

Voicing Documentary Narration VO Class Notes

vo2gogo.com
presents
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Created by David H. Lawrence XVII

vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

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

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, when to show 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 locate voice-over practice. The subject is about changing.

vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

Here's the plan for class.

Introduction
The power of adding documentary narration to your portfolio.

Lesson 01
The marketplace, demos, and categories of documentary work.

Lesson 02
Auditions, preparation, and creating your narrator character.

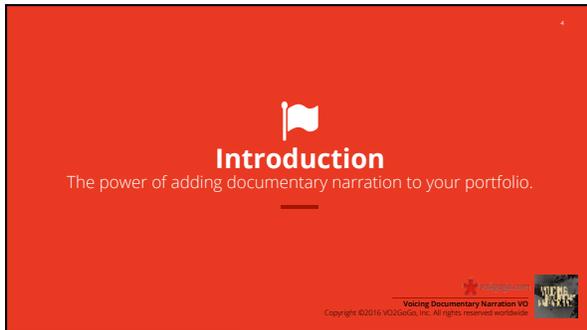
Lesson 03
Creating your audience of one and mastering the craft.

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

Questions and Answers
Save your questions until the end, then fire away.

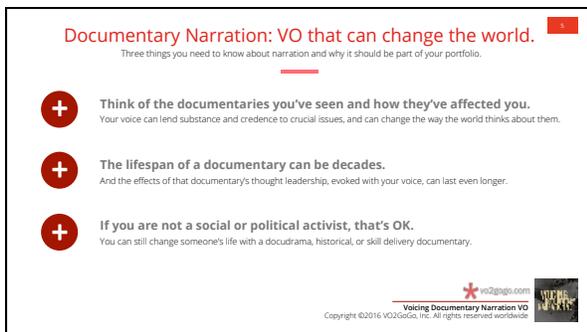
vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

Voicing Documentary Narration VO Class Notes



Introduction
The power of adding documentary narration to your portfolio.

VO2GoGo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.



Documentary Narration: VO that can change the world.
Three things you need to know about narration and why it should be part of your portfolio.

- +** **Think of the documentaries you've seen and how they've affected you.**
Your voice can lend substance and credence to crucial issues, and can change the way the world thinks about them.
- +** **The lifespan of a documentary can be decades.**
And the effects of that documentary's thought leadership, evoked with your voice, can last even longer.
- +** **If you are not a social or political activist, that's OK.**
You can still change someone's life with a docudrama, historical, or skill delivery documentary.

VO2GoGo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.



Lesson 01
The marketplace, demos, and categories of documentary work.

VO2GoGo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.

Voicing Documentary Narration VO Class Notes

// The markets:
Networks
Cable
Public TV
Non-broadcast
Internet/OTT
and more... **//**



vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.



// The categories:
• Docudrama
• DIY
• Reality
• Political and Social
Commentary
• Citizen Journalism **//**

vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.

// You are a customer as well:
Create your own documentary content! **//**



vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.

Voicing Documentary Narration VO Class Notes

Your documentary narration demo: longer than most. 10
Most VO demos are a minute long or less. Not so with documentary narration.

Hire a producer for this demo.
You need a producer who understands documentaries.

Like all demos, immerse the listener.
Your demo should include music and actualities.

Length: 2-3 minutes, with one segment.
Your demo needs to show gravitas and authority.

It should sound like it was taped off the TV.
Just like in the real world, with typical narration intros and content.



vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide


Lesson 02
Auditions, preparation, and creating your narrator character.

vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

Prepare your documentary narration audition. 12
Here's how to assess your approach for auditions, from the script and the breakdown.



Follow the producer's lead.
The breakdown will tell you the approach the producer is looking for. Align your brand and style accordingly.



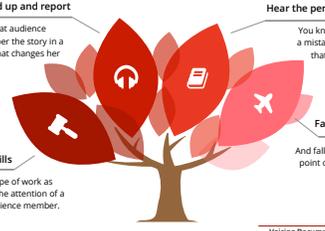
Watch for conflicting terms.
You may get "edgy, but reliable," or "Morgan Freeman, but down home," or "urban, but chatty." Do your best to deliver your brand.

vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

Voicing Documentary Narration VO Class Notes

Create your documentary narrator character. 13

Before you audition, take what you learn from the script and the breakdown, and create your character.

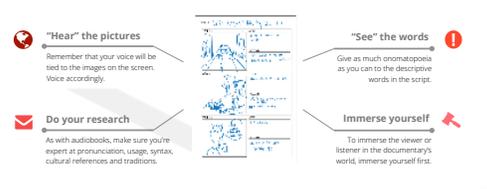


- Stand up and report**
Tell that audience member the story in a way that changes her life.
- Hear the perfect voice in your head**
You know the one: it never makes a mistake. Let that one be the one that comes out of your mouth.
- Fall in love with the script**
And fall in love with the producer's point of view. Or, pass on the job.
- Use stage skills**
Think of this type of work as commanding the attention of a single rapt audience member.

Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.

Execute your documentary narration audition. 14

Keep these four constants in mind as you voice your audition.



- "Hear" the pictures**
Remember that your voice will be tied to the images on the screen. Voice accordingly.
- "See" the words**
Give as much onomatopoeia as you can to the descriptive words in the script.
- Do your research**
As with audiobooks, make sure you're expert at pronunciation, usage, syntax, cultural references and traditions.
- Immerse yourself**
To immerse the viewer or listener in the documentary's world, immerse yourself first.

Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.

15



Lesson 03
Creating your audience of one and mastering the craft.

Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.

Voicing Documentary Narration VO Class Notes

16



Define your audience of one.

Who is the biggest fan of this subject matter? What side of the issue is she on? How much does she know about the content? Tell the story **only** to this one person.

vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

17

Further defining your audience of one.
Here are four questions you want to ask yourself.

In which state is this person?
Red state? Blue state? State of denial? State of bliss?

What is his point of view?
Are you preaching to the choir, or changing a viewpoint?

What is the producer's point of view?
Remember, fall in love with it, and deliver it in spades.

Are you telling your best story?
Or are you simply trying to read words well on the page?



vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

18

Documentary narration performance: be influential.
There are four basic standards of documentary narration performance excellence.



01 Take it slow
Authority is built on clarity and a manageable pace. Don't rush things.

02 Slight over-enunciation
You never know what you're going to be competing against for the listener's attention.

03 Aim for the rafters
Use your theater background and own this work. Speak up, Louise.

04 Hightened emotions
Create a connection with the listener or viewer based on your investment in the content.

vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

Voicing Documentary Narration VO Class Notes

//

Be as natural as the copy calls for:

Take your cue from the producer on how "presentational" you need to be.

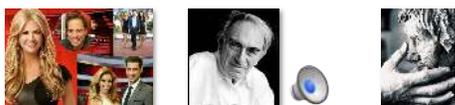
//



vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

Mastering your craft: study/emulate the masters.

Watch the credits, find the names of the people who are booking, and study their work.



Watch all categories of work
Watch histories, biographies, reality shows, fashion shows, and entertainment and gossip shows, even if you're not a fan.

Imitate your fellow artist
Talk back to the TV. Repeat what you hear. Imitate boldly.

Strip and create
Strip away their artifice and create your own style from theirs and all others.

vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

// PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE:

Use the Random Article link on Wikipedia. Make the not-so-great writing you'll find oh-so-great.

//



vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

Voicing Documentary Narration VO Class Notes



“ Grant yourself permission to be your brand. Remember, producers don't always know exactly what they want. Just be you. ”

vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

“ And be sure to bring your brand to the party. Give producers you and what you are. Don't be afraid to show your true self. ”



vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide



Record. Get better. Record again.

Go to an article on Wikipedia. Record a paragraph. Listen to it. Record it again. Then go to another article.

Lather, rinse, repeat.

vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide

25



3 Or More Things To Explore

Your homework and other actionable items.

 vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.



26

3 or more things to explore.

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

-  **Watch every documentary you can find: History, HGTV, Science, etc.**
-  **Get to know the people getting the work: watch the credits.**
-  **Random Article on Wikipedia. See how good you can make that stuff sound.**
-  **Work with a producer to make your documentary narration demo.**

 vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.



27



Questions

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

 vo2gogo.com
Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Copyright ©2016 VO2GoGo, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.



Voicing Documentary Narration VO
Class Notes