

Suggested Science Podcasts

Short Wave by NPR (any of these will give a great example)

- 8-13 minutes in length
- All science related
- Primarily interview style
- Recommended episodes: “What’s Behind Australia’s Historic Fires”, “Tennessee’s Wild ride To The Periodic Table”, “A Polar Expedition To The Top of the World: Part 1 and 2”

Science vs by Gimlet Media (again, any of these are great science podcasts!)

- 30-40 minutes in length
- Science related topics
- Host (Wendy Zuckerman) has strong Australian accent
- Pit myths against science
- Recommended episodes: “Vaping: What the Hell is Going On?”, “Football: Should We Cancel It?”, “Murder Mystery: An 1850’s Whodunnit”.

Hidden Brain by NPR (fascinating stories relating to the unconscious brain)

- 35-50 minutes in length
- Some are more science related than others but all relate to our brain
- storytelling to reveal the unconscious patterns that drive human behavior, shape choices and direct relationships
- Recommended episodes: “Decide Already!”, “One Head, Two Brains”, “The Lonely American Man”.

Every Little Thing by Gimlet Media (Answering questions about fun, random stuff)

- 25-30 minutes in length
- Most are science related (not all), all are interesting and well crafted
- People call in with a question and the podcast tries to answer people’s questions
- Recommended episodes: “Spiders: How Many Can There Be?”, “Public Toilets: To Sit or To Hover?”, “What Lurks Under Our Cities?”

Radiolab by WYNC (Science, culture, and beyond)

- About 60 minutes, but can be shorter or longer
- Iconic innovators regarding podcasting editing and storytelling, groundbreaking approach, some consider it too aggressive or intrusive, but its influence is vast
- Use the opening portion of “Antibodies Part 1: CRISPR” from June 6, 2015 as an example of sound editing, sound design as it relates to storytelling

60-Second Science by Scientific American (Quick missives from a variety of scientific fields)

- 2-3 minutes total
- Good illustration of a quick podcast, its strengths and limitations
- Talking to an expert in the field combined with reporting. Good example: “When the Bellbird Calls, You Know It” (Dec. 9, 2019)

This Week I Learned by The Week (Random things learned)

- 10-15 minutes in length, but broken into smaller segments
- Good classroom example
- Illustrates how to take information from a scientific study and turn it into a story
- Podcast no longer making new shows, but first segment in the last episode works well: “This week I learned that crows make up after fights, and more” Ep. 79

Curiosity Daily by Westwood One / Curiosity.com (Random things learned)

- 9-12 minutes in length, but broken into smaller segments
- Good classroom example
- Illustrates how to take information from a scientific study and turn it into a story
- “Why Women Started Shaving, Universal Features of Music, and ‘Split Brain’ Studies” on universality of music, but really any episode is probably fine

Planet Money by NPR (Economics)

- 15-25 minutes in length
- Good example for how personal stories can lead into the main story, combining audio from in-person interviews, phone interviews, and discussion with co-hosts, the arc of a story from beginning to end, ending with a call-back to something from the story, etc.
- I listened to “The Cost of Free Doughnuts” Ep. #386, but many will work well