

LESSON 7

Editing Audio with AudioMass, Part 1: Trim and Shape a Clip

40 minutes

Make It Yourself

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Students take a raw audio clip and turn it into a clean thirty second piece they can use in a project, working in AudioMass, a free browser audio editor with no account needed. They load a clip, cut the unwanted opening and ending, add a fade in and a fade out, and export it as an MP3. The lesson closes by turning the skill back on itself: if cutting a recording changes what a listener believes was said, where is the line between tidying and misleading?

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Edit an audio clip so it is the right length, starts and ends cleanly, and is ready to use in a project

BEFORE THE BELL

- AudioMass runs entirely in the browser at audiomass.co. There is nothing to install and no account to make, so it works on school devices and Chromebooks. Nothing is saved when the tab closes, which is why the export step matters and is not optional. Check the site opens on your school network before the lesson. Headphones are ideal but not essential; the class can work at low volume. The animations on steps 3 to 6 are short screen recordings of each action. Play the relevant one on the board before turning the class loose on that step, then leave it up while they work. If a student's cut goes wrong, Edit then Undo puts it back. Get them undoing rather than reloading and starting over, as reloading loses everything.

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HOW THE LESSON RUNS

3 min	introduction	Start
4 min	content	Three Kinds of Audio
6 min	activity	Open Audiomass and Load a Clip
11 min	activity	Trim It to Thirty Seconds
9 min	activity	Fade in and Fade Out
4 min	activity	Export and Check It
2 min	content	Before You Go
1 min	summary	What You Covered

TEACHING MOVES

- 1. Start. Play the silent version first so the class supplies its own reaction when the music arrives. Ask what changed when nothing on screen moved.
- 2. Three Kinds of Audio. Talk this through from the board. Take two or three spoken answers to the closing question, then move on to protect the practical time.
- 3. Open Audiomass and Load a Clip. Model opening AudioMass and loading a clip on the board first. Then sweep the room and confirm everyone has a waveform on screen before starting step 4.
- 4. Trim It to Thirty Seconds. Budget most of the time here and circulate. Tell students to press play on their selection before cutting, so a bad selection is obvious. Say the undo path aloud.
- 5. Fade in and Fade Out. Hold students to a three to five second fade so they do not fade half the clip. Point at the sloping waveform, because seeing the shape change is what makes it stick.
- 6. Export and Check It. Do not let anyone close the tab before exporting. Insist every student plays the MP3 back outside AudioMass, since a failed export looks identical until you open it.
- 7. Before You Go. Protect two minutes for this spoken discussion. If the room is quiet, offer the line: removing a pause is tidying, removing the word 'not' is not. Ask where it stops being one.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students select the part to cut by eye from the waveform without listening, and cut the wrong section. Make pressing play on a selection a habit before every cut. It plays only the highlighted part, so a wrong selection is heard instantly.
- Students think closing the tab keeps their work, and lose everything. State clearly that AudioMass keeps nothing after the tab closes. Make exporting to MP3 and playing the file back a compulsory final step for everyone.
- Students apply a fade over far too much of the clip, so most of it slopes up or down. Hold them to a three to five second selection and have them watch the waveform: only the very start or end should slope.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Emerging: Sit them beside you for the first cut and do one trim together, then let them repeat it alone. Give a target: just get the door creak off the front. One clean cut is a full win for this student.