Shifting to a Podcast

This project is designed for a First-Year Writing course, but can be utilized in other writing and literature courses as well. Earlier in the semester, students are tasked with developing an inquiry into a topic which has previously been explored in the course. After creating an annotated research bibliography, they write an academic research paper concerning this inquiry.

The *Shifting to a Podcast* project then asks students to turn this research paper into a 10-15 minute podcast. This requires students to shift their rhetorical situation from writing for an academic community to writing for the general public and make necessary changes in their focus of and approach to the inquiry. Projects in which students simply read their papers are not accepted.

This project works especially well as a group project. All students' voices are required to be heard on the recording.

Scaffolding assignments:
- A self-analysis of the previously submitted research paper which explains what the student thinks went right and what went wrong, what could be cut and what could be expanded. This concludes with a proposal for the podcast project.
- If this is a group project, students are required to write an additional proposal which explains whose research paper will be the basis of the podcast project.
- Because a podcast is not simply a recording, but also a soundscape, students are required to create three original recordings of music, background noise, sound effects, etc. that they could potentially use in their project.
- Additionally, a podcast "script" with a basic outline of what topics will be covered at which points, which sounds might be used, and an estimate on the length of time the podcast will run. Students are encouraged to not simply read off of a detailed script for the final project, but create a more casual conversation; the assignment here is provided so that they have a basic plan for the recording.

With submission of the podcast, students are also asked to submit a joint Works Cited page, as well as a joint Statement of Goals and Choices. This latter requirement is adapted from Jodi Shipka's "Negotiating Rhetorical, Material, Methodological, and Technological Difference: Evaluating Multimodal Designs" (2009); it is a reflective piece which asks students to explain their goals in the project and describe the various choices they made to accomplish these goals, as well as a self-assessment.