



A letter from Bobby Brown, Executive Director of Wrigley Radio Productions at Columbia Broadcasting Systems (CBS), to John L. Barkley. Brown asks Barkley if he can use a dramatized version of Barkley's heroism on a program.

Online Collections Database, 2010.102.20, www.theworldwar.org/research/database. National WWI Museum and Memorial. Online.

A Short Activity: Radio Drama

Recommended Grade Levels: 6-8, 9-12

Course/Content Area(s): U.S. History

Authored by: Leah Schwartz, National WWI Museum and Memorial Teacher Fellow

LESSON OVERVIEW:	In this activity, students learn how some methods used to inform the American public about the war effort were not always honest. Students will play a game from the BBC to see if they can identify if the news headlines are real or fake and then will read a letter about dramatizing a soldier's story from WWI for American listeners. Students then speculate why that might have been done and analyze the impact of dramatizing stories from WWI on the American public.
OBJECTIVES:	<i>Students will:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the impact of the media on people's opinions
STANDARDS ALIGNMENT:	National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) C3 Framework Standards: D2.His.4.9-12. Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
TIME NEEDED:	20 minutes
INTERDISCIPLINARY:	English Language Arts
PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will need to have basic background knowledge about what radio is and that it was a popular form of entertainment and news at the time of WWI.
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 computer per student for online quiz 1 copy of letter per student

LESSON

INTRODUCTION/HOOK:

1. Have students individually take the quiz: [The Fact or Fake News Quiz: Can you spot the true stories of 2023? - BBC Bitesize](#).
2. After taking the quiz, host a class discussion about which were the most difficult headlines to decide about and why?
3. Ask students to speculate why journalists might use sensationalism in their stories and headlines.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Have students read the [letter](#) from Bobby Brown individually, using the popcorn reading method, or the teacher can read it aloud.
 - a. Host a discussion either before or after reading the letter about the use of the term “Indian Wars.” What does it mean? What does it reference? Why is it not okay to use that term now?
2. The teacher will write the following questions on the board for students to answer in small groups:
 - a. When was this letter written? Why is this significant?
 - b. Why was this letter written?
 - c. What does it mean to dramatize a story in the middle of a war?
 - d. How does this letter relate to nationalism?
 - e. Is there an example from your lifetime of a story that was dramatized? To what end?
 - i. This can be as simple as a story exaggerating how hard a test is – the goal is to show students that this happens all the time.

POST-ASSESSMENT/EXTENSION:

Students will write their own radio program in pairs or groups that shares the story of John Lewis Barkley or another soldier. Students will have creative freedom but will need to make their program based in research. Students can either record their programs, share the program live, or just turn in the script.

MODIFICATIONS/ACCOMMODATIONS

- Students who need more time to process reading can be given the letter the night before.
- All students should have the letter in front of them even if it is read aloud. Students may be allowed to use a dictionary to look up words they do not know.