

# Voicing Specialty Narration VO Class Notes

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presents  
**Voicing Specialty Narration VO**  
Created by David H. Lawrence XVII

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

**Art**  
The skill of **storytelling** how to voice commercials, 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 make them pay, how to bill their notes, and how to price your services and collect your fees.

**Science**  
The **technology, tools and digital skills** needed to create and execute voice-over practice. The science is always changing.

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**Here's the plan for class.**

**Introduction**  
Why adding specialty narration to your portfolio rocks.

**Lesson 01**  
The marketplace and categories of specialty narration work.

**Lesson 02**  
Auditions, preparation, and accessing your narrator character.

**Lesson 03**  
Your audience of one, your demos, 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.

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# Voicing Specialty Narration VO Class Notes



**Introduction**  
Why adding specialty narration to your portfolio rocks.

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**If you have mad skills, specialty narration is for you.**  
Sure, you're an actor. But if you're deep in other areas, you have an advantage.

- +** **Most people have fall back/previously learned skills. Handy.**  
Nurse? Paralegal? Teacher? Chemist? Financial advisor? These and others can be your ticket to work.
- +** **If you do, you handle the explanation of concepts more expertly.**  
No one sounds as well versed in a subject than someone who knows their stuff, and is a good storyteller.
- +** **You also understand all the moving parts, the jargon, and the zeitgeist.**  
You can look at an issue in your area of expertise, and immediately impart what it all means.
- +** **You naturally respond well to auditions that draw on your specialty.**  
Others need to sound authentic, but you are authentic. That means easier auditioning and work.

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**Lesson 01**  
The marketplace and categories of specialty narration work.

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



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**// The categories:**  
• Medical  
• Legal  
• Scientific/Technical  
• Food, Health, Sex,  
Financial, Sports, Skill-  
building and more **//**

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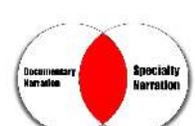
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**There can be a crossover between narration areas.**

Documentary narration and specialty narration often meet.  
The subject matter of documentaries can be very specialized.

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**Go with your strengths. And don't fake it.**

Determine those areas you can instantly and expertly execute.  
And never claim skills or expertise you don't have.

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**//** You are a customer as well:  
Create your own specialty content.  
**//**



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**Lesson 02**  
Auditions, preparation, and accessing your narrator character.

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# Voicing Specialty Narration VO Class Notes

**Prepare your specialty narration audition.**  
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. Remember, your knowledge is your biggest advantage.

**Watch for conflicting terms.**  
You may get "edgy, but reliable" or "Morgan Freeman, but down home," or "urban, but chatty." Do your thing. Deliver your brand.

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**Access your specialty narrator character.**  
Unlike documentary narration, you've already created 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.

**Use stage skills**  
Think of this type of work as commanding the attention of a single rapt audience member.

**Enjoy the script**  
Take advantage of your existing knowledge, and roll with the content of the script.

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**Execute your specialty narration audition.**  
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 your storytelling skills a great workout with the descriptive words in the script.

**Your research is easy**  
Because you have skills, you're already expert at pronunciation, usage, syntax, cultural references, and traditions.

**Immerse yourself**  
To immerse the viewer or listener in your world, immerse yourself in your existing expertise.

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# Voicing Specialty Narration VO Class Notes

**Specialty narration: world-class practices.**  
There are four basic standards of specialty narration performance excellence.



**01** Take it slow  
Authority is built on clarity and a manageable pace. And your expertise is your biggest advantage.

**02** Over-enunciate. Slightly.  
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** Heightened emotions  
Create a connection with the listener or viewer based on your investment in the content.

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**Lesson 03**  
Your audience of one, your demos, and mastering the craft.

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**Defining your audience of one.**  
Here are four questions you want to ask yourself.

**Is he more or less expert than you?**  
Is he a beginner? Experienced? An expert as well?

**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?



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**Zeroing in on your audience of one.**

Is she the biggest fan of this subject matter?  
What side of controversial or divisive issues does she take?  
Tell the story **only** to this one person.

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**“**  
**Be as natural as the copy calls for:**  
Take your cue from the producer on how “presentational” you need to be.  
**”**



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**Mastering your craft: study/emulate the masters.**  
Watch the credits, find the names of the people who are booking, and study their work.

 <p><b>Watch your favorite shows.</b> Watch financial shows, procedurals, medical investigations, science and technical shows, whatever you're most expert in, then stretch.</p>	 <p><b>Imitate your fellow artist.</b> Talk back to the TV. Repeat what you hear. Imitate boldly. Remember, you're an expert too.</p>	 <p><b>Strip and create.</b> Strip away their artifice and create your own style from theirs and all others.</p>
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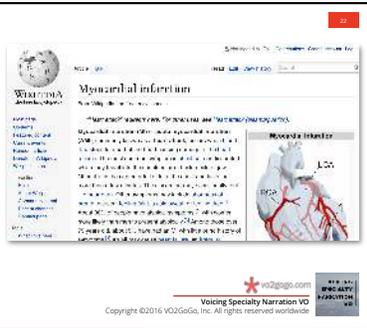
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# Voicing Specialty Narration VO Class Notes

## “ PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE:

Use Wikipedia to find articles that match your expertise. Make the not-so-great writing you'll find oh-so-great. ”



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



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“ 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. ”



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**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.**

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**Your specialty narration demos: simpler than most.**  
Most VO demos are a minute long or less. Not so with specialty narration.

**You don't need a producer for this demo.**  
This is one demo that relies more on content than effects.

**Keep it simple for specialty narration.**  
Your demos don't need music and actualities.

**Length: 2-3 minutes, with one segment.**  
Your demos need to show experience and authority.

**Make as many demos as you have specialties.**  
Different areas of expertise should have different demos.



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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.**  
Next steps: take what you've learned, explore and learn more, then put that all to work.

- + **Watch every information show you relate to or have expertise in.**
- + **Get to know the people getting the work: watch the credits.**
- + **Find relevant articles on Wikipedia. Make that crap sound great.**
- + **Make as many specialty narration demos as you have mad skills.**

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**?**  
**Questions**  
Fire away. Or send them to [david@vo2gogo.com](mailto:david@vo2gogo.com).

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**☕**  
**Pick a clip to record.**

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