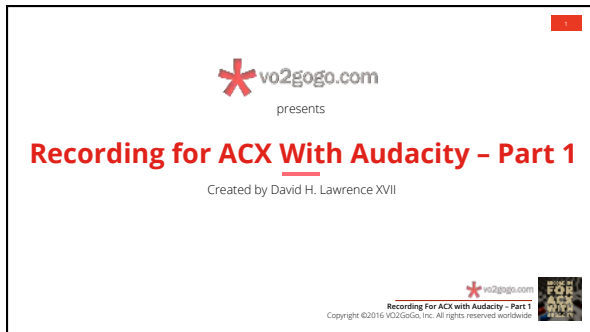


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Class Notes

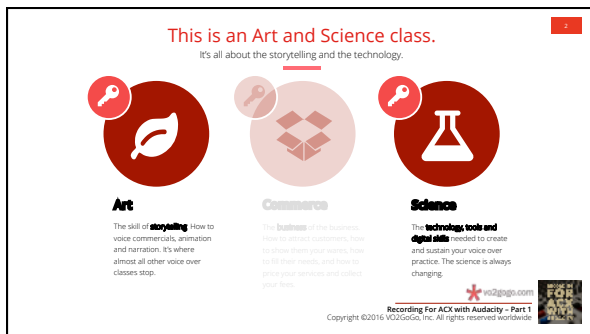


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presents

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Created by David H. Lawrence XVII

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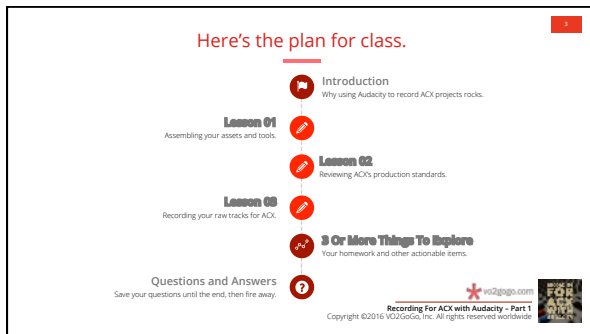
This is an Art and Science class.
It's all about the storytelling and the technology.

Art
The skill of **storytelling** - how to voice commentaries, animation and narration. It's where almost all other voice over classes stop.

Commerce
The **business** of the business. How to attract customers, what to charge them your work, how to fill their needs, and how to price your services and collect your fees.

Science
The **technology tools and digital skills** needed to create and sustain your voice over practice. The science is always changing.

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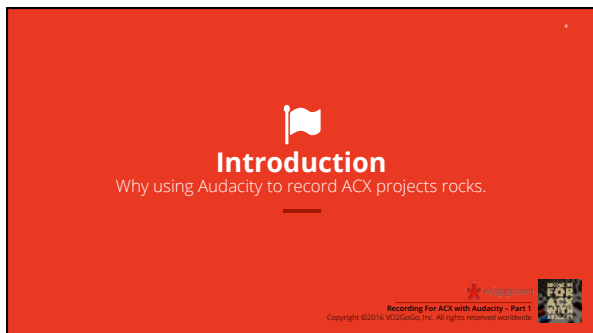
Here's the plan for class.

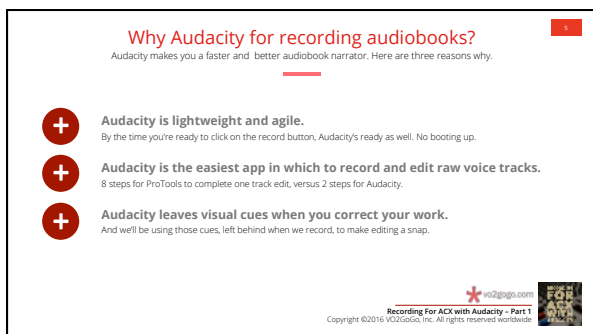
- Introduction**
Why using Audacity to record ACX projects rocks.
- Lesson 01**
Assembling your assets and tools.
- Lesson 02**
Reviewing ACX's production standards.
- Lesson 03**
Recording your raw tracks for ACX.
- 3 Or More Things To Explore**
Your homework and other actionable items.
- Questions and Answers**
Save your questions until the end, then fire away.

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Lesson 01
Assembling your assets and tools.

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Assemble your assets.
Gather the materials, hardware and software you'll need.

- Script
In PDF format
- Microphone
The AT-2020 USB Plus
- Sound software
Audacity
- MP3 plugin
LAME
- Mastering app
The Levelator

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Where to get the AT-2020 USB Plus mic:

<http://vo2gogo.com/get-at2020usbplus>


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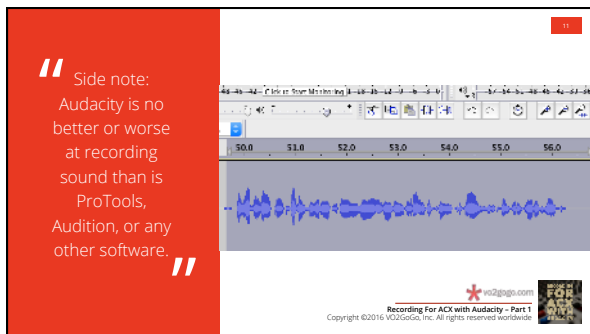
10



Where to get Audacity:

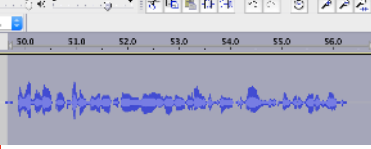
<http://vo2gogo.com/get-audacity>

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11

“ Side note:
Audacity is no better or worse at recording sound than is ProTools, Audition, or any other software.”



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12



Where to get LAME:

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13



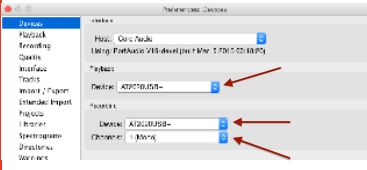
Where to get The Levelator:

<http://vo2gogo.com/get-levelator>

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14

“ Make sure the AT2020 is selected as both your output and input, and that you’re recording in mono. ”



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15



Lesson 02
Reviewing ACX's production standards.

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ACX's Production Standards. Whoa. 16
If you're not really familiar with audio technology and terminology, they can be daunting.

ACX wants clean audio.
Your audio should be a great read, while free of any extraneous noise, with high quality equipment and editing.


ACX wants a quiet room.
Your environment should be as silent as possible. Be ruthless with intrusions.

ACX wants highly compressed sound.
Retail audiobooks are more compressed than most radio stations, so listeners can hear them in noisy areas.




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Your noise floor. 17
The actual sound in your room when you're not speaking.
Must be -60 dB. That's really, really quiet.



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Measuring your noise floor with Audacity – Video Demo 18
Let's see if your room is below or above -60db with this simple test.



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ACX's production standards page.


There are SEVEN screensful of difficult information.

<http://vo2gogo.com/get-acx-standards>

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The ACX production numeric values in plain English.

Let's convert the tech talk to something easy to understand.




01 Length limit No single body (or chapter) can be more than 120 minutes (two hours) long.	02 Overall volume -3.0 dB is ACX's limit for how loud your sound can be. That's about 80% of the maximum volume possible.
03 Quiet/Silences Half a second (0.5) at the start of each chapter, 2.5 seconds between the title and the body, 3.5 seconds at the end. Always.	04 Compression -18 to -23 dB RMS normalization: extreme compression.

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Use Single Page Continuous Mode...

...when reading from your script in Preview or any other PDF reader.




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Recording for ACX with Audacity – Part 1

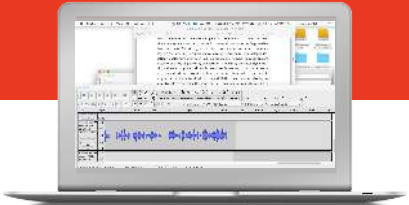
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Keep your window narrow...
...you'll make fewer mistakes when reading.



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Read your chapters directly from the screen.
No need to print the script out and make noise every time you turn the page. Scroll through it right in Preview.



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A preview of ACX-compliant production and mastering.
Here's a quick look at that process.

Record from the manuscript.
In PDF format, with Audacity running as you speak.

Record and edit with the stairstep method.
Narrate hitting STOP-FF-REC for pickups. Then, edit backwards.

Export, use Levelator, reopen in Audacity.
The WAV file will now sound completely different.

Normalize to -3.0 dB and export as MP3.
Using Audacity, export the MP3 file as 192k mono.



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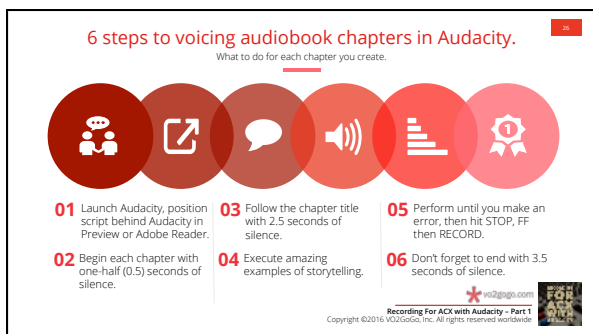
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Lesson 03
Recording your raw tracks for ACX.

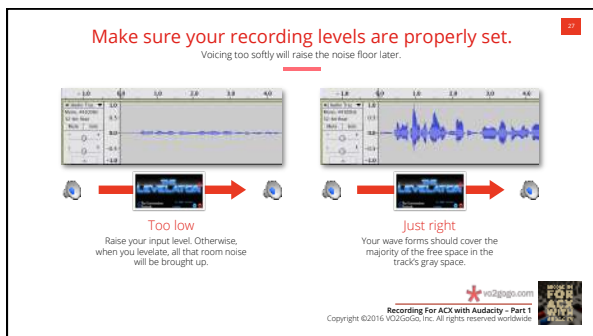
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6 steps to voicing audiobook chapters in Audacity.
What to do for each chapter you create.

- 01 Launch Audacity, position script behind Audacity in Preview or Adobe Reader.
- 02 Begin each chapter with one-half (0.5) seconds of silence.
- 03 Follow the chapter title with 2.5 seconds of silence.
- 04 Execute amazing examples of storytelling.
- 05 Perform until you make an error, then hit STOP, FF then RECORD.
- 06 Don't forget to end with 3.5 seconds of silence.

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Make sure your recording levels are properly set.
Voicing too softly will raise the noise floor later.


Too low
Raise your input level. Otherwise, when you levelate, all that room noise will be brought up.

Just right
Your wave-forms should cover the majority of the free space in the track's gray space.

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Control your recording level in Audacity.

Raise or lower the level via the record input slider.
0.5 to 0.7 is a good place to start, then adjust if needed.

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Make a mistake? Hit STOP, FF then REC.

You're going to make mistakes.
This is the button click pattern to do pickups

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“ Audacity will start a new recording below and to the right of your current track. You'll be able to easily see each. ”



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The timing of silences.

Half a second (.5) at the start of each chapter. **.25 seconds** between the title and the body. **3.5 seconds** at the end. Always.

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“ Build the silences into your read: “One 1000, two 1000, three 1000, four 1000.” Silently. ”

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“ Don't forget the 3,5 seconds of silence at the end. If you do, hit STOP, FF, REC. In silence. ”

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“ When you're finished, you'll usually end up with many visible pickups. We'll edit them together in Part 2 of this class. ”




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How To Record Chapters with Audacity – Video Demo

Just the recording part of the process. We'll show you the editing process in Part 2 of this class.



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3 Or More Things To Explore
Your homework and other actionable items.

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3 or more things to explore.
Take what you've learned, explore and learn more, then put that all to work.

- + Review ACX's standards. Be ready for your eyes to glaze over.
- + Measure your noise floor. Do you see the meter moving? Fix it.
- + Record a sample chapter with the right length silences.
- + Get used to STOP >> FF >> REC. Do some test recordings. Rinse. Repeat.

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Questions

Fire away. Or send them to david@vo2gogo.com.

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☕

Pick a clip to record.

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