

Communication PRinciples for Principals

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PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW WITH ARMED WITH SCIENCE



IDEA

Be sure that you have parent permission forms on file for all students participating in the Armed with Science blogs and blog talk radio interviews. This is important since this information will be accessible on the web, and will probably be reposted or retweeted on other websites.

This issue of Communication PRinciples for Principals focuses on the Department of Defense's (DoD's) "Armed with Science" blog. In the past, this blog has worked with the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) students and teacher highlight some of their accomplishments and explorations into science and math technology.

If your school is selected to participate in this program, it is important to know how to prepare for an Armed with Science blog session and be aware of what questions may be asked, what to expect during the blog session and the best way to prepare your teachers and students for the interview.

What is "Armed with Science"?

"Armed with Science" is a blog series that is part of DoD Live, which is owned by the DoD Emerging Media Directorate. "Armed with Science" highlights the importance of science and technology within the Department of Defense, connects military scientists and engineers with the public, and experiments with new social technologies. Their efforts were recognized with the 2009 Award for Publication Excellence (APEX) and the PR News Nonprofit PR Award. The podcast was downloaded nearly 200,000 times in its first year in 2009.

The blog is an "experiment in progress," exploring new social technologies to better engage the public and continually evolving to meet the needs of our audience.

How Can I Showcase Our Science Success on "Armed with Science?"

Teachers and students can be featured on "Armed with Science" in one of two ways. Either the DoD Emerging Media Directorate will contact your school directly, or they will contact DoDEA headquarters about an idea for an "Armed with Science" blog based on information in recent news articles or press releases.



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Visit the DoDEA website
for more information.

<http://www.dodea.edu>

If you want to see your science program showcased in an “Armed with Science” blog you can also contact your area Public Affairs Office or the PAO office at headquarters to make us aware of any science related activities your school. We will then pass the information on to “Armed with Science.”

What Should You Expect During an “Armed with Science” Interview Session?

“Armed with Science” is comprised of two different media outlets: a blog and blog talk radio. The blog posting will be featured online on the “Armed with Science” blog. This part is usually submitted via a word document file to a contact at the DoD Emerging Media Directorate and has a 300-500 word count; of course participants can write more than the word count.

Recently, two DoDEA teachers who received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching (PAEMST) participated in an “Armed with Science” blog.

Their postings can be found at: <http://www.science.dodlive.mil/?s=dod+smola+kelly>

The “Armed with Science” blog talk radio broadcast is a talk radio show. The show features 30-45 minute telephonic interviews with guests about science related research and activities or and their current research in science. The questions can come from a variety of sources; from the DoD Emerging Media Directorate or from other bloggers or journalists. The show is usually 30 to 45 minutes and many of the interviews are conducted via telephone interview.

DoDEA teacher and Director of the European Regional Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSJS), Dr. Lynn Smith, was featured on “Armed with Science’s” blog talk radio to give an overview of the program and how it encourages students to expand their learning of science and the humanities.

This broadcast can be found at: <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/armedwithscience/2010/03/17/episode-59-the-junior-science-and-humanities-sympo>

If you want to see your science program showcased in an Armed with Science blog you can also contact your area Public Affairs Office or the PAO office at headquarters to make us aware of any science related activities occurring in your school.

TIPS



Some Important things to Remember Before an Armed with Science Interview

» Get Parent Permission

Be sure that you have parent permission forms on file for all students participating in the “Armed with Science” blogs and blog talk radio interviews. This is particularly important since this information will be accessible on the web, and will probably be reposted or retweeted on other websites. Even if the permission slips are on file you may also want to call, email, or send a letter home to the parents of the children that will be participating.

» Practice in Advance

Encourage participants to think about some questions that could potentially be asked during the blog talk radio broadcast. This will help get participants thinking ahead and may also help alleviate any nervousness they may feel about participating in the program.

These additional tips will help your participants in writing a blog post or if they are being interview on blog talk radio.

[Interview tips from: <http://www.udel.edu/research/presenting/media.html> and <http://www.smallbusinessnotes.com/marketing-your-business/preparing-for-tv-amp--radio-interviews.html>]

» Stay on Message

Know the points that you want to convey and stick to them.

» Avoid Getting Sidetracked

You can accomplish this by returning to your key points. It may also help to create an outline of your main talking points to help you write. You may also want to keep your talking points nearby as you do the interview.

» Stay Calm

This may seem difficult but it is important to stay calm particularly if you are asked a question that you may not like since the reporter might be trying to get a strong reaction out of you.

» Avoid Speaking in a Monotone

Since you will only be heard over the radio it is best to avoid speaking in a monotone voice. Professionals recommend smiling to animate the voice. You may be interviewed over the phone or a mobile device, or in the studio at a radio station. In a studio situation, the sound engineer will do a voice check before the interview starts. Be sure to maintain the same distance from the microphone throughout the interview to ensure that your volume is consistent.

» Ask About the Length of the Interview

This will give you an idea of how long your answers should be; you would hate to run out of time and not get to talk to all of your talking points. Knowing the length of the interview will also help to keep you on-topic.

» Ask If the Interview is Live

Live interviews require a bit more preparation and practice and you have less room to make mistakes than if an interview is taped and then broadcast. Check in advance.

» If the Interview is not over the Phone...

You may want to email a copy of your biography to your contact beforehand or bring a copy of your biography with you if you meet them for the interview.

» Ask About Air Times and Dates

It is okay to ask when a broadcast will air or when a blog post will post. After all, it is exciting to be interviewed.

You can reference [Communications PRinciples for Principals' Principals Tip Sheet](http://www.dodea.edu/pressroom/prPrincipals/tipSheet.pdf) for more helpful tips on being interviewed: <http://www.dodea.edu/pressroom/prPrincipals/tipSheet.pdf>

Remember, it is a great honor to be selected to be on “Armed with Science”. It means that your research or science program is unique and interesting. Congratulations and best of luck with your interview!

If you are participating in “Armed with Science” and have any additional questions feel free to contact your area or a headquarters Public Affairs Officer (PAO) or visit “Armed with Science’s” blog, Twitter, or Facebook page for more information:

- » <http://www.science.dodlive.mil>
- » <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/armedwithscience>
- » <http://www.twitter.com/ArmedwScience>
- » <http://www.facebook.com/ArmedwithScience>