Imagine life in the past (Who lived here? What happened here?)

Phase 3: Reflection (Classroom)

- Group discussion: What did we see? What surprised us?
- Organise findings into themes (e.g., daily life, architecture, legends).
- Begin identifying possible story ideas.



Outcome for Podcast:

Raw material for storytelling (observations, impressions, questions, ideas).

Teacher Tips

- Keep observation tasks **simple and focused** (3–4 prompts only), especially for younger children.
- Encourage students to **use all senses**, not only sight (What do you hear? feel? imagine?).
- Allow moments of **free exploration**—not everything needs to be structured.
- If a visit is not possible, use **photos, virtual tours, or local surroundings** as alternatives.

Quick Variations

- Ask students to **take the role of a "young historian" or "time traveller"**.
- Use a **"treasure hunt" approach** (find a tower, a symbol, a hidden detail).



Learning Path 2: From Observation to Storytelling

Objective:

To transform observations and research into narrative structures suitable for podcasts.

Phase 1: Story Discovery

- Revisit notes and materials collected during the visit.
- Identify possible narratives:
 - A historical story (based on facts)
 - A fictional story (inspired by the place)
 - A "voice from the past" (imaginary character)

Phase 2: Story Development

- Guide students in structuring a story:
 - Beginning (setting and characters)
 - Middle (events or conflict)
 - End (resolution)
- Encourage creativity:
 - Add dialogue
 - Include emotions and sensory details
 - Consider different perspectives

Phase 3: Collaborative Writing

- Students work in small groups to draft their stories.
- Teachers support language development and coherence.



Outcome for Podcast:

A complete narrative script ready for adaptation into audio format.

Teacher Tips

- Provide story starters for students who struggle (e.g., "One night in the castle...").
- Encourage students to **mix reality and imagination** – this increases engagement.
- Use **visual supports** (story maps, drawings) before writing full texts.
- Accept different levels of writing: some students may **dictate or draw instead of writing**.

Quick Variations

- Create stories from **different perspectives** (a king, a guard, a ghost, even the castle itself).
- Turn the story into a **dialogue or interview** format.



Learning Path 3: Giving Voice to Stories

Objective:

To develop oral expression and prepare students for audio narration.

Phase 1: Exploring Voice and Expression

- Practice reading texts aloud.
- Experiment with:
 - Tone and emotion
 - Volume and pace
 - Character voices

Phase 2: Rehearsal

- Students rehearse their scripts in groups.
- Encourage peer feedback:
 - Is the story clear?
 - Is it engaging?
 - Can we improve expression?

Phase 3: Sound Awareness

- Introduce the idea of sound in storytelling:
 - Background sounds (e.g., footsteps, wind, doors)
 - Music or rhythm
- Explore how sound enhances meaning.



Outcome for Podcast:

Prepared narration and initial ideas for audio design.

Teacher Tips

- Start with **short, fun vocal exercises** (e.g., say a sentence in a happy, scary, or mysterious way).
- Emphasise that **clear communication is more important than perfection.**
- Allow shy students to participate through **group narration or sound creation.**
- Record short practice clips so students can **hear themselves and improve.**

Quick Variations

- Let students experiment with **"sound storytelling" without words** first.
- Use **body percussion** or **classroom objects** to create sound effects.



Learning Path 4: From Story to Podcast Content

Objective:

To organise and finalise content for podcast production.

Phase 1: Structuring the Podcast

- Introduce basic podcast structure:
 - Title and introduction
 - Main story / content
 - Closing

Phase 2: Assigning Roles

- Students take on roles such as:
 - Narrator
 - Character voices
 - Sound creator
 - Recorder

Phase 3: Final Preparation

- Finalise scripts for recording.
- Decide on sound effects and sequence.



Outcome for Podcast:

A complete, organised plan for recording.

Teacher Tips

- Keep roles **flexible**—students can try more than one role if possible.
- Do a **quick rehearsal of the full sequence** before recording.
- Keep recordings **short (1–3 minutes)** for younger children.
- Use simple and accessible tools (tablet, phone, basic apps).

Quick Variations

- Create a **series of short podcasts** instead of one long one.
- Combine multiple group stories into a "**class podcast episode**".



Learning Path 5: Reflection and Sharing

Objective:

To reflect on the learning process and give meaning to the final product.

Phase 1: Listening and Feedback

- Listen to the recorded podcasts.
- Encourage reflection:
 - What did we learn?
 - What did we enjoy most?
 - What would we improve?

Phase 2: Sharing with an Audience

- Share podcasts within the school or community.
- Encourage discussion and celebration of students' work.

Phase 3: Connecting Learning

- Reflect on links between:
 - Cultural heritage
 - Storytelling
 - Digital creation



Outcome for Podcast:

Enhanced sense of achievement, ownership, and understanding.

Teacher Tips

- Focus on **positive feedback first** before suggesting improvements.
- Ask open questions that encourage reflection (not just "Did you like it?").
- Celebrate all contributions, including **non-verbal roles**.
- Make sharing meaningful: another class, parents, school event, or online platform.

Quick Variations

- Organise a "**Podcast Listening Day**" with a simple ceremony.
- Let students vote for categories (e.g., "most creative story", "best voice").



Time Planning (Suggested)

- Learning Path 1:
 - 1–2 sessions (+ visit)
- Learning Path 2:
 - 2–3 sessions
- Learning Path 3:
 - 1–2 sessions
- Learning Path 4:
 - 1–2 sessions
- Learning Path 5:
 - 1 session

Materials Checklist

- Notebooks / worksheets
- Pencils, colours
- Recording device (tablet/phone)
- Simple props for sound creation
- Optional: headphones, basic editing app

Pedagogical Considerations

- Ensure inclusivity by allowing multiple forms of participation (writing, speaking, drawing, acting).
- Encourage collaboration and peer learning.
- Adapt activities according to age and context.
- Maintain a balance between structure and creativity.

Common Challenges and Solutions

As experienced educators, you will undoubtedly already be familiar with many, if not most, of the solutions suggested here. The following overview of common challenges and possible responses is therefore added as a supportive resource and an invitation to reflect on and share professional practice.

1. Limited time for activities

Challenge: Teachers may find it difficult to complete all phases due to curriculum constraints or limited lesson time.

Solutions:

- Split the learning path into **micro-sessions** (10–20 minutes activities).
- Use **blended learning**: some phases (e.g., story writing or reflection) can be done at home or in short classroom moments.
- Prioritise key phases: even **visit + reflection + simple story creation** is sufficient for a complete experience.
- Reuse content across subjects (e.g., language, history, art) to maximise time efficiency.

2. Difficulty engaging less motivated or shy students

Challenge: Some students may hesitate to participate in storytelling, speaking, or group work.

Solutions:

- Offer **multiple roles** (writer, illustrator, sound creator, observer).
- Allow non-verbal participation (drawing, gestures, sound effects).
- Use **pair or small-group work** instead of individual performance.
- Encourage participation through **low-pressure tasks first** (e.g., describing one word or emotion).

3. Managing diverse ability levels in the classroom

Challenge: Students may have very different linguistic, cognitive, or creative abilities.

Solutions:

- Apply **flexible task design** (same activity, different complexity levels).
- Use **scaffolding tools** such as sentence starters, visual maps, or guided templates.
- Encourage **peer support and mixed-ability groups**.
- Value all contributions equally, not only written output.

4. Technical difficulties with recording or digital tools

Challenge: Lack of equipment, digital skills, or technical confidence.

Solutions:

- Use **simple tools** (smartphones, tablets, voice recorders).
- Focus on **content over technical quality**. Perfect editing is not necessary.
- Assign a “digital helper” role among students.
- Pre-test devices before the activity to avoid interruptions.

5. Classroom management during group and outdoor activities

Challenge: Noise, movement, and group dynamics may become difficult to control.

Solutions:

- Establish **clear rules before starting activities**.
- Define **roles and responsibilities within each group**.
- Use **structured time blocks** (e.g., 10 minutes exploration, 5 minutes regrouping).
- Provide clear physical boundaries during visits or outdoor work.

6. Difficulty connecting learning to meaningful storytelling

Challenge: Students may struggle to transform observations into narratives.

Solutions:

- Use **simple story frameworks** (beginning–middle–end).
- Provide **visual prompts or story cards**.
- Start with oral storytelling before writing.
- Encourage imagination: “What if this castle could speak?”

7. Ensuring inclusion in multilingual or multicultural classrooms

Challenge: Language barriers may limit participation for some students.

Solutions:

- Allow **multimodal expression** (drawing, acting, keywords, audio).
- Encourage use of **mother tongue during brainstorming phases**.
- Pair students strategically for **language support**.
- Focus on communication and meaning, not grammatical perfection.

Final Note for Teachers

Challenges in this approach are not obstacles but part of the learning process itself. Flexibility, creativity, and responsiveness are key. The role of the teacher is to facilitate participation, reduce barriers, and ensure that every child finds a meaningful way to contribute to the shared storytelling experience.

Integrating Sustainable and Eco-Friendly Practices into the Learning Paths

Sustainability is integrated as a transversal and practical dimension throughout all learning paths, ensuring that environmental awareness is not treated as an additional topic, but as a natural part of everyday classroom practice and experiential learning activities.

Teachers are encouraged to embed eco-friendly principles into both classroom-based and outdoor learning activities in simple, concrete ways that are accessible to primary school students.

During site visits and outdoor explorations, students can be guided to respect natural and cultural environments by observing carefully, avoiding damage to spaces, and developing awareness of how heritage sites are preserved and maintained. Small behaviours—such as staying on designated paths, not leaving waste behind, and observing without disturbing—become meaningful learning experiences in themselves.

In classroom practice, sustainability can be reinforced through the use of low-impact and reusable materials, such as paper-based templates, recycled objects for creative tasks, and minimal printing when possible. Digital tools may also support eco-friendly approaches by reducing the need for paper-based drafts and encouraging shared collaborative work.

A further important aspect is the integration of reflective environmental awareness into storytelling activities. Students can be gently encouraged to consider the relationship between cultural heritage and the natural environment, for example by including elements such as landscapes, climate, animals, or environmental changes within their narratives. In this way, sustainability becomes part of the story world itself, not only of the learning process.

Teachers may also support students in identifying simple, age-appropriate actions for caring for their environment, such as saving materials, reusing resources, or respecting shared spaces. These actions help children understand that sustainability is not abstract, but something they can actively practice in their daily school life.

The integration of sustainable and eco-friendly practices within the learning paths reinforces the project's holistic vision of education, where cultural heritage, creativity, digital learning, and environmental responsibility are interconnected dimensions of a single meaningful learning experience.

We wish now to share the basic documents prepared for the realization of the seven-podcast series prepared in the PodCastle project.

Based on these texts, the podcasts' scripts were written.

You will see a series realized in Cyprus and a series realized in Italy on the same subjects:

1. History of real and imaginary castles and how the castles could be used today according to the fantasy of the children;
2. The castle and the territory; castles or building belonging to the migrant pupils' culture.
3. Building materials, means of transportation.
4. Life inside the castles (and building of migrant cultures), the food that castle residents ate and their dresses.
5. Poetry, Music and Dance in the Castle
6. Games played in the castles
7. The ideal castle.... and how to use castles that can still be used. (If I were an architect....)