

# History of Radio

Non-Fiction Article

PDF & Digital Formats



**2 Peas and a Dog**  
Middle School Teaching Resources

## RESOURCE INCLUDES

- ☐ Lesson Plan
- ☐ Teacher Instructions
- ☐ Individual PDFs for Google Drive
- ☐ Google Slides for 1:1 Schools
- ☐ Audio file of the article
- ☐ Pre-reading K-W-L chart
- ☐ Non-fiction article (modified and regular levels)
- ☐ 3 Post reading activities
  - ✓ Comprehension questions
  - ✓ Grammar questions
  - ✓ Long response writing

## EXAMPLE PAGES

### THE HISTORY OF RADIO

Radio is sound communication that is produced by radio waves, instead of through a physical connection (such as a wire). These waves travel through air, space, and objects, and then the radio receiver changes these waves into sound. The first wireless method of communication was radio.

#### First Broadcasts

Heinrich Hertz was the first to prove that radio waves exist, and from there experimenters began exploring the theory. Guglielmo Marconi invented the wireless telegraph in 1895. He transmitted Morse code by radio waves through a receiver he created which has now become the radio. The first voice to be transmitted over the radio was that of Reginald Fessenden from Brant Rock, Massachusetts, in 1906. The Canadian experimenter was able to produce an hour of talking and music. Three years later, in 1909, an American named Charles Herrold created the first radio station. He was able to regularly provide voice and music programs to a small group of amateur radio operators. He continued his broadcasts until 1917 when the U.S. government suspended radio transmissions during World War I. Herrold returned in 1921 but was unable to continue due to the cost of operations.



Image of a vintage radio.

#### Radio Receivers

Crystal sets, also known as cat's whisker sets, were one of the earliest radio receivers. Receivers such as these were used to detect radio waves and then play the audio that was added to the waves. Crystal sets included a piece of galena (a natural mineral from the Earth known as lead sulfide) that could detect radio signals. The sets were inexpensive to make and quickly became popular, however they didn't work very well. Therefore, many people who loved to tinker around made their own handmade receivers.

#### Popularization of Radio

Broadcasting started to take off between 1920 and 1921, when 30 radio stations were created across America. Many of these stations had a different purpose. By 1922, over 500 radio stations began broadcasting a range of different topics and music.

© <http://www.2peasandadog.com>

### K-W-L CHART

Topic:

K	W	L
What do I already know about this topic?	What do I want to know about this topic?	What new things did I learn about this topic from the article?

© <http://www.2peasandadog.com>

### SAMPLE ANSWERS

#### 1. What is radio?

Radio is sound communication that is produced by radio waves, instead of through a physical connection (such as a wire). These waves travel through air, space, and objects, and then the radio receiver changes these waves into sound.

#### 2. Who was Charles Herrold?

Three years later, in 1909, an American named Charles Herrold created the first radio station. He was able to regularly provide voice and music programs to a small group of amateur radio operators.

#### 3. What is another name for crystal set receivers?

Crystal sets, also known as cat's whisker sets, were one of the earliest radio receivers.

#### 4. Why were broadcasters originally concerned about advertising on the radio?

Many broadcasters were concerned about offending listeners by requiring them to listen to ads in their own homes.

#### 5. When did the first commercial air on radio? What did it advertise?

The first commercial aired in 1922. It was 15 minutes long and advertised apartments in Queens, New York.

#### 6. Explain how radio has changed in order to attract specific target audiences. (2 marks)

Many radio stations have changed their programming in order to reach specific target audiences or have hired big name people to operate some segments. Some radio stations have even started their own streaming services in order to attract more listeners.

© <http://www.2peasandadog.com>

# K-W-L CHART

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

**K**

**W**

**L**

What do I already know  
about this topic?

What do I want to  
know about this topic?

What new things did I  
learn about this topic  
from the article?

**PREVIEW**

# THE HISTORY OF RADIO

Radio is sound communication that is produced by radio waves, instead of through a physical connection (such as a wire). These waves travel through air, space, and objects, and then the radio receiver changes these waves into sound. The first wireless method of communication was radio.

## First Broadcasts

Heinrich Hertz was the first to prove that radio waves exist, and from there experimenters began exploring the theory. Guglielmo Marconi invented the wireless telegraph in 1895. He transmitted Morse code by radio waves through a receiver he created which has now become the radio. The first voice to be transmitted over the radio was that of Marconi's assistant, from Brantford, Massachusetts, in 1906. The Marconi experiment was a big success and a big talking point. Three years later, in 1909, an American named Charles Herrold created the first radio station. He was able to regularly provide voice and music programs to a small group of amateur radio operators. He continued his broadcasts until 1917 when the U.S. government suspended radio transmissions during World War I. Herrold returned in 1921 but was unable to continue due to the cost of operations.



## Radio Receivers

Crystal sets, also known as cat's paw sets, were the first type of radio receiver. Receivers were used to detect radio waves and then play them back. That was added to the mix. Crystal sets included a piece of galena (a natural mineral from the earth known as lead sulfide) that could detect radio signals. The sets were inexpensive to make and quickly became popular, however they didn't work very well. Therefore, many people who loved to tinker around made their own handmade receivers.

## Popularization of Radio

Broadcasting started to take off between 1920 and 1921, when 30 radio stations were created across America. Many of these stations had a different purpose. By 1922, over 500 radio stations began broadcasting a range of different topics and music.

# SAMPLE ANSWERS

## 1. What is radio?

Radio is sound communication that is produced by radio waves, instead of through a physical connection (such as a wire). These waves travel through air, space, and objects, and then the radio receiver changes these waves into sound.

## 2. Who was Charles Herrold?

Three years later, in 1909, an American named Charles Herrold created the first radio station. He was able to regularly provide voice and music programs to a small group of amateur radio operators.

## 3. What is another name for crystal set receivers?

Crystal sets, also known as cat's whisker sets, were one of the earliest receivers.

## 4. Why were radio advertisers opposed to advertising on the radio?

Many radio stations were concerned about offending listeners by requiring them to listen to ads for their own products.




## 5. When did the first commercial air on radio? What did it advertise?

The first commercial aired in 1922. It was 15 minutes long and advertised apartments in Queens, New York.

## 6. Explain how radio has changed in order to attract specific target audiences. (2 marks)

Many radio stations have changed their programming in order to reach specific target audiences or have hired big name people to operate some segments. Some radio stations have even started their own streaming services in order to attract more listeners.

# THINKING QUESTION

Assessment	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Above Expectations
	 -		 +
Do you prefer the to listen to the radio or music streaming services? Explain your thinking.			

**PREVIEW**