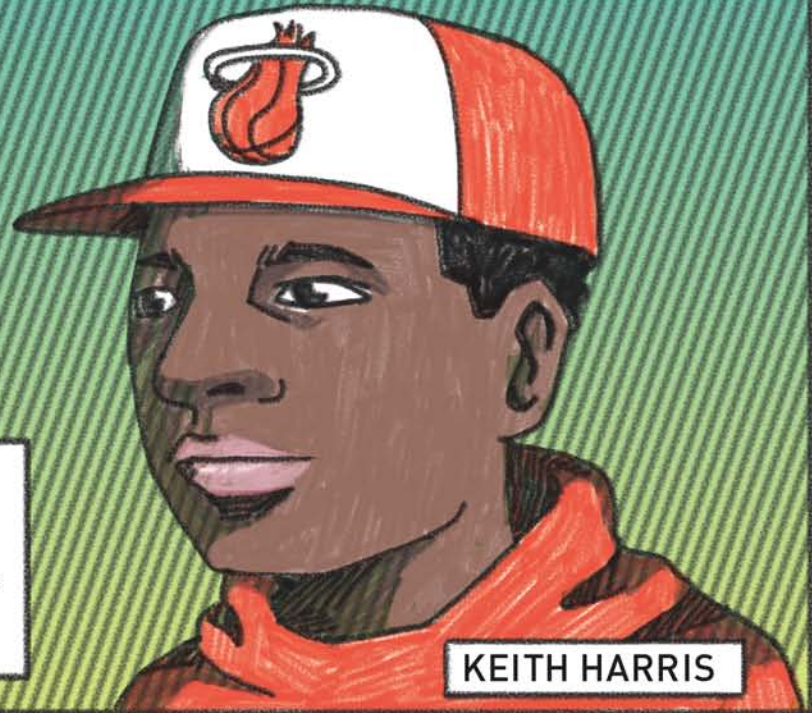


THE MAKING OF A RADIO ROOKIES STORY ~DAY ONE TO AIR~

(With DIY tips and tools along the way!)



Keith Harris is a high school student and Radio Rookie, which means he's reporting a story for the radio for the first time. Keith learned to read and write two years before he joined Radio Rookies.

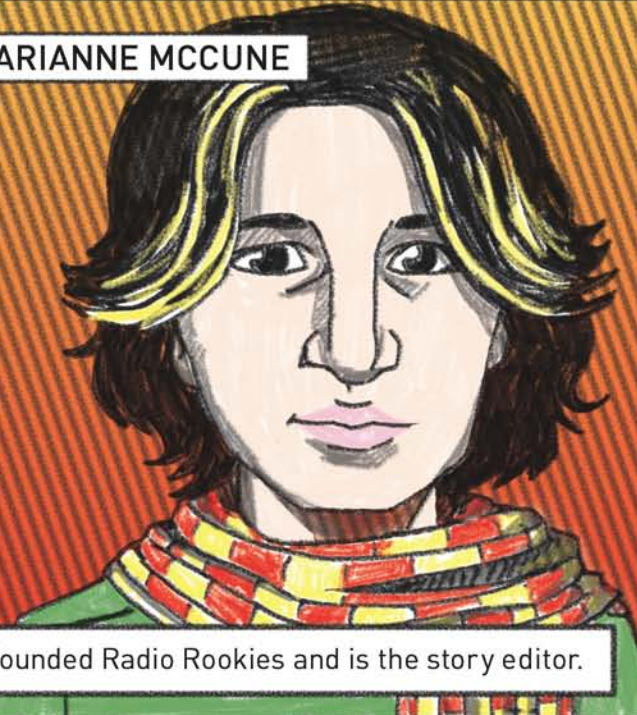
KEITH HARRIS

SANDA HYTE



Sanda HYTE is a Radio Rookies producer. She works alongside Keith on everything from story development to voicing narration.

MARIANNE MCCUNE



Founded Radio Rookies and is the story editor.

Chapter 1: Workshop Begins

At the beginning of the workshop, Radio Rookies get their own recording kit

Digital audio recorder

Headphones

Microphone

Their first assignment is to head out to learn the basics of interviewing skills

Rookies producer Sanda helps Radio Rookie Keith prepare for his first interview

Hold the mic close to your subject's mouth.
Always wear your headphones.

And most importantly, listen closely and ask follow up questions!

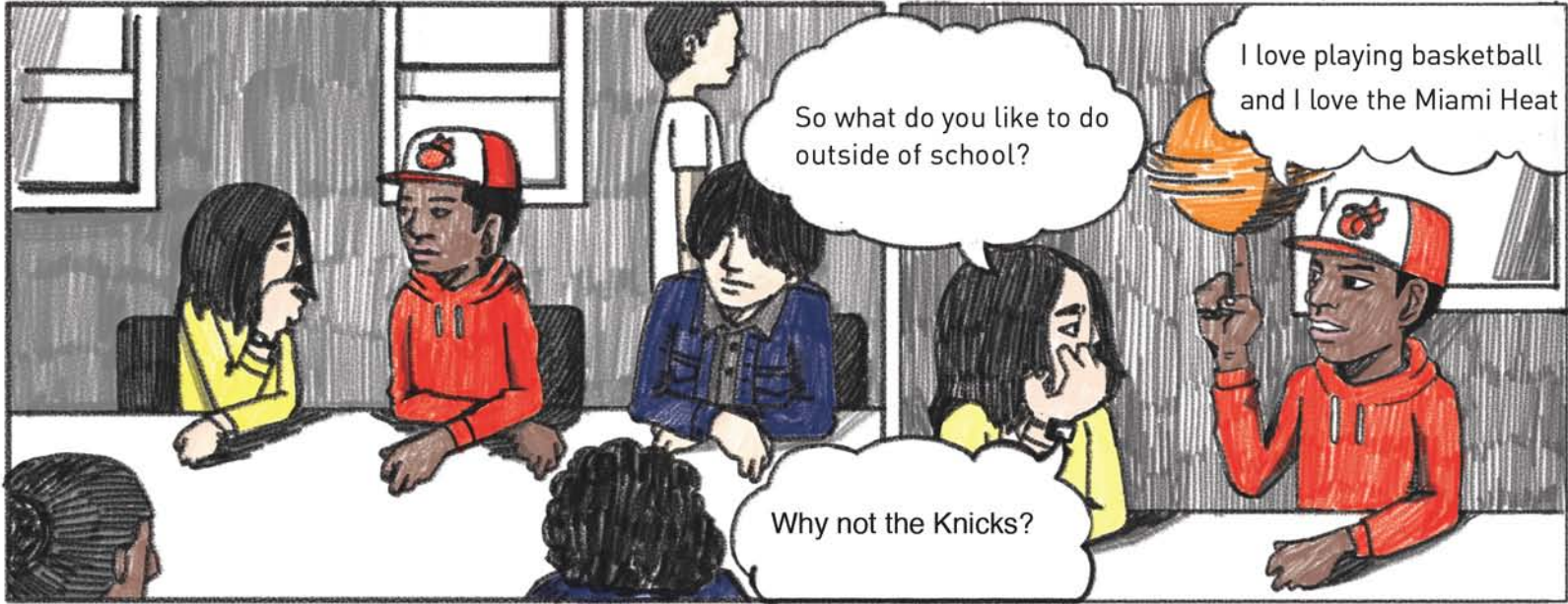
Can I interview you about your first crush?

Back at workshop, Sanda spends time getting to know Keith

For more on how we teach Vox Pop Interviews, [GO HERE](#)



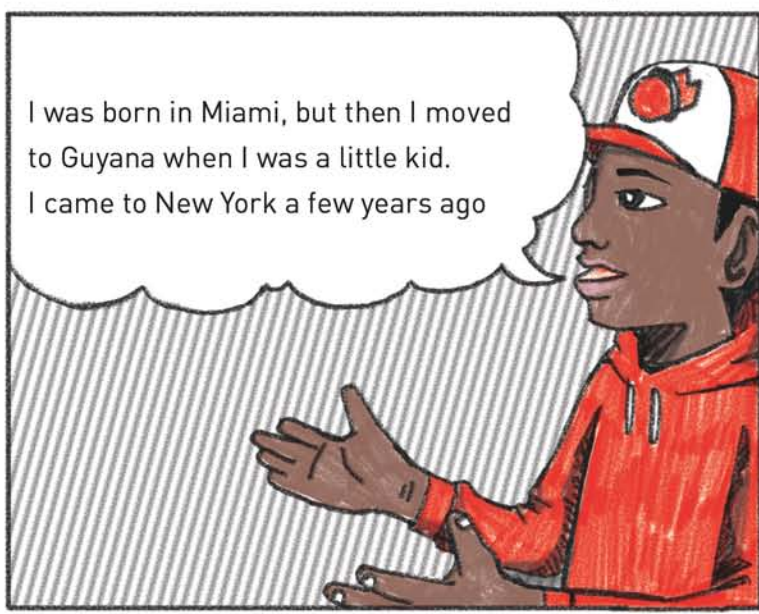
The one-on-one conversations help build connection and trust



So what do you like to do outside of school?

I love playing basketball and I love the Miami Heat

Why not the Knicks?



I was born in Miami, but then I moved to Guyana when I was a little kid. I came to New York a few years ago



I lived in Jamaica, when I was little...



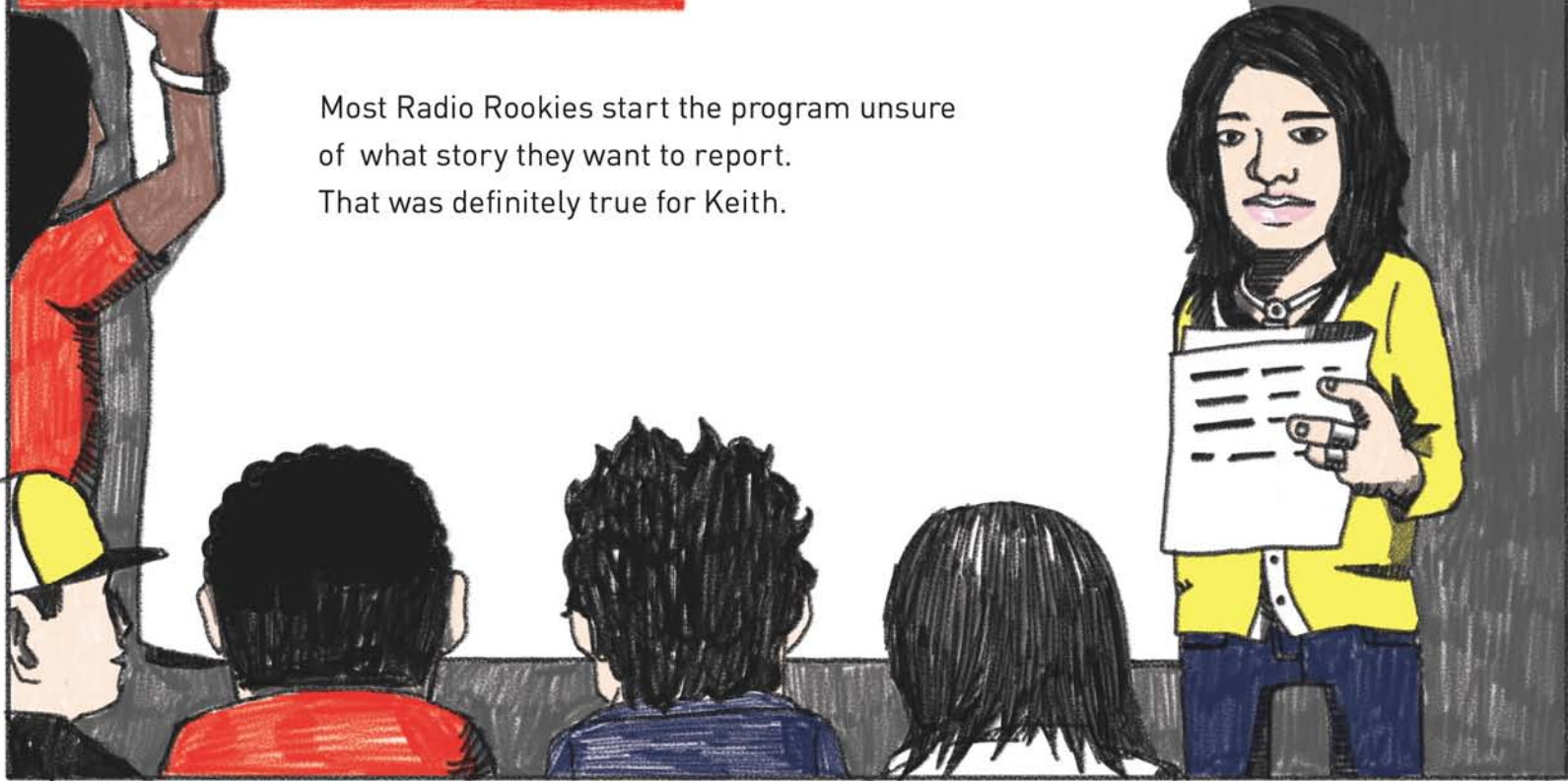
You? In the West Indies.



I guess we have something in common

Chapter 2: Coming Up With A Story Idea

Most Radio Rookies start the program unsure of what story they want to report. That was definitely true for Keith.



Everyone take a marker and start writing your story ideas on this "graffiti wall."



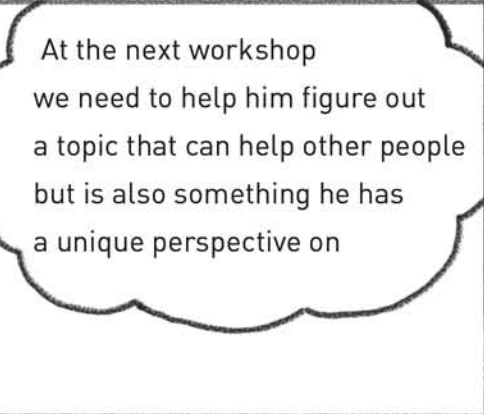
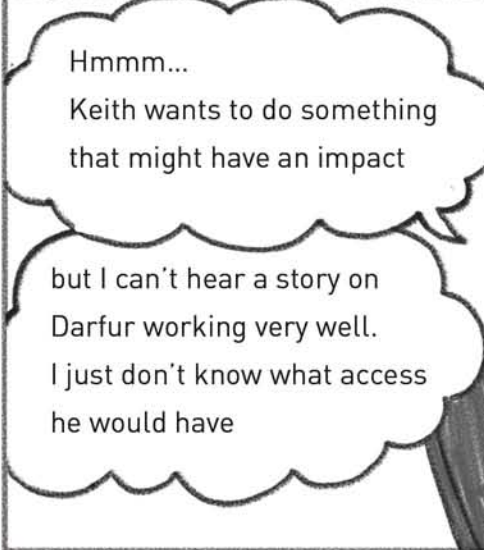
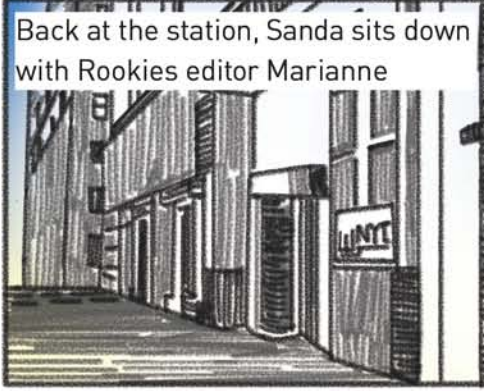
What are you passionate about? Interested in? Curious about?

The only rule is no talking.

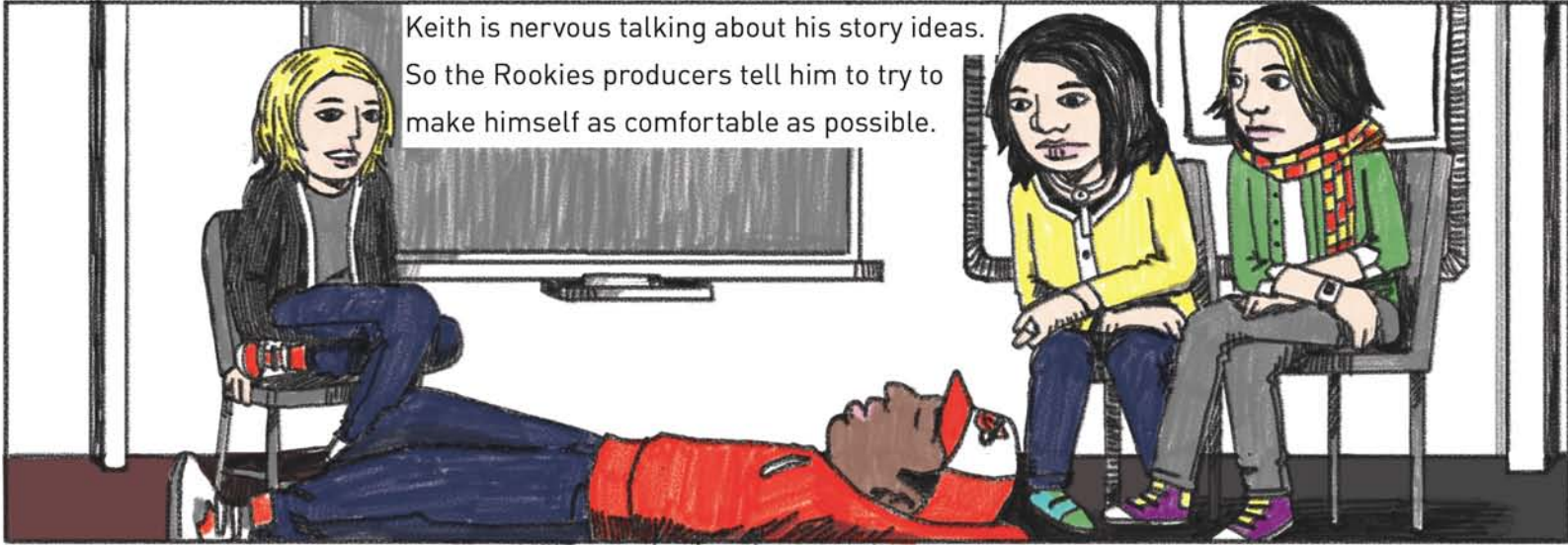


To see a video on reporting on an issue, [GO HERE](#)





Keith is nervous talking about his story ideas. So the Rookies producers tell him to try to make himself as comfortable as possible.



What do you care about?

What really matters to you?
How do you spend your time?

I like basketball, and I'm on the team, but I thought I might not be.

Why?

The coach said I had to get my grade point average up to an 80. mine was lowwww.

What happened?



Keith, you can tell us.

How about if you close your eyes and don't look at us, and then say it



What's going on in school?
Has anything changed?

Well.... Up until I came to high school...
I didn't know how to read or write.

That would be a powerful story to tell, Keith!




To see a video about reporting a personal story, [GO HERE](#)

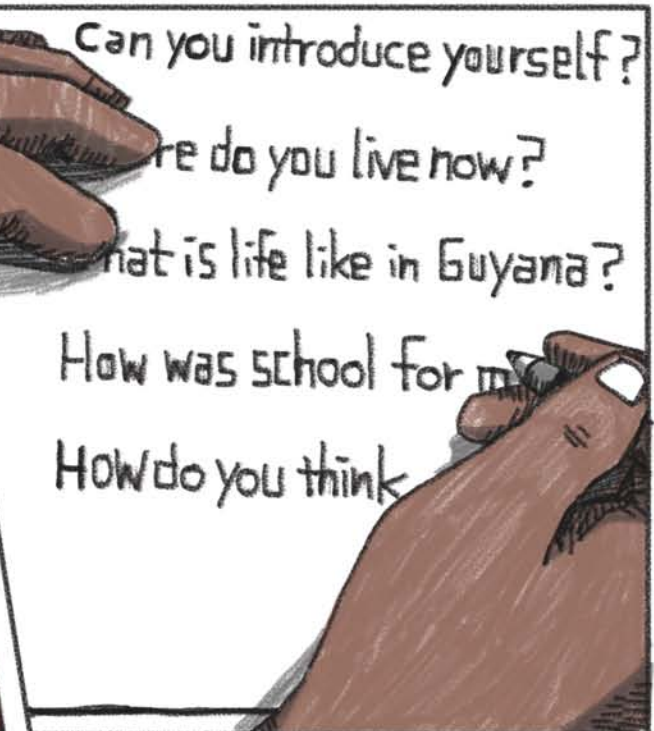


And telling your story can make a difference for other kids struggling with learning to read.

Chapter 4: Reporting Your Story



Click here to see a Story Planning Worksheet 





Keith's first interview is with his mom, who was visiting from Guyana.



How was school in Guyana?

Well, school in Guyana was brilliant. Very perfect.



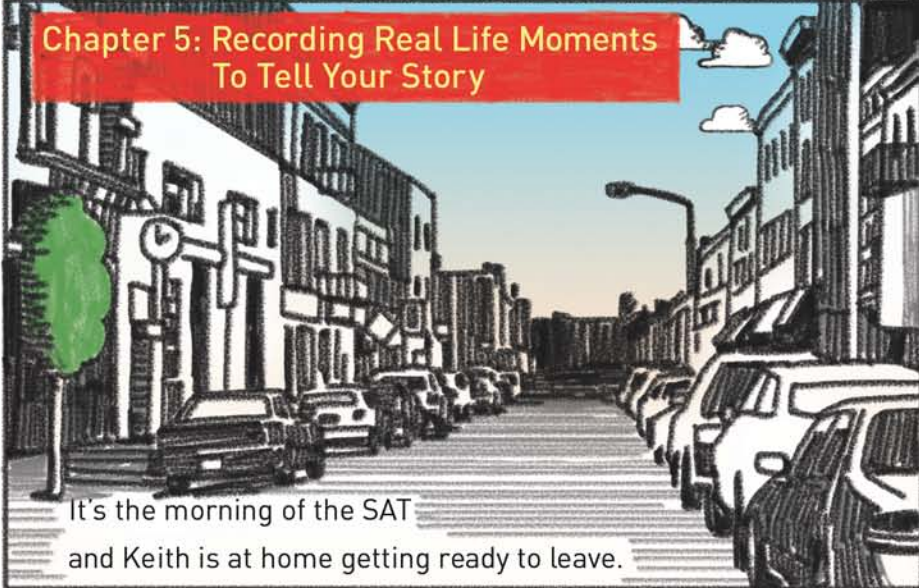
How was my report card?

Keith used to get 75s and I think that was good.



Woah! That's not true! I used to fail. How am I going to get her to tell the truth??

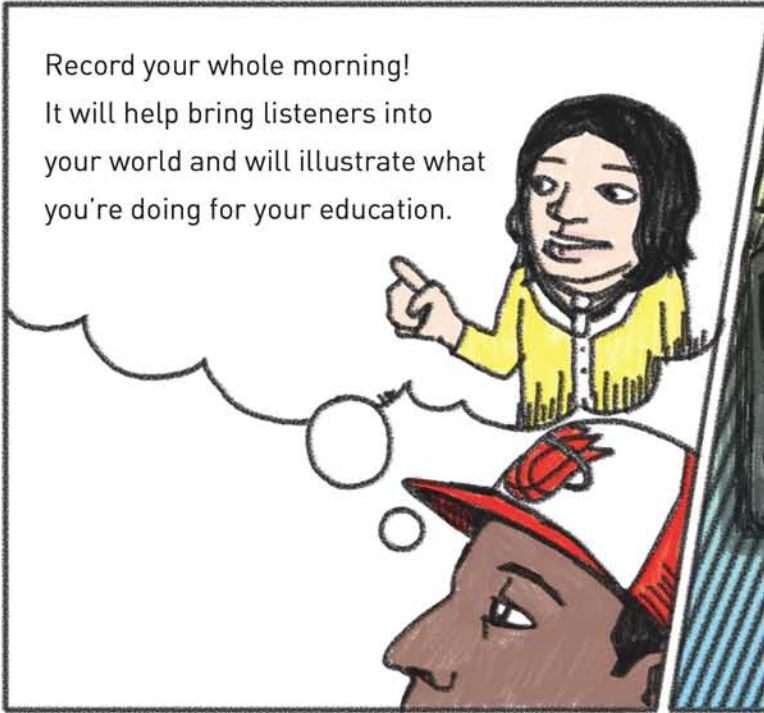
Chapter 5: Recording Real Life Moments To Tell Your Story



It's the morning of the SAT and Keith is at home getting ready to leave.





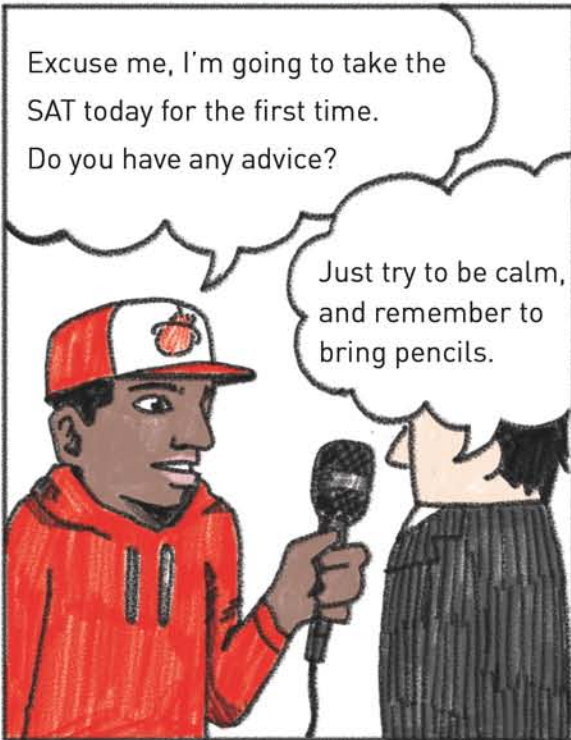
At the last minute, he hears Sanda's voice in his head,



Record your whole morning! It will help bring listeners into your world and will illustrate what you're doing for your education.

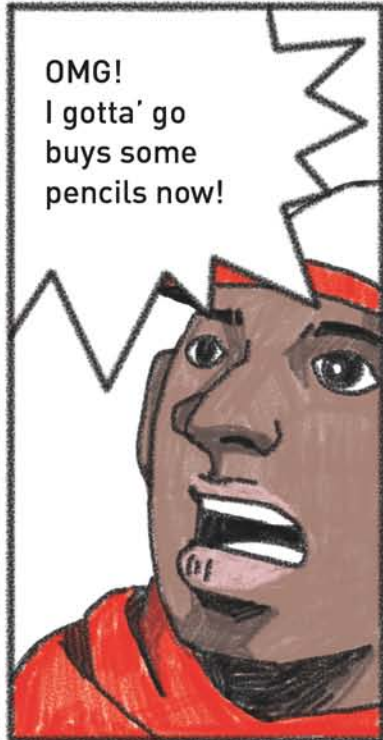


For tips on recording scenes, [GO HERE.](#)  and [HERE.](#) 

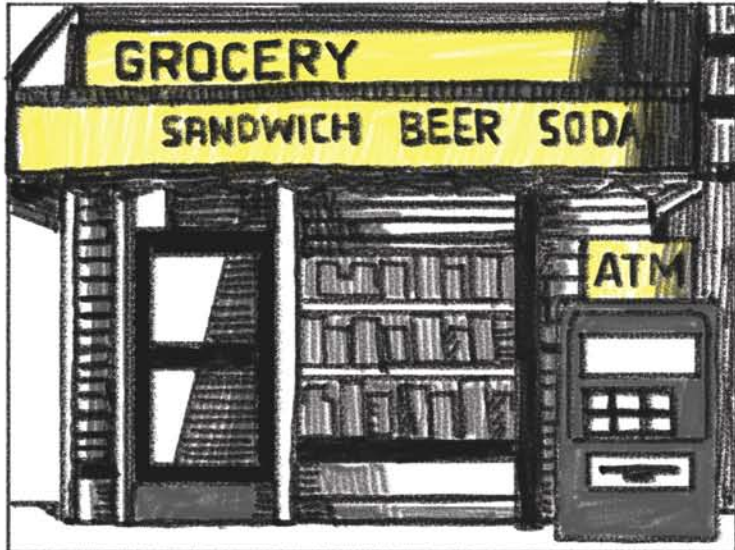


Excuse me, I'm going to take the SAT today for the first time. Do you have any advice?

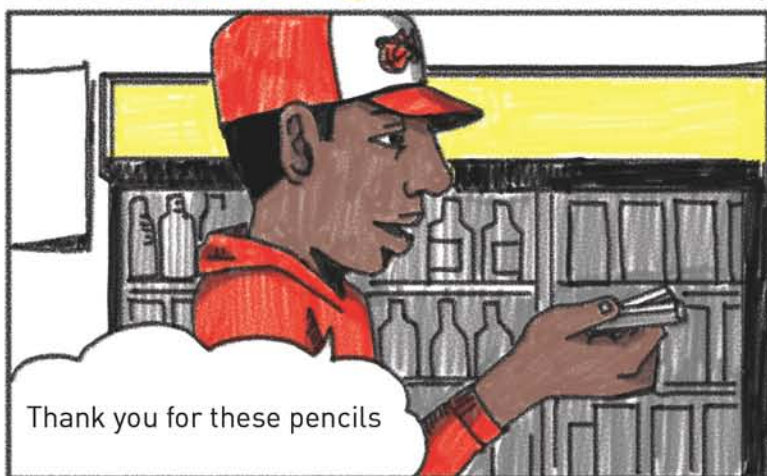
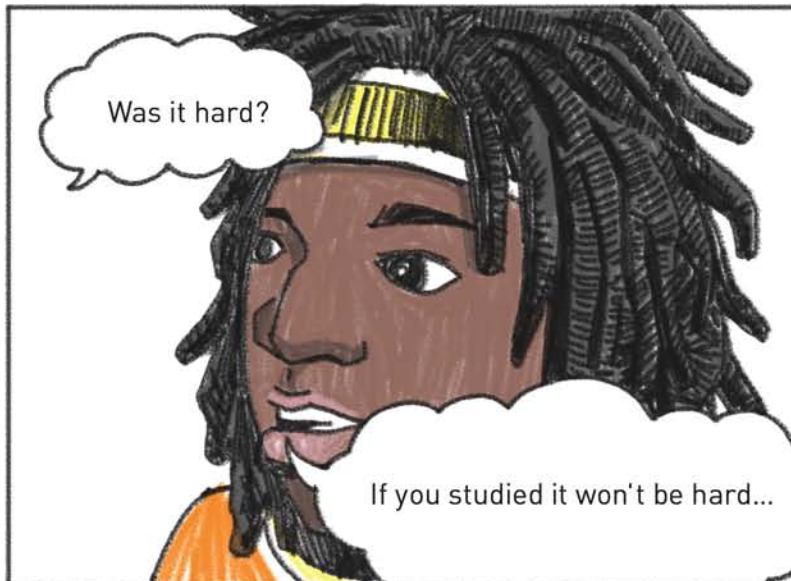
Just try to be calm, and remember to bring pencils.



OMG! I gotta' go buys some pencils now!



I took it at home in Trinidad



Chapter 6: Editing Audio and Writing a Scene



Okay, so let's highlight the best parts of the audio on the transcript. Which moments do you like the best?

I like the woman in the deli.



I think this moment is going to make a great scene in your story. Every scene should have a main idea. What's the main idea here?

I was kinda' nervous before the SAT



What tape of you on the morning could help to show that?

How do you think it would've been different for you if your mom were here in New York?



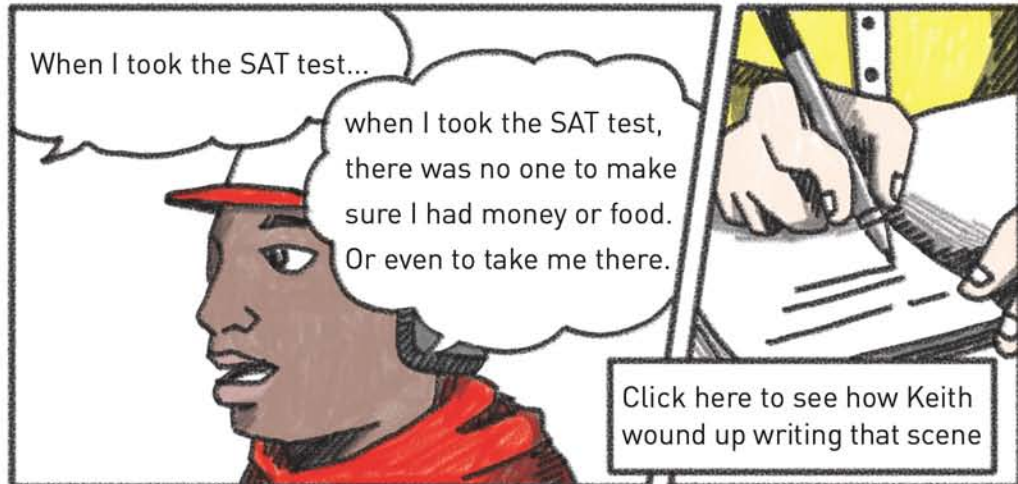
when I forgot to get pencils

She would've made me breakfast, and probably made sure I had pencils

In order to give structure to this scene you'll need to write narration to give listeners background info that they wouldn't be able to hear in the tape.

When I took the SAT test...

when I took the SAT test, there was no one to make sure I had money or food. Or even to take me there.

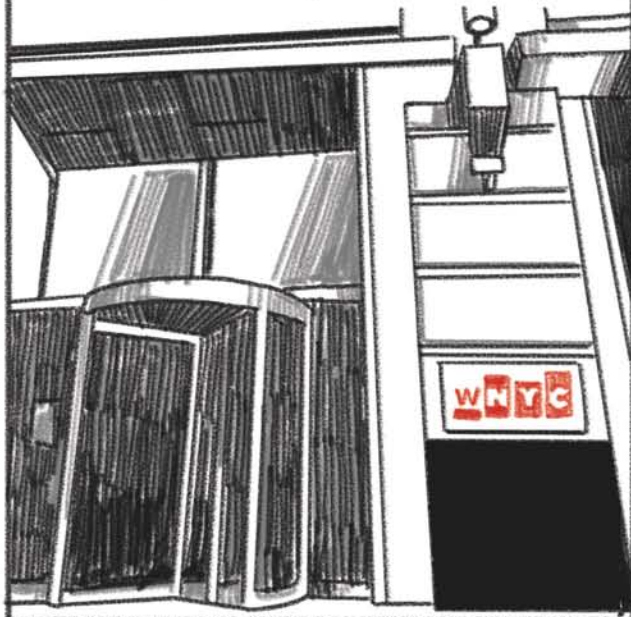


Okay, so finish this sentence:

Click here to see how Keith wound up writing that scene

Chapter 7: Pulling It All Together

Now that Keith has his interviews recorded, his tape edited and some scenes written, it's time to pull it all together into a story




Making a story is like putting together a very difficult jigsaw puzzle, but with no picture to work from. Each scene is a piece of the puzzle. You can start out by figuring out where you might want to begin and where you want to end.

Keith, what do you want to start with?



How about the scene with my mom, when I asked her how I did in school in Guyana.

 [CLICK HERE](#) to see an early draft script



Sanda has a check-in with Marianne, the editor

There is so much good tape and he's so likable. It's going to be a great story. Right now it's too long. Everything needs to be cut down by at least 50%

Definitely



Also, But I think we need to get more of Keith in here

I'll ask him what other details he'd like to include

And he needs to interview his mom again and ask her about how he did in school in Guyana.



So, Marianne and I were thinking we want more of YOU in the story. What would help?



How about if I read one of my poems?

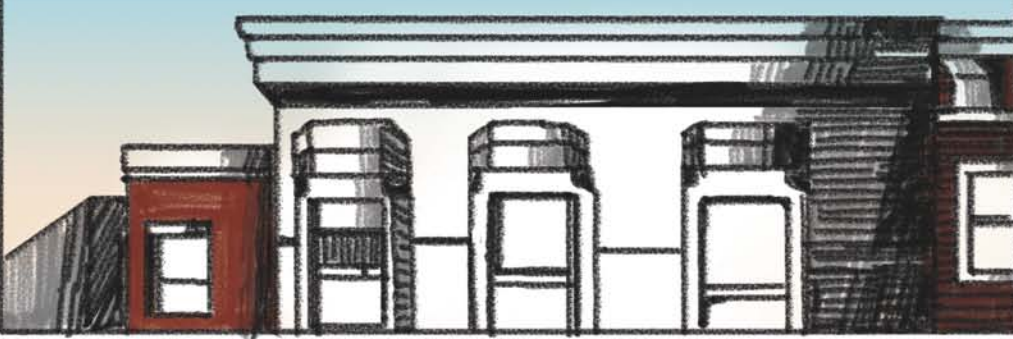
Yes! How about we start with that. What else?

Also, something about Dwayne Wade, you know how much I love him



I mean right around when I was learning to read the Miami Heat won the NBA Championship!

Keith's mom came back to town, so he tries to interview her last more time.

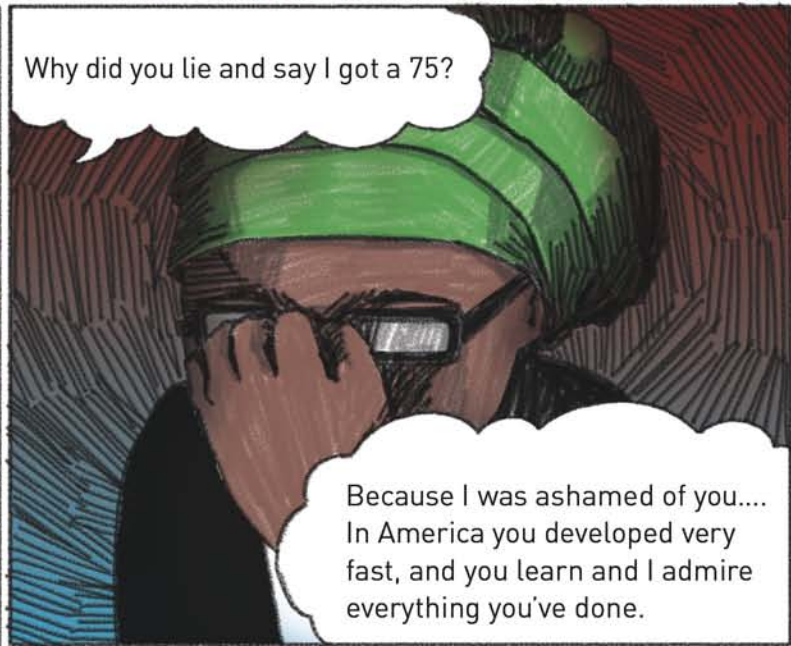


Mom, how did I do in school in Guyana?



You...

used to fail...




Why did you lie and say I got a 75?

Because I was ashamed of you.... In America you developed very fast, and you learn and I admire everything you've done.



Yes! We have our ending!

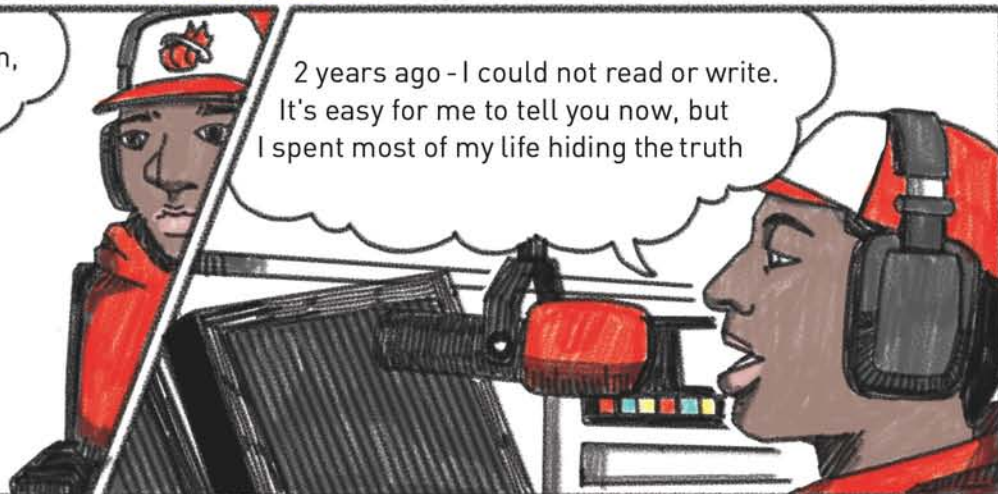
 [CLICK HERE](#) to see Keith's final script and listen to his story to see how his mom, his poetry and the Miami Heat show up in the story

Chapter 8: Voicing Narration



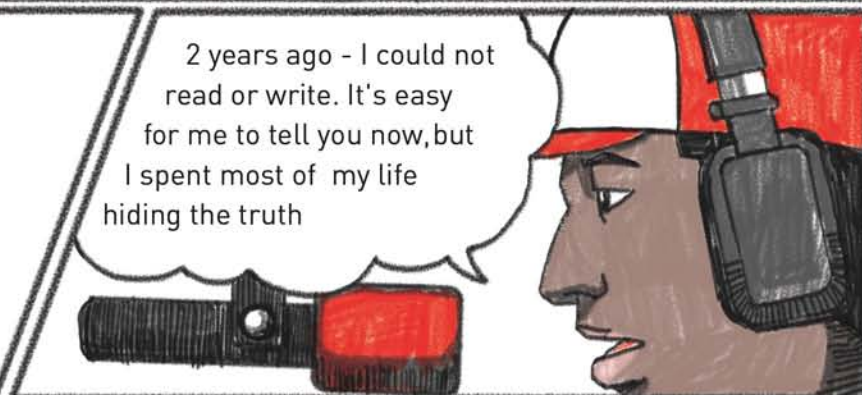
Okay, when you read this line of narration, just look at me and talk to me

2 years ago - I could not read or write. It's easy for me to tell you now, but I spent most of my life hiding the truth



try it again, but this time, see if you can slow down, especially on **MOST OF MY LIFE**

2 years ago - I could not read or write. It's easy for me to tell you now, but I spent most of my life hiding the truth



For tips on recording narration, [CLICK HERE](#).



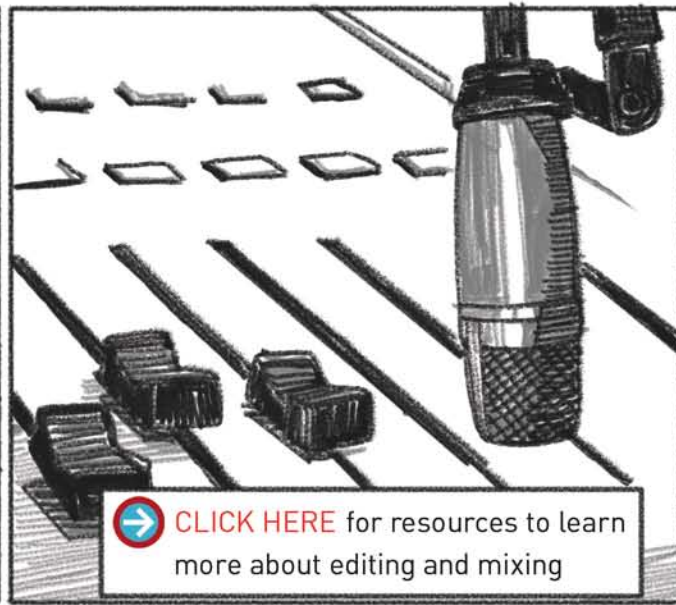
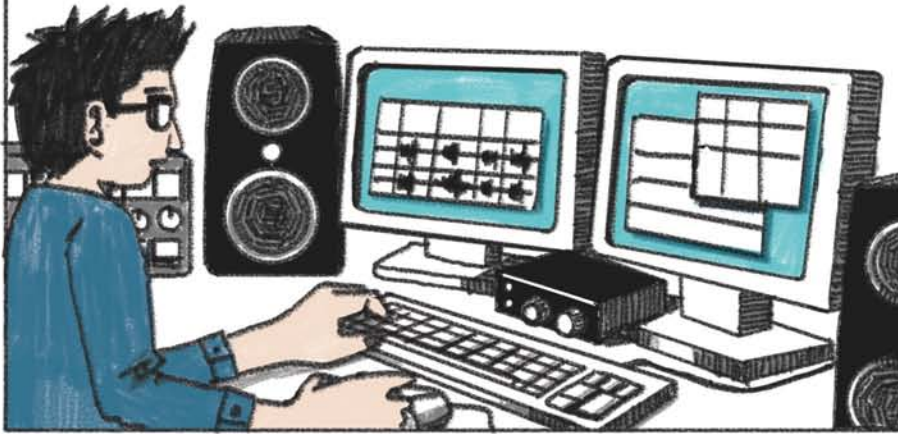
One more time, try talking with your hands a little this time

2 years ago - I could not read or write. It's easy for me to tell you now, but I spent most of my life hiding the truth

Better!



One of the final steps in producing a story is mixing the piece. Radio Rookies works with engineers at WNYC, who polish every breath and smooth out all the bumps



[CLICK HERE](#) for resources to learn more about editing and mixing



Finally the day has come, after 6 months of hard work, Keith's story airs in the morning for thousands of WNYC listeners



"A broken heart by Keith Harris..."



A broken heart by Keith Harris...



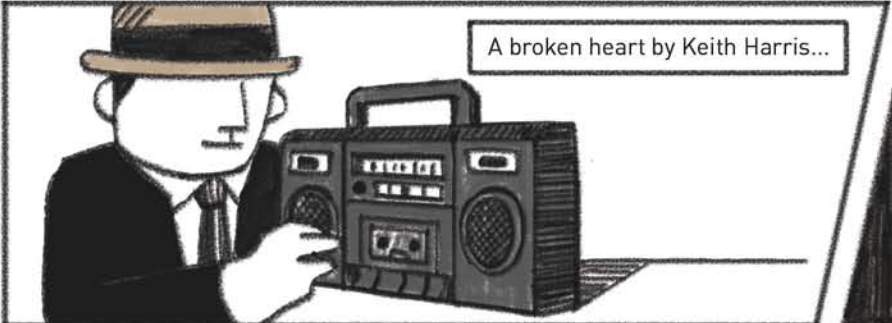
A broken heart by Keith Harris...



A broken heart by Keith Harris...



A broken heart by Keith Harris...



LISTEN Keith's story

Credits:

Artist and Animator: Masayoshi Nakamura

Radio Rookie: Keith Harris

Producer: Sanda Htye

Editor: Marianne McCune

Writers: Kaari Pitkin and Courtney Stein

Graphic Designer: Erin Reeg

The DIY Radio Rookies Toolkit is funded by the Hive Digital Media Learning Fund in the New York Community Trust and Mozilla

Additional support for Radio Rookies comes from:

America's Promise Alliance

The Rose M. Badgeley Residuary Charitable Trust

The Bay and Paul Foundations

Casey Medals for Meritorious Journalism

Corporation for Public Broadcasting

Fred L. Emerson Foundation

National Endowment for the Arts

New York City Department of Cultural Affairs

New York State Council on the Arts

The Pinkerton Foundation

The Slomo and Cindy Silvan Foundation

The W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation

The MacArthur Foundation