

The Raven Radio Theater Presents!

Talkin' Tobacco

A "Hands-On" Radio Drama Experience!



Written by Joe McHugh

Introduction

Mr. Tobacco is the feature in this news show setting of "Talkin' Tobacco. He answers questions about the history of tobacco-use and the health dangers that arise from using tobacco. Talkin' Tobacco is set up in four distinct scenes.

For step-by-step instructions on how to perform a radio play with students, refer to the "Radio Theater Cookbook, Recipes for the Imagination," available from the Raven Radio Theater of the Air! This script is published with the following materials and information to help you prepare your students for their own radio drama presentation.

Mp3 Playlist - lists the Mp3 music and sound effect segments that is included with your script, their duration, and instructions.

Character List - tells you which characters are in the play, how many lines each one has, and which pages of the script to duplicate for each character.

Sound Effects Suggestions - ideas for finding or building the mechanical sound effects you will need to perform the play.

"Get-Ready" Cards - a master set of cue cards that you can copy onto card stock and use during the performance to cue sound effects crew.

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The Raven Radio Theater offers a wide variety of scripts and books on radio theater and storytelling. If you would like more information or see our catalog on-line:

www.ravenradiotheater.com

Talkin' Tobacco Character List

"Face the Press" Interview Team

Mr. Tobacco	86 Lines	Tobacco plant being interviewed on television
Ann Walters	24 Lines	Television news show interviewer
Anita Jackson	8 Lines	Reporter for Newsbreak Magazine
Maria Alvarez	7 Lines	Television commentator
Sy Ripton	4 Lines	Reporter for World Marker News

Spaniards Exploring in the Americas

Captain	22 Lines	Leader of the Spanish explorers
Priest	21 Lines	Catholic Priest trying to convert the native peoples
Sergeant	10 Lines	
Juan	8 Lines	

Invention of the Cigarette Rolling Machine

Hogstead	25 Lines	Owner of a profitable tobacco company
Ernest	24 Lines	Inventor of a cigarette rolling machine
William	20 Lines	Mr. Hogstead's son
Hank	2 Lines	Assistant to Ernest the inventor

1940s Movie Set

Sam	22 Lines	Actor, Humphrey Bogart character
Victor Orloff	20 Lines	Movie Director
Marilyn	15 Lines	Actress
Woman's Voice	9 Lines	Informant over the telephone
Assistant	7 Lines	Movie set assistant for the director
Cameraman	1 Line	Movie set cameraman

Operation

Hanley	45 Lines	Lead surgeon performing an operation
Renetti	11 Lines	Assisting surgeon
Riley	10 Lines	Nurse assisting with the operation
Robinson	6 Lines	Medical school student observing the operation
Kim	4 Lines	Medical school student observing the operation
Hernandez	1 Line	Anesthesiologist

Directions for Duplicating Scripts for “Talkin’ Tobacco”

A major concern when producing a radio play is to minimize extraneous noise such as the sound created by the actors as they turn the pages of the script. It is recommended that the actors be given only those pages necessary for performing their own part(s) in the play. Whenever an actor’s part is near the beginning of a page, the previous page should also be provided so that he or she can be ready for the cue.

Make only single-sided copies, as double-sided copies are difficult for the actors to follow without creating unwanted pauses in the story.

Color highlighting each actor’s lines on their pages is also helpful.

Scripts are not needed for the sound effects crew.

Following is a list of the page numbers to be duplicated for each part.

Mr. Tobacco - entire script

Walters - pages 1, 2, 18, 19

Jackson - pages 1, 10

Alvarez - pages 2, 6, 14, 15

Ripton - pages 2,3

Sergeant - pages 3, 4, 5

Priest - pages 3, 4, 5

Juan - pages 3, 4, 5

Captain - pages 4, 5, 6

Ernest - pages 6, 7, 8, 9

Hank - pages 6, 7

Hogstead - pages 7, 8, 9

William - pages 7, 8, 9

Sam - pages 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

Marilyn - pages 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

Woman’s Voice - pages 10, 11

Orloff - pages 11, 12, 13, 14

Assistant - pages 11, 12, 13, 14

Cameraman - page 12

Riley - pages 15, 16, 17, 18

Hanley - pages 15, 16, 17, 18

Robinson - pages 16, 17

Kim - pages 16, 17

Renetti - pages 16, 17, 18

Hernandez - page 17

Announcer - page 19

Mp3 Playlist

With the music/sound effects Mp3 files for “Talkin’ Tobacco”, you will be able to add audio texture and excitement to your radio theater production. The Mp3 playlist includes in sequence the music and sound effects selections listed below as they are numbered in the script.

1. News show opening music :49
2. Swamp 4:58
3. Machine shop 5:07
4. Heavy rain 5:04
5. News show ending music 2:00

CLIPPITY-CLOP! SPLASH! PLOP! CRASH! BANG! WHOOSH!

Sound Effects

Footsteps - - Walk in place or hold a pair of shoes with the hands and “walk” on a table. It is important to get a realistic rhythm to the footsteps. If walking in place, a “heel to toe” step is best but takes practice to master. For footsteps indoors use hard-soled shoes (leather are best) on a piece of plywood. For footsteps on gravel use a tray with medium to small gravel on it.

Teletype - This effect can add realism to the news show format. Using an old mechanical typewriter, randomly hit just two keys with the left and right index fingers. (Using more keys may cause the typewriter to jam.) Remove the return bell, if possible, and start from the beginning of the carriage return to have enough time for the effect.

Scene Transition - This effect can be made a number of ways and aids the listener in traveling from one scene to another. An effective ways to do this is with a bell tree. You can make one by cutting 1/4” copper tubing in different lengths, drilling holes in one end, and then hanging them with strong thread, longest to shortest, from a piece of wood. Brush your fingers lightly across the tubes to introduce a new scene.

Campfire - An old standby of radio theater, this effect is created by gently crumpling a piece of cellophane. Different pieces of cellophane create different sounds so experiment to get just the right “crackle” for a campfire, grass fire, or house fire. You can add to this effect if you want by taking a small whisk broom and running your fingers along the top of the bristles while someone else snaps a thin piece of wood from time to time.

Horse Approaching (Hoofbeats) - Take two halves of an empty coconut shell and drum them rhythmically against the desired surface such as wood for a drawbridge or bridge, flagstone for cobblestones, and gravel. You can also cover the coconuts with cloth to imitate hoof beats on a soft surface. Cloth covered toilet plungers can be used also.

Gold coins - Simulate the sound of coins by using different sizes of metal washers from the hardware store. Drop them from above into a hand held against the stomach or into a metal tray for a cash register.

Pouring - Pour a large glass of water into a wash pan near a mic.

Oil Can - To make this effect you want to find the old-style oil can; the kind that squirts oil when you push your thumb on the bottom of the can. It makes a very recognizable sound even when empty.

Door - There was always a framed, half-size door in all the old radio drama studios. Once you build one or have a parent or local business donate one, it can be used over and over again in future radio drama productions. Another solution is simply to use a real door close enough to be picked up by a microphone.

Pouring Tobacco - Use some dry loose herbs or crushed breakfast cereal and pour it slowly into a metal pie plate to simulate the sound of blended tobacco.

Crank - Any mechanical crank can be used for the crank on the cigarette rolling machine model. A large, deep-sea fishing reel turned slowly works great.

Match - There are two distinctive sounds of lighting a match, the scratch and the flare of the flame. Use a large wooden kitchen match and draw it slowly across the striker about 6 inches from the mic.

Thunder - Go to a sheet metal shop and try different pieces of scrap metal until you get one that makes exactly the sound you want (18 gauge works well). Bolt a piece of wood along the top and a piece of leather for a handle to the bottom. You can hang the thunder-sheet or have it held up by two people while a third shakes it. (Be careful when laying it down afterwards you don't make any unwanted noise.) Students who handle the thunder-sheet should wear leather work gloves as sheet metal often has sharp edges.

Another way to make thunder is to buy some lead shot from a sporting/hunting goods store ("OO-buck" is best). Put a handful into a heavy balloon and blow it up. Shake the balloon next to the mic to simulate thunder. A little practice will get it right. If you shake it too hard the balloon may break.

Ice Cubes - Find or make three wooden blocks the size of ice cubes. Drop the blocks, one after another, into a large glass close to a mic and fill with water. Swirl the blocks around to continue the illusion of someone drinking an iced drink.

Telephone - Use a windup alarm clock, the kind with the bells on top. Wind the alarm but not the clock itself! Set the alarm and time to the same time and pull out the alarm stem whenever you need the telephone to "ring." For dialing, simply use an old rotary telephone. Pick-ups and hang-ups can also be done with a real telephone.

Cigarette Lighter - A distinctive sound is made by the old Zippo-style metal lighters. Find one empty of lighter fluid and flip it open and turn the flint wheel with you thumb repeatedly.

Scene Board - You can make a simple scene board with two pieces of wood joined by a hinge or you can take a regular clip board and just snap the clip at the right time.

Crash - Experiment with different items and use your imagination! One idea is to use a metal cookie container with the lid and add nuts, bolts, bottle-tops, and rocks. Shake or drop the container when the crash is needed.

Surgical Masks - Use inexpensive, disposable dust masks from the hardware store.

EKG Monitor - The background “beep” “beep” of a heart monitor can be done vocally with the mouth or with some electronic device or toy that beeps when you press a button.

Ventilator - This sound can be made with a fireplace bellows or an accordion with only the air key held open.

Incision - This effect can be made by taking a piece of fish and cutting against the bone with a knife.

Suction - Use a baster or straw in a pan of water to create this effect.

Sawing Bone - Take a hacksaw and cut into a soup bone to simulate a surgeon’s saw. Remember to have a beginning cut made in the bone beforehand so that the teeth of the saw don’t slip on the smooth surface of the bone when its time to make the effect.

Teachers' Glossary

Nicotiana Tabacum - Scientific name for type of tobacco used in modern cigarettes and other tobacco products. Named after French Ambassador to Portugal, Jean Nicot, who introduced tobacco to his own country in 1560.

Nicotiana Rustica - Scientific name for a less-potent and harsher tasting tobacco found throughout North and South America and often used now in Oriental tobacco products.

Emphysema - A debilitating disease which destroys the lungs' ability to inhale and exhale properly. Often fatal, this disease has increased 700% since 1950 because of smoking.

Chronic Bronchitis - A progressive condition in which mucus builds up in the lungs and bronchial passages. A "CB" sufferer must cough constantly to clear the lungs.

Stroke - A sudden blockage of blood to the brain often caused by a blood clot resulting in paralysis, slurred speech, or death. The nicotine in tobacco causes blood to clot more.

Arsenic - A poisonous, grayish-white element.

Benzene - A mixture of various hydrocarbons often used for cleaning dyeing cloth.

Formaldehyde - A colorless, toxic, water-soluble gas used chiefly in a liquid solution as a disinfectant and preservative.

Nightshade - Any of various plants of the genus, Solanum. Because it is poisonous, these plants are often called "deadly nightshade."

Fountain of Youth - A mythical spring believed to cure illness and restore youth sought in the Caribbean and Florida by Ponce de Leon and other Spanish explorers.

Petum - Ancient name given to tobacco in Brazil.

Zemi - Ancient name given to tobacco in the Caribbean.

Uppowac - Ancient name given to tobacco in Virginia.

Calabash - A dried, hollow shell of a gourd used as a container in the Caribbean.

Pineapple - Native to the Caribbean, this fruit, "ananas comosus" was first offered to Columbus by Carib Indians on Guadalupe in 1493.

Iguana - A genus of lizard of which the "arboreal" is edible.

Dominicans - A Christian mendicant religious order founded by St. Dominic, a Spanish priest, in 1215. Dressed in a white tunic and scapular with a large black cloak and hood they were nicknamed the “black friars.” They often harshly criticized the Spanish for their brutal treatment and enslavement of the native Carib and Arawak.

Arawak - A native people who inhabited the islands of the Bahamas, the Greater Antilles, and Trinidad. As described by the Spanish, the Arawak were peaceful, gentle, hospitable, friendly, and ceremonious. Both men and women painted their bodies and ornamented them with jewelry made of gold, stone bone and shell. Unfortunately, it was their gold rings, necklaces, and masks that proved their undoing by attracting the attention of the Spanish who enslaved them to work the gold mines located in the island interiors. Removed from the protein-rich fish and shellfish of the coastal areas, the Arawak were in time exterminated through overwork, malnutrition, and exposure to European and African diseases, such as influenza, small pox, measles, and malaria.

Carib - A native people who inhabited the Virgin Islands, many of the lesser Antilles, and the northwestern tip of Trinidad. Much more warlike than their Arawak neighbors, the Carib practiced a religious rite in which the bravest warriors captured in battle were tortured, killed, and then eaten. The English term, “cannibal,” is derived from their Spanish name, “caribal.” At first the Carib were friendly and provided food to starving adventurers but turned hostile only after being attacked by the Europeans.

Cassava Bread - An important, nutritious food crop made from a tuberous root called the “bitter yucca” which provides an abundant supply of starch and sugar and can be stored for months without spoiling.

Hatuey - An Arawak chief who fled to Cuba from Hispaniola with a small band of refugees and was pursued and captured by Spanish troops under Captain Diego Velazquez in 1511. He was burned at the stake and is honored to this day by the Cuban people.

Bartolome Columbus - Admiral Christopher Columbus’ brother who took over as governor of Hispaniola in 1496 and founded the city of Santa Domingo on the south coast of Hispaniola. A corrupt and arrogant ruler, he was sent back to Spain in chains along with his more famous brother in 1500.

Hispaniola - The original Spanish name for an island in the West Indies comprising modern day Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Heretic - A name given to anyone who does not conform to an established religious doctrine and used by the Spanish toward the English after they broke with the Roman Catholic Church.

Plug - A hard square of compressed tobacco leaf often sweetened with with licorice, rum, sugar, or honey. A portion was cut from the “plug” with a knife and either chewed or crumbled up and put into a pipe to smoke.

James Bonsack - An inventor from Virginia who developed a machine for manufacturing cigarettes in 1883. Before machines, cigarettes were rolled by hand by dexterous Polish and Russian women, or “cigarette girls” as they were called.

J.B. Duke - A tobacco manufacturer from North Carolina who was the first to use machines to manufacture cigarettes. His company became the American Tobacco Company.

Blended - The practice of combining several different types of tobacco to achieve a certain characteristic or taste.

Anesthesiologist - A physician who specializes in making a patient insensible to pain and other sensation by using certain drugs.

Surgery Rotation - A training period at a hospital for medical students.

Squamous Cell Cancer - A locally spreading, non-pigmented skin cancer which can be caused by tobacco use.

Esophagus - The fleshy tube connecting the mouth with the stomach.

Chemotherapy - The use of specific toxic chemicals to kill cancerous cells, often with severe side-effects such as nausea and hair loss.

Mandible - The bone of the lower jaw.

Tumor - An abnormal or diseased swelling or growth of new tissue in the body.

Lesions - Any localized structural change in the body.

Periosteum - The thin connective tissue surrounding a bone from the Latin words, “peri,” meaning on or around and, “osteum,” meaning bone.

TYPEWRITER

MAP

Wait for Cue!

BELL TREE

FIRE

WOOD SNAPPED

FOOTSTEPS (Gravel) **2 cues**

POURING

PLATES &

SILVERWARE

**HOOFBEATS
BRIDLE**

Wait for Cue!

FOOTSTEPS (Gravel)

Wait for Cue!

2 Cues

PLATES

POURING

COINS

Wait for Cue!

FOOTSTEPS (Gravel)

BELL TREE

**BELL TREE
BANGING METAL
FILE ON METAL**

Wait for Cue!

FOOTSTEPS

TAPPING ON METAL ⁷ OIL CAN

Wait for Cue!

FOOTSTEPS (2 People)

Wait for Cue!

2 cues

DOOR (Open & Close)

POURING TOBACCO ⁸ PAPER SHEETS

Wait for Cue!

CRANK

Wait for Cue!

MATCH

BELL TREE

BELL TREE

THUNDER

FOOTSTEPS (Hard Surface)
ICE CUBES
POURING

Wait for Cue!

TELEPHONE (2 Rings)

TELEPHONE (Hang-up)

Wait for Cue!

THUNDER

Wait for Cue!

LIGHTER

CLAPPING
SCENE BOARD

Wait for Cue!

TELEPHONE (Hang-up)
THUNDER

Wait for Cue!

MATCH

SCENE BOARD

Wait for Cue!

TELEPHONE (Hang-up)
THUNDER

Wait for Cue!

CRASH!

FOOTSTEPS (Disgusted)

FOOTSTEPS (Hurrying)

FOOTSTEPS (Walking)

Wait for Cue!

BELL TREE

BELL TREE

WATER & SCRUB BRUSH

Wait for Cue!

MASK

FOOTSTEPS (2 People) ¹⁶
EKG MONITOR
VENTILATOR

Wait for Cue!

LATEX GLOVE
PAPER GOWN

FOOTSTEPS (2 People)
SWITCH
X-RAY PHOTO

Wait for Cue!

FOOTSTEPS

SCALPEL (slapped into hand)

Wait for Cue!

INSCISION
SUCTION

Wait for Cue!

SAWING BONE
BELL TREE

TYPEWRITER

TALKIN' TOBACCO

Cue Cards

"TALKIN' TOBACCO"

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1

FADE-IN NEWS SHOW INTRODUCTION MUSIC

fade-in Teletype machine (optional)

Walters: Welcome ladies and gentlemen to "Face the Press," the program where today's top newsmakers field questions from a panel of distinguished journalists. I am Ann Walters, your host for "Face the Press" and I am joined today by Sy Ripton of World Market News, . . . Maria Alvarez of NWC- TV, . . . and Anita Jackson of News Break Magazine.

Our guest this week is not a world leader. He does not chair a powerful committee in Congress nor is he a popular star of stage and screen. And yet his impact on both international markets and our own health industry is second to none. His botanical name is "Nic-o-ti-ana Ta-ba-cum" but he is better known to Americans as "Tobacco."

FADE-OUT THEME MUSIC

fade-out Teletype machine (optional)

Walters: Good morning, Mr. Tobacco, and welcome to "Face the Press."

Tobacco: Good morning, Ms. Walters. It's a pleasure to be here.

Walters: We will begin our questions with Anita Jackson of NewsBreak Magazine.

Jackson: Mr. Tobacco, for many years medical experts have blamed you for the deaths of millions of Americans. They say you cause cancer, emphysema (em-fa-see-ma), chronic bronchitis (bron-ky-tis), heart attacks, and strokes. How do you respond to these allegations?

Tobacco: Sad to say, they are true, Ms. Jackson. You see, I'm made up of chemical compounds, forty-three hundred of them to be exact. . . and many of these, such as benzene, arsenic and formaldehyde (for-mal-de-hide), are toxic to the human body. In fact, they even make a pesticide out of me.

Jackson: What do you mean by "toxic", Mr. Tobacco?

Tobacco: These chemicals are poisons, Ms. Jackson, and, when people smoke or chew me, these poisons get into their lungs and saliva and bloodstream causing them, over time, to get sick and often die.

Jackson: But the tobacco companies consistently deny these charges.

Tobacco: Of course, they do. They didn't become some of the richest corporations in America by telling people their products are harmful! And the sad thing, Ms. Jackson, is that these same companies spend millions of dollars each year trying to get young people to use me because they have to replace the profits that are lost when an older user dies or has the good sense to quit. Now, look at us plants. We don't do that sort of thing. We don't try to get our little sprouts to use a product we know will kill them, like you humans do. I admit, we do crowd each other out of the sunlight from time to time but, you must understand, that's only natural.

Alvarez: Mr. Tobacco, Maria Alvarez from NWC-TV. I must say I'm surprised by your comments. I thought you worked for the tobacco industry?

Tobacco: (surprised) Work for the tobacco industry? You can't be serious?! . . . It's true their success has led to my increased cultivation but, to say I work for them, would be like saying that beef cattle work for the meat-packing industry . . . or pine trees work for the christmas-tree industry. Take cigarettes for example. Do you really think I enjoy being grown by farmers only to be pulled up in the prime of life, hung upside down for days inside a scalding oven, crammed into wooden crates, cut to shreds in giant machines, rolled up in a piece of paper and stuffed into a box so that I nearly suffocate? And then, if that's not enough, somebody puts a match to me and burns me up while they drink a cup of coffee and cough. No, ma'am! That's not what I call a good time!

Walters: (trying to calm her guest) Yes. . .well. . .Mr. Tobacco, let's move on now if we can. Sy Ripton with World Market News has a few questions.

Ripton: Mr. Tobacco, perhaps you could share with us something about your history and how you became so important to we humans?

Tobacco: I'd be glad to. . .

unfolding of large map

Tobacco: Let me unfold this map I brought with me first . . . You see, Mr. Ripton, I'm a member of the "nightshade" family, a cousin to the petunia. I'm native to Peru and Ecuador but, by the time Columbus arrived, as you can see on this map, I had spread throughout South America and the Caribbean. My brother, "Nic-o-ti-ana Rus-tica," he's marked in brown here on the map, originated in the Yucatan but he eventually spread as far north as Quebec.

refolding of large map

Ripton: When did people begin using you then, Mr. Tobacco?

Tobacco: Oh, a long, long time ago. The native Americans used me in their religious ceremonies and at social events. I had many different names back then like "Petum", and "Zemi", and "Uppowac." These people believed that my smoke could keep away evil winds and poisonous snakes. They would blow my smoke over their warriors before going into battle. Some even believed that shooting stars were burning cigar butts thrown away by the Gods. But then the Spanish came. They were looking for gold and the "Fountain of Youth" . . . but what they also found . . . was me!

bell tree

2

FADE-IN SWAMP

fade-in crackling campfire

Sergeant: Good Priest, break off some more wood for the fire. I'm a fool to soldier in this strange land.

several pieces of wood being snapped

Priest: Each must do his duty for God and King, my son.

Sergeant: Aye, only God seems farther from this accursed island than our King in Spain. (yelling out) Juan Carlos, is the food ready?

Juan: (from distance) Yes, Sergeant Lopez. I will bring some to you.