

Our Critiques are based off of the STAA Pyramid. Our process involves giving the clip one passive listen while washing the dishes, cooking dinner, or doing something else like an average listener.

What is your first impression:

A few things jump out to me on first listen. First, and this is a mild nitpick, but there's several seconds of dead air before your demo begins. Don't make me wait around 5-8 seconds to hear your voice – your voice is the reason I'm listening, so I want to hear it right away.

There's some good storytelling being done right off the bat. Instantly, I know who's playing, why it matters, and that it should be a good matchup of two successful teams. That hooks me, as a listener. I got a little lost on your breakdown of the stats (points per game), so that could have been a little clearer.

From there, on first run listening to the game action, I'm not hearing a lot of identification of who has the ball. Since we're not privy to you reading the starting lineups, we have no idea who plays for who, and I was frequently lost as to who had the ball and where.

Felt like I heard the score a fair amount, the time maybe not so much. While in the flow of the game you were able to reset your keys to the game and continue with the storytelling aspect, which I like.

So, to sum up: on first, passive listen, I think the storytelling is promising but the nuts and bolts of describing the action is a little sporadic. Let's dive in...

The Basics:

Next, a deep dive into the audio. Take notes that include how many times they said the damn score, whether the ball is being pinpointed, and whether the picture is being painted descriptively.

Game action begins at: 1:15

Time: 1:31, 2:02, 5:42, 5:58, 6:44, 7:31, 7:51, 9:10

Score: 1:26, 2:50, 3:20, 5:40, 6:00, 6:42, 6:56, 7:30, 8:12, 9:16

As you can notice, a few large gaps here, especially with regards to time. You got better as the clip went along, but there's rarely a reason to not mention time and score together, and going 2:20 without mentioning the score in a basketball game can't happen.

Lot of confusion right off the bat – seems like things got moving a little too quickly for you after that first made basket, which I as a listener have no idea about other than who scored it and for what team. That's the most important part, sure, but did he lay it up, float it in... what happened?

I also like to hear who's going what direction – right to left, left to right – I think that's essential for a radio broadcast to paint a clearer picture.

“...gets to the short corner” - which one? “John Doe puts up the shot” - from where? “Missed” - how? And what team got the rebound? I want to know who has the ball EVERY time there's a change in possession.

The basket I heard at the 3:20 mark or so – I had no idea who had the ball or which team had scored until I heard you say the score. I was completely unaware there had been a change in possession. You HAVE to tell your listener if a different team ends up with the ball. You can't just rely on them knowing the names of the players and being able to freely associate them.

Basket at 3:40 – I think I know who scored it, but no score reset afterwards. Score resets after baskets are the easiest thing in the world to do. Don't miss one.

“Pinballed up and through the net” at 4:29 – love that vocab, very descriptive! But no score reset afterwards.

Getting a little better with identification of possession as this clip goes on

Lot of repetitive vocab for passes – I'm hearing 'gives it to' a lot

The locating of the ball is very inconsistent, as is the locating of each shot. This is vital and there's not enough of it here.

Basket at 7:30, no idea which team scored it.

Free throw at 9:08 – 'off the back of the rim' – it's easier to have more room to describe free throws, but I want to hear this on every shot, particularly misses

Storytelling:

Is the game being advanced as a story as opposed to a linear narrative? Please include examples.

“This... is not how North High wanted to start” - I'm sure that's true, but recap exactly what they've done that has contributed to the poor start (turnovers, missed shots, etc)

“North High has to find a way to slow down South High” - again, this in and of itself is good, but go further, tell me how you think they can do that, or who you think can help get them back in the game.

Again, when you tell me “This is not what North High needs but this is exactly what South High wants” - why is that? What is it that North High doesn't need? This is a good place to reset the score too.

“South High wants this first seed” - excellent reset from the top of the broadcast about the stakes of the game, and you tell us why the first seed is important

Who is important? Are characters being developed inside the story. Please include examples.

This is something you could have done at the top of the broadcast. "Led by (so-and-so's) scoring, South High is...." or "South High has ridden the hot shooting of (so-and-so)..." Particularly since we seem to have missed the lineup announcements, by the time the game action starts, the names are just names to me and nothing more. You fleshed the teams out well, but didn't flesh out the characters in this story.

When new players check into the game, try and tell us something about them – are they guards, wings, posts? Big guys, scorers, rebounders? Are the teams going bigger or smaller with their lineups or are the subs like-for-like?

Advanced:

Are they recapping the action? Examples.

"Two buckets... he's getting North High rolling" - I like this

A very nice job as I noted earlier of resetting the stakes of the game, why those stakes are important, and bringing back your keys to the game. Sometimes those keys come out early and we never hear about them again. Well done.

Is the voice being used as an instrument. Are inflections, volume, and intensity being used appropriately? Examples.

There's a little inflection here, but not a whole lot. Those moments seemed to increase as the clip went on.

Is the broadcaster showing the proper amount of energy for the moment? Examples.

Energy picked up a little bit during a wild scramble for the ball around the 4:00 mark, especially with the "great pass"

Made it very clear with the energy and tone of your voice that North High was dominating

Are they doing the basics: rank 1-5 with 5 being great and 1 being poor:

I'm scoring this a 2 out of 5. Time and score were too sporadic, though they got better as the clip went along. So did ID of ball location and possession, but again, it wasn't nearly consistent enough. Some good vocab, but the more you identify ball location and what's happening around the ball the more opportunities you have to expand that vocab.

Are they telling a story and building characters: rank 1-5 with 5 being great and 1 being poor:

I'm giving you a 2 out of 5. Really I'm splitting the difference here. I think your storytelling as it regards the team, the game, and the tournament is probably worthy of a 3. You give us good, clear understanding of what the game means right away. As the game unfolds you are attempting to move that story along, but I'd like to hear more details rather than just generalities. Your character building, however, is a 1. I still had zero feel for who the star players were, what anybody's role was, how anybody had played during the tournament, etc... they were all just names.

Advanced techniques including using voice as an instrument, recapping, and using energy: rank 1-5 with 5 being great and 1 being poor:

I'm giving you a 2 out of 5 here. I think this was something that got better once you got a little more comfortable with the game speed. There were some efforts to increase your energy and have inflections in your tone of voice. Still, I think this can get a lot better too as you're more able to stay with the pace of the game.