Requirement 9

Do ONE of the following, (a OR b OR c):

a. AMATEUR RADIO    b. BROADCAST RADIO    c. SHORTWAVE LISTENING

9b. BROADCAST RADIO

9b.1 Prepare a program schedule for radio station “KBSA” of exactly one-half hour, including music, news, commercials, and proper station identification. Record your program on audio tape or in a digital audio format using proper techniques.

A real commercial radio station makes broadcasting radio seem easy! But it takes a lot of work to put together radio broadcasts around the clock. A carefully scheduled script of a day’s broadcast must be created to make sure the radio is “always there” for the listeners. A radio station will also usually create many of the commercials that are played on the station, recording them in advance and inserting the commercials into time slots on the station’s schedule. Everything must be timed perfectly, to the second, so that all the commercials get played, all the music time is available, and all the news gets covered! It can be a complex and difficult job!

You can get a taste of the radio producer and director jobs with this requirement! When you write your half-hour script consider these things:

- What kind of radio station are you running, and who is the audience that listens?
- What kind of products for commercials would be interesting to your station’s audience?
- What kind of music, either in broadcasted songs for enjoyment, in commercials, or as background would your audience like?
- How will you introduce the parts of your radio show, including music, news, sports, weather, or other parts that you create?
- What will you use to record your radio show?

If you have access to a computer, you may be able to use it to record your radio show! Many different digital recording software utilities are available, some for free! Get your parents’ help and learn to use a simple audio recording application on the computer. With many of these applications you can record different sections of your radio show as separate parts and move the various parts around on a timeline. This way you can experiment with different ordering of your radio show parts and perhaps even use some special sound effects to enhance your radio show, if the audio recording application provides such features.

However, before you start recording, be sure to “prepare a program schedule” as the requirement states. You should have each radio broadcast segment of your show scheduled with a precise time (duration), scripted content (what you’ll say or play), and sequence of all the segments. After you have created your schedule, then you can begin to record segments and play with the sequence and effects! Have fun!

9.b.2 Listen to and properly log 15 broadcast stations. Determine the program format and target audience for five of these stations.

This one is easy! Just use your family radio to tune across the dial, perhaps both FM and AM stations. Select 15 stations to listen to for a while and evaluate. Record the following for each station you choose:

- Date and Time you listened
- The Station Frequency (on the dial)
- The Station Call Sign
- The Station’s Location (City)
- The Station’s Format (Talk, Music, News, Sports, etc.)
- The Station’s Target Audience (What kind of people does the station wish to reach?)
- Notes About the Broadcast (Topics discussed, music type played, times and sequences of content, etc.)

9.b.3. Explain at least eight terms used in commercial broadcasting, such as segue, cut, fade, continuity, remote, Emergency Alert System, network, cue, dead air, PSA, and playlist.

Seque: A natural flow from one topic or song to another. A smooth transition.

Cut: In recording a broadcast show, the time or point at which the transmission will be terminated; also in recording broadcast material, a single attempt at making a recording, as in “cutting a record.”

Fade: To make the volume softer, as to fade to silence.

Continuity: The action of keeping a radio broadcast going, avoiding “dead air.” A break in broadcasting continuity results in no content being broadcast.

Remote: A broadcast that originates live on location, outside the studio where the broadcast would normally originate.

Emergency Alert System: A government system using commercial broadcast stations to send emergency information.

Network: A group or system of radio stations that broadcast similar or identical shows and content.

Cue: A signal to an on-air announcer or a script position indicator that something is supposed to happen at that point.

Dead Air: A broadcast signal with no sound on it. This is considered very bad!

PSA: A public service announcement.

Playlist: The official list of songs that a radio station will play during a give time period.

You can explore additional broadcasting terms at these fine sites. Remember to get your parents’ permission!