

Between the Lines

This is a complete classroom podcast project plan for “**Between the Lines**” — a collaborative, discussion-based literary podcast that helps students identify and interpret literary devices through debate, analysis, and conversation. This version is written in clean, print-ready prose (no icons or bullets), suitable for classroom handouts or digital posting.

Focus: Literary Devices and Interpretation

Project Type: Roundtable Literary Discussion Podcast

Length: 3–4 class periods

Product: 6–8 minute group podcast episode

Mode: Small group (3–5 students)

Learning Objectives

Students will:

1. Identify and explain the use of literary devices in various genres.
2. Analyze how authors use language to create meaning and develop themes.
3. Engage in discussion and debate about literary interpretation.
4. Communicate ideas clearly and collaboratively in a recorded format.

Standards Alignment (CCSS):

RL.9-10.4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases, including figurative and connotative meanings, and analyze the cumulative impact of word choices.

RL.9-10.2 – Determine central ideas or themes and analyze their development.

SL.9-10.1 – Initiate and participate effectively in collaborative discussions.

SL.9-10.4 – Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly and logically.

Project Overview

Between the Lines invites students to become literary analysts and conversationalists. Each episode focuses on one literary device—such as irony, symbolism, imagery, motif, tone, or allusion—and explores how it operates within a selected text. The format is a roundtable discussion in which group members unpack examples, interpret meanings, and debate multiple viewpoints.

The project emphasizes close reading, evidence-based discussion, and interpretive thinking. By the end, students will not only recognize literary devices but also articulate how they shape a reader’s understanding.

Session Breakdown

Session 1 – Selecting the Device and Text

Goal: Identify the focus and prepare examples.

Activities:

Groups select one literary device to explore and choose a short text (a poem, short story, or excerpt from a novel or play) where that device is clearly used. Students conduct a close reading, noting at least three examples of the device in context. They analyze how each instance contributes to tone, theme, or characterization.

Each group completes a planning sheet that includes:

- The selected literary device and its definition.
- The chosen text and author.
- At least three direct quotations where the device appears.
- Preliminary interpretations for each example.

Example Pairings:

Irony – “The Gift of the Magi” by O. Henry

Symbolism – “The Scarlet Letter” by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Allusion – “The Waste Land” by T.S. Eliot

Motif – “Their Eyes Were Watching God” by Zora Neale Hurston

Imagery – “Ode to a Nightingale” by John Keats

Tone – “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe

Session 2 – Scriptwriting and Discussion Planning

Goal: Develop structure and discussion prompts.

Activities:

Groups outline a conversation plan rather than a traditional script to maintain spontaneity. They decide on an introduction, discussion flow, and conclusion.

Suggested structure:

1. Introduction (30–45 seconds): Introduce the device, text, and purpose of the episode.
2. Explanation (1–2 minutes): Define the device and describe how it functions in the selected text.
3. Evidence and Debate (3–4 minutes): Discuss examples, challenge interpretations, and respond to differing viewpoints.
4. Reflection (1 minute): Summarize conclusions and pose one open-ended question for the listener.

Example Excerpt:

Speaker 1: “Let’s talk about irony in O. Henry’s *The Gift of the Magi*. The ending twist seems simple, but what makes it powerful?”

Speaker 2: “It’s ironic because their sacrifices cancel each other out—but that same irony deepens the story’s theme of love over materialism.”

Speaker 3: “I think O. Henry uses situational irony not just for surprise, but to criticize how society defines value. The gifts are useless, yet the love behind them is priceless.”

Students finalize key talking points and assign roles for the recording.

Session 3 – Recording and Production

Goal: Record and edit the podcast.

Activities:

Students record their discussion using phones, tablets, or school devices. Free software such as Audacity, Soundtrap, or GarageBand can be used for editing. They should focus on natural tone, clear articulation, and smooth transitions.

Each group includes a brief intro and outro with the episode title, group names, and the literary device discussed. Optional background music may be added during introduction and closing only.

Suggested timing (6–8 minutes total):

Introduction – 0:30

Explanation – 1:30

Discussion and Debate – 4:00

Reflection and Closing – 1:00

Group Roles

Role	Responsibilities
Discussion Leader	Introduces the episode, guides the conversation, ensures focus
Device Expert	Defines and explains the literary device using textual evidence
Text Specialist	Brings in quotations and connects them to theme or character
Interpreter	Challenges and expands on group ideas, introducing alternative viewpoints
Producer	Manages recording quality, editing, and submission of the final product

Groups may adjust or combine roles depending on size.

Suggested Texts

- “The Raven” – Edgar Allan Poe (tone, repetition)
 “Ozymandias” – Percy Bysshe Shelley (irony, imagery)
 “Sonnet 18” – William Shakespeare (metaphor, personification)
 “The Lottery” – Shirley Jackson (symbolism, irony)
 “A Rose for Emily” – William Faulkner (foreshadowing, point of view)
 “The Road Not Taken” – Robert Frost (metaphor, ambiguity)
 “The Yellow Wallpaper” – Charlotte Perkins Gilman (imagery, symbolism)

Assessment Rubric (20 points)

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Proficient (4)	Developing (3)	Beginning (1–2)
Literary Analysis	Deep, insightful discussion with textual support	Clear and accurate analysis	Some understanding but limited depth	Misinterprets or oversimplifies
Use of Evidence	Integrates multiple strong quotations	Includes relevant evidence	Limited or unclear references	Little or no evidence
Collaboration and Discussion	Balanced participation and strong interaction	Mostly balanced participation	Uneven discussion or minimal engagement	Limited or one-sided discussion
Interpretive Thinking	Demonstrates multiple perspectives and nuanced reasoning	Offers thoughtful commentary	Shows limited perspective	Lacks interpretation or depth
Presentation Quality	Clear, polished, and engaging delivery	Mostly clear with minor pacing issues	Some clarity or pacing problems	Difficult to follow or poorly edited

Extension Options

Create a “Literary Device Series” where each group covers a different device and episodes are combined into one classroom anthology.

Invite students to record a “Follow-Up Debate” episode in which they respond to peers’ interpretations.

Have groups compare how the same device functions across genres—for example, irony in both poetry and drama.

Publish final episodes on the class website or school media page as a “Student Literary Podcast Collection.”