

The News Decoder Summer Camp at the American School of Paris

3–7 July 2023

Morning, 3.5 hrs/day

Overview

The News Decoder Summer Camp at the American School of Paris welcomes students grades 9 and above for an adventure in non-fiction storytelling and podcast creation.

Based out of the campus of the American School of Paris, participants will learn how to apply journalism techniques to identify and tell important stories that are happening around them. Students will work with experienced journalists as they master media literacy skills. Along the way they will learn what it is like to be a foreign correspondent and they will try their hand at finding and reporting a story in Paris for a foreign audience, by taking the information they gather and turning it into a compelling audio podcast. Content created during the camp can be entered into New Decoder's student storytelling contests.

At the end of the week, camp participants will come away with:

- An understanding that problems they see around them are shared by people across the globe.
- The skills to parse out reliable sources of information.
- The ability to find and communicate with experts who can help explain complicated topics.
- The ability to formulate questions and interview people.
- The know-how to take information and turn it into an audio script.

Possible Daily Schedule

Day 1: How journalists find and report stories.

- The difference between verified information, rumor and opinion.
- How to take a big topic and turn it into a focused idea for a news story.
- Types of sources of information and how journalists find them.
- *Sample exercise: Students will brainstorm ideas for stories and come up with a mock news site page.*

Sample exercise: Students will pitch a story to News Decoder that they think they can complete by the end of the week.

Day 2: Podcasts for telling important stories

- Different types of podcasts
- The idea of scripting for podcasts
- Basic audio editing

Sample exercises. Students will interview and record each other and create a short recording out of the audio tracks. Students will research their story topic and compile a list of important questions they could get answered.

Day 3: A visit from a foreign correspondent

- How to see what's around you with an outsider's eye.
- What makes stories interesting to people far away.
- How stories connect people across borders.
- Some reporting tips and techniques.

Sample exercise: Students will try to create a one-minute podcast using some of the audio clips of their talk with the visiting journalist.

Day 4: Scripting for audio

- Differentiation between unscripted and scripted podcasts
- How scripting a podcast is different from writing an essay.
- Descriptive storytelling: How to incorporate sights and smells into audio.

Sample exercise: Students will create outlines or storyboards and a draft podcast.

Day 5: The News Decoder Camp podcast stream:

- Students will present their podcasts for peer and News Decoder feedback.
- 'How podcasts can be taken to the next level, how they can be turned into multimedia packages with photos and writing.
- A post-production party.