Radio-play Title Goes Here

A radio-play by Author's-Name-Goes-Here

NOTE: This RuyaSonic.com radio script format template is available for free download at: **https://www.ruyasonic.com/wrt_template.htm**. You can *link* to it there, but posting my template file on other websites for download is an infringement of my copyright. I worked hard, using my decades of experience writing, directing and performing radio-plays to create this template. I hope newcomers to radio drama will visit my RuyaSonic.com website—maybe even license one of my scripts, music scores, or sound effects track collections. Offering this template for free attracts website visitors—and that helps my script-licensing business. If you have a hard time writing for radio, consider producing one of my many scripts.

Tony "Sparx" Palermo

Production Company Name
1234 Main St.
City-name-goes-here, CA 90019
Email-me@something.com
www.something.com

PRODUCTION SCRIPT
September 7, 202X
© 202X Author's Name

author@something.com

Cast of Characters - 'Radio-play Title Goes Here'

Narrator   The narrator (m/f)
Character #1   Character description (m)
Character #2   Character description (f)
Character #3   Character description (m/f)
Character #4   Character description (m/f)
Character #5   Character description (m/f)
Character #6   Character description (m/f)

Two sound effects artists are also required.

Visit Tony Palermo's Radio Drama Resources website at: **www.RuyaSonic.com**

> NOTE: To make better use of this template, go to my website RuyaSonic.com and read my many "How-To" articles on Radio drama writing, directing, scoring, and sound effects. They'll fill you in on what the various conventions of this radio script format mean--such as why the music cues have a box with [MUS-04] and other bits that I don't want to cram into this template. My very detailed lesson in writing clear radio drama cues is found at: RuyaSonic.com/wrt_cues.htm

See page 12 for instructions on how to install and make your own customized version of this generic radio script template.

**SCENE 1 - EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN — SUMMER EVENING
        (ANNOUNCER <1>, KIM <3L>, RAY <3R>,**

PRODUCTION NOTE:
The diamond brackets in the Scene Heading indicate what mic the actors
should be standing at. The <3L> means Mic #3--on the left, as that mic will
be shared with another actor. When writing a script, you may want to leave
the mic assign brackets blank. Then fill them in during rehearsal—and have
your actors notate their scripts..

1.	MUSIC: [MUS-01]	(BED) "OPENING THEME"--UP. ESTABLISH. FADE UNDER ANNOUNCER.
2*	ANNOUNCER:	Yes, friends! It's just another summer evening in Yoxpokpetl--time for the usual stroll. (PAUSE) Or is it???
3.	SFX TRACK: [FX-01]	CRICKETS--UNDER.
4*	LIVE SFX:	KIM & RAY WALKING ON SIDEWALK--UNDER
5*	KIM:	(SIGHS) I love these summer-evening strolls.
6.	RAY:	Not me. They're a waste of time—like golf. Mark Twain once said, "Golf!--a good walk spoiled!"
7.	KIM:	Well, we're not golfing. I love strolls.
8.	RAY:	Gimme a break! These strolls are dull—just like this town. Nothing exciting ever happens around here.
9.	KIM:	That depends on your idea of exciting.
10.	RAY:	My idea of exciting would be a superhero flying in to save somebody from danger.
11.	LIVE SFX:	SLIDE-WHISTLE SLOW GLISSANDO DOWN--UNDER
12.	KIM:	Wait! Look! Up in the sky! It's-it's a--
13.	RAY:	(MOCKINGLY) --What? A bird? A plane? C'mon!

1. <u>LIVE SFX:</u>   <u>KIM RUNNING ON GRAVEL--UNDER.</u>

2. KIM: (EXITING) Yikes! Run! No!... (GASPS) Safe!

                        Safe! <u>Run!</u>

3. RAY: (RHETORICALLY) "Safe"? "Safe"??? (FEARFUL)

                        Oh, no! It <u>is</u> a--

4. <u>SFX TRACK [FX-02]   GIANT SAFE DROPS ON RAY—REVERBERATES 3</u>

                        <u>SECONDS</u>

        RADIO-ON-STAGE BLOCKING NOTE:
        Ray—now dead--steps back from the mic and faces upstage.

5* ANNOUNCER: It wasn't "safe." It was <u>a</u> safe--a two-ton

                        Diebold safe that somehow plummeted out of

                        the sky! ...Perhaps dropped by a superhero.

6. KIM: (GULPS) Twain also said, "Life!—one darn

                        thing after another."

7. <u>MUSIC: [MUS-02]   "CLOSING THEME"--UNDER. LET IT FINISH.</u>

8* ANNOUNCER: Well, that's all we've got time for on

                        today's show. Tune in again next week for

                        <u>"What's Up With You?"</u>... the show where you

                        never know--until it's too <u>late!</u>

[OPTIONAL CREDIT SEQUENCE ON NEXT PAGE]

NOTE: All cues are numbered to make it easy to refer to a specific Page and Cue in the script. To tell actors, SFX-ers, or booth crew to begin at a specific point, the director can just call out "Page 2, Cue #3." Also, this is actually spoken to "slate" retakes when re-recording blown lines or cues. Just call out, "Retake. Page 3, Cue #5." This way, post-production audio editors can easily know what line goes where.

When rewriting, if cues are added or cut, you'll need to renumber them. Always start with a new Cue #1 at the top of each page.

1. ANNOUNCER: (PAUSE) Our program featured...

as Character #1, _____,

__and__ Character #2,_____.

Our sound effects artists were

_____ __and__

_____.

Engineering by _____,

Our director was _____,

I'm your host, _____.

(PAUSE) "__Radio-play Title Goes Here__" has been

a production of the _____ radio

network.

--END OF EPISODE--

Radio Skills School

Microphone Technique:

- Sensitive and dead areas. Don't touch!
- Proximity effect. (Boomy if too close.)
- Proper distance for radio acting.
- Dynamics and distance. (Back off to yell.)
- Off mic use for distant sounds. Asides.
- Popping "P"s and S-S-S-Sibilance.
- Mic safety. (hitting, blowing, dropping)
- Assume every mic is always ON.
- Quiet script page turning.

Radio Acting:

- Quiet in the studio.
- Don't cough, laugh, or talk during production.
- Watch the director. Wait for your cue. (Q)
- Speed equals excitement. Don't bore audience.
- Jump in if there's dead air.
- Wait for director's signal at end of show.

Radio Direction "Sign Language"

- "Wait" - Open hand.
- "5-4-3---" - Finger count down.
- "Theme starting" - Form a "T" with hands.
- "Watch for cue" - Point to person then eye.
- "You're on" - Pointing finger.
- "Cut" - Finger slits throat.
- "Faster" - Move index finger clockwise.
- "Stretch it out" - Pulling taffy.
- "Come in/"Back off" microphone - Move hand
- towards/away from face.
- "Louder" - Elevate the hand, palm up.
- "Quieter" - Lower the hand, palm down.

Casting Evaluation: 'Radio-play Title Goes Here'

Director: _____   Date: _____

Cast Size: 7 (m/f)   Gender-swapping is permitted.
Sound effect artists: 2

_____	Narrator	The narrator (m/f)
_____	Character #1	Character description (m)
_____	Character #2	Character description (f)
_____	Character #3	Character description (m/f)
_____	Character #4	Character description (m/f)
_____	Character #5	Character description (m/f)
_____	Character #6	Character description (m/f)

Audition ratings: A through F

Actor Name	Rating	Bold?	Emotion	Accent?	Possible roles

Casting Monologues: 'Radio-play Title Goes Here'

All actors are asked to read some lines, called "sides," aloud, to audition. The director will cast the roles in our production based upon these readings. Please take a moment to read the lines below several times, both silently and aloud. These monologues can also provide some "back story," giving an idea of who the characters are and what kind of story we are producing. Since radio actors often play several parts, we encourage the use of different voices or accents when auditioning for the different roles.

ANNOUNCER: I'm the announcer. I quickly describe the setting for each scene and report on all spine-tingling <u>suspense</u> for the radio listener. These lines often include underlined phrases to instruct the actor to stress or emphasize or just <u>read</u> the underlined words slower.

CHARACTER #1:   Hello, I'm Character #1, this text describes me and contains certain typical phrases I use. It is to educate the cast and crew about the characters <u>before</u> we begin work. Also, by giving a fairly long speech--in character--a director can evaluate my voice for its tone and my ability to read a script--<u>live</u>--well.

CHARACTER #2:   I'm Character #2, this text describes <u>me</u> and contains certain typical phrases <u>I</u> use. By having the actors say all these lines we can cast the better speakers in the <u>leading</u> roles.

Sound Effects Cookbook: 'Radio-play Title Goes Here'

Sound effects duties are often split between several SFX artists, so they won't have to quickly switch from one sound effects device to the next. Use colored high-lighters to mark the script as to which SFX artist is doing which sounds. Then array the SFX devices to be in front of the artist responsible for those sound effects cues. The brackets on the next two pages are there so you can check off that you have all the devices to make the sounds—like for a pick-list.

SOUND EFFECTS ARTIST #1

[ ] Footsteps on sidewalk
[ ] Footsteps on wooden floor
[ ] Dog barks/howls
[ ] Gavel
[ ] Door opening/closing/shut

SOUND EFFECTS ARTIST #2

[ ] Slow slide-whistle glissando down
[ ] Phone rings
[ ] Phone handset picked up/hung up
[ ] Phone being dialed
[ ] Dinner plates/forks

Live Sound Effects Cookbook: 'Radio-play Title Goes Here'

Never call it "foley"

In professional radio drama, the term for sound effects is... *sound effects* and the term for the person who performs and controls them is *sound effects artist*. "Foley" is a film production term in use only since the late-1980s and covers the replacement of sounds that we're not recorded well during the film shoot. A radio sound effects artist does everything a foley artist does and many more sounds-- both live and pre-recorded. My mentors worked with radio greats Orson Welles, Jack Benny and Jack Webb, the made me swear to never call it 'foley." Pass it on!

[ ] SLIDE-WHISTLE DOWNWARD GLISSANDO
    Push the plunger in and blow through the slide-whistle while pulling out the slide. Search Google for *Slide-Whistle toy*. The Schylling versions are very good. Get two, in case the toy gets broken—or stolen.

[ ] FOOTSTEPS ON SIDEWALK:
    Use conventionally heeled shoes on a piece of rough stone tile affixed with construction adhesive to an 18"x18" (450mm x 450mm) piece of 3/4" (20mm) plywood. Building supply stores sell rough "travertine" tiles in 1/2" (13mm) thickness. If you are using hands-as-feet, make a 12"x 12" (300mm x 300mm) sidewalk walk-board that sits on your SFX table.

[ ] OTHER SOUND EFFECTS GO HERE
    Include a description of the device and how it is to be played.

When writing a script, you may not know how to produce certain sounds, so you just list the sound effects cue name here, as in the two SFX cues above. Later, you may want to update your script with "how-to" info for use in future productions.

Engineer's Notes: 'Radio-play Title Goes Here'

Equipment notes

Murgatroyd-the-dog should always be off-mic--stand 3 feet away from the actors' mics-to simulate the sound of the dog being in the backyard.

Playback devices:

This show uses several back-to-back music tracks. It may require TWO playback devices OR quick triggering, using an inexpensive MP3 playback app, such as Go Button (IOS) or Audio Cues (Android).

Pre-Recorded Music/SFX tracks

The music cues are mostly BEDs--where music plays underneath dialogue. Let the music bed establish itself for a few seconds, then reduce the volume a bit to allow the actors' voices to be clearly heard. There is one BRIDGE music cue--where the music plays with no dialogue on top of it. The SPOT cues (rip-chords) need to finish before the next line is delivered. The INTRO and OUTRO music cues may need to be faded out so as to not intrude on character dialogue or the credit sequence.

Cue #	Volume	Title	Run Time
01		INTRO "Opening Theme" [BED]	0:40
02		Meanwhile [BRIDGE]	0:07
03		Next Morning [BED]	0:26
04		Sting #1 "Uneasy Maxie" [BED]	0:20
05		Rip-Chord #1-D "Fluffy!" [SPOT]	0:14
06		Sting #2 "Live on a farm" [BED]	0:17
07		Desperate Bunny-Scrub Montage [BED]	0:38
08		SFX: Car pulling into driveway, stopping.	0:07
09		OUTRO Rip-chord #5-Gb & Closing theme [BED]	0:35

All music composed by Composer-name-goes-here
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When writing a radio script, you may not know the actual music tracks that will be used. Just list the Music Cue Titles used your script. The composer or sound-designer can use this list to name the MP3 files and create a playlist in whatever app being used to trigger pre-recorded cues. If you use pre-recorded sound effects, create a separate SFX-only list -OR- combine those SFX cue tracks with the music cue tracks listed here.

How to Install RuyaSonic Radio Script Template for Word

Step 1: Copy the template file

1. Locate the **RuyaSonic-Radio-Play-Script-Template.dotx** template file in your computer downloads folder.
2. Copy that file to your MS Word Template folder.
   - Default location for Windows:
   C:\Users\<your_username>\AppData\Roaming\Microsoft\Templates
      Note: The AppData folder is typically hidden. You may need to enable "Show hidden files and folders" in Windows Explorer's view table. If unsure how to do this, search online for instructions.
   - Default location for Mac:
   /Users/<your_username>/Library/Group Containers/UBF8T346G9.Office/User Content/Templates

Step 2: Open and customize the template

1. Open Microsoft Word.
2. Open the file "**RuyaSonic-Radio-Play-Script-Template.dotx"** from your Templates folder.
3. Print the template as if it were a regular document. Keep this printed copy as a reference guide for the elements of a radio script.
4. In Word's Home toolbar, the Quick Styles Gallery will show the Normal style, then the Radio Script styles (Q1-SCENE HEADING, Q-DIALOGUE, Q-MUSIC, Q-NOTES, Q-SFX, Q-WALLA, Radio AUTHOR, Radio Play Title, etc.)

It is possible to modify any of my Radio Script styles' font, size, tabs, indenting, line spacing, etc. You can choose to save those style changes just for a new document -OR- any future documents based on your custom template. If unsure how to do this, search online for instructions.

Step 3: Save as your own customized template

1. Go through the template and change any generic information I used to your own (Play title, Author name, production company, dates, copyrights, etc. Do the same for the Headers and Footers--by clicking on them. Be thorough, as I used a lot of generic info (play-title-goes-here, 12345 Main St, City-name-goes-here, etc.).

You may want to delete my sample radio script text (character lists, scene headings, cues for dialogue, music, SFX, notes, audition monologues, sound effects cookbook, list of pre-recorded tracks, etc. -OR- leave them alone and just overwrite them when you create your own radio script documents.

2. Once the template is customized to your liking, go to File > Save As.
3. Choose a new name for your template (e.g., "My Radio-play Script Template").
4. Ensure the file type is set to "Word Template (*.dotx)".
5. Click Save. This will be the template to use when creating your own new scripts.

How to create a document based on your template

1. Open Microsoft Word
2. From the top-left corner of the Word window, navigate to File > New
3. In the New Document window, look for the **Personal** or **Custom** section (this may vary depending on your version of Word).
5. Locate your custom-named Radio-play Script Template, select it and click "Create."
6) Begin writing your script using the styles in the Quick Style Gallery on the Home toolbar.

Features of the RuyaSonic Radio-play Script Template

This template makes it easy to write in the format of a professional radio script, which is far more efficient for radio rehearsals and performances.

The classic "block" style format uses the 12-point Courier font of 1940s typewriters—which is easy to read live, off-the-page. All the styles for cues are set to BOLD so they will photocopy better. Each page of script in this radio format runs about 55 seconds of air time--depending on the tempo of your actors and direction. Other aspects of radio scripting are demonstrated by the dummy text in this template. Here are a few conventions I use in my radio drama scripts that differ from stage or film scripts.

Dialogue delivery instructions

For dialogue, I specifically recommend that you make full use of <u>underlines</u>, ellipses [But...] and parentheticals [(DRUNK) (WHISPERS) (PAUSE) etc.] to indicate how the actors should deliver the lines. There's never much rehearsal time in radio drama, so these scripted instructions quickly convey just what the writer intended. We are working <u>live</u>, off-the-page remember.

Some directors wish to let the actors deliver lines the way they feel it, and hope they get it right. However, due to the time constraints for radio, I wrote a line <u>one way</u> and make sure it reads easily and can be delivered as I intended it. Actors can still bring nuance and interpretation to their lines, but I don't want them mis-understanding what the lines are about--especially live! Clarity is paramount in audio theatre. Confusion will make listeners *tune out*.

Characters in a scene/at the mics

The scene heading identifies a new scene and includes which characters appear. This alerts actors to come to the mics. It also allows for quick calls in rehearsal. ("I need Scrooge, Marley, and the Narrator for this scene.") I add mic-blocking assignments in diamond brackets—like this: <2>. Below is an example of a scene heading with featured characters for a scene:

```
SCENE 4 – EXT. PIRATE FRIGATE – DAY
    (NEVILLE <1>, TERESA <4>, JIM <3R>, ALEX <3L>, ASH <LATE TO 2>)
```

Just before the scene starts, the actor playing Neville should go to mic #1, Teresa to mic #4. Jim and Alex share a mic—Jim at mic #3 RIGHT and Alex at Mic #3 LEFT. Ash will enter late in the scene and go to mic #2.

You may want to have empty brackets--with NO mic number--and determine the mic-blocking during rehearsals. Then have the actors write in their mic assignments—in pencil, as blocking may change.

Cue Numbering

Each cue (dialogue, music, SFX) is assigned a consecutive number—restarting at 1 with every new script page.

```
3.  NEVILLE:              (CALLS OUT) Ahoy, you skulking dogs!

4.  ALEX:                 (DISTANT) Aye, Cap'n!
```

When first writing a radio script, I just put an "X." instead of a number for the cue. Then after I've finished with <u>all</u> my drafts, I replace the Xs with consecutive numbers—but always starting with 1. at the top of each page.

For a full explanation, see my advice for how to write radio cues:
https://www.ruyasonic.com/wrt_cues.htm

Marking up the final draft

After I've printed out the production draft, I take a Sharpie pen and hand-write the letter "Q" alongside any cues where the actor, music, or SFX crew should wait for the director to cue them. Everybody will work off of the marked-up script. This is usually in specific places:

1) On the first dialogue cue following a music cue--so the director can wait until the music cue is established or fades. This is often at the beginning of a new scene.

2) On a dialogue cue after an important sound effect--so that effect can "clear" and not get stepped on by the actors.

3) On a music or SFX cue that must precisely follow the director's timing. Say, where a gunshot SFX cue is followed by a suspenseful pause and then the sound of a body dropping to the floor.
These "Qs" easily tell everyone to wait for the director. They make rehearsals and performances run much smoother. Since it's handwritten and bold, these "Qs" really stand out amidst the typed text.

What I do when typing a script is substitute an asterisk for the period after a cue number, so I can remember where these hand-written "Q" marks should go. So, you'll see:

```
7*   NARRATOR:            Some dialogue goes here.
```

When marking up scripts, I also use a Sharpie pen to circle the walla walla cues (background crowd sounds). This way the cast can all see when walla is required.

Preparing radio scripts for production

If you're using my script template, also take a look at my website's pages about preparing for production. The advice on using hi-lighters for the engineers and SFX department are real time savers. **https://www.RuyaSonic.com/pre-prod.htm**

Printing by section

This script uses many section breaks to allow for quick printing. Once your script is 60 to 110 pages long, being able to print just a single section may be handy.

The pages used for actors' copies are Sections 1-2. You can print just these sections by going to the MS Word "Print" page, and designating pages: S1-S2.

To print just a few pages from within a section, specify a page range first, like **p18-24 S3** (Note that the Section number is always last).

Here's a breakdown of the sections:
Section 1 - Title (fly) page, cast listing
Section 2 - Script pages (dialogue, music, SFX)
Section 3 - Casting list, chart and Casting Monologues
Section 4 - Director's signals
Section 6 - Sound Effects notes
Section 6 - Engineer's notes
Section 7 – Template info.

"So, good evening to all our friends out there in Radio-lantt!"

This script format is based on actual scripts from the 1930s-1960s used by the major American radio networks. The layout, indents, spacings, and conventions were perfected through producing hours of dramas—daily—to run from 6 am to midnight.

The network radio-drama "factories" created a brilliantly efficient script format to make all aspects of a show clear to actors, sound effects artists, technicians, directors, and composers. It allowed them precisely time how long a show would

run, which was especially important when you had to include the live ad-spots that paid for everything.

From my own experience of doing over 2500 radio shows, I have added several script upgrades to aid modern radio-play production: Scene headings with Exterior or Interior and time of day, mic-assignment brackets and radio-on-stage blocking instructions, monologues for quick casting, a Sound Effects "cookbook" section, and Engineering notes. I hope this format can make creating and producing radio-plays easier for all practitioners of mankind's oldest art-form, "telling stories with sound."

Good luck, or—as we say in radio—"Break a lip!"

Tony "Sparx" Palermo

September 2024

P.S. The title to this last section is from Stan Freberg's hilarious 1957 Lawrence Welk Show radio parody titled "Wun'erful, Wun'erful!" That 45 RPM record inspired me, back in 1962, to work in radio. Decades later, I met Stan, who was all wit and warmth. From Stan, and my other mentors, Norman Corwin, Peggy Webber, Cliff Thorsness, Ray Erlenborn, and more, I learned that, in radio, you can do anything— for nothing! As my Mom once said, "Well, at least it 'sounds' like a living!"