

Figure 2.1 Sample permission form

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We have an exciting new project that we will be starting in class this term. We are going to be creating a Poetry Slam Podcast. (A podcast is an audio broadcast over the Internet that can be played on an iPod, but also on any computer.) The purpose of this project is to allow students to create, recite, and publish their original poetry. Students will be creating poetry based on different genres. This project uses cell phones to create the podcasts in order to demonstrate how these devices can be used as a learning tool. As homework, outside of class, students will use their cell phones to record the podcasts. Alternatives will be provided for students without cell phones.

This project will not only meet our district language arts standards for original poetry but also the National Educational Technology Standards for Students (developed by the International Society for Technology in Education).

The podcast will be created using a free Web service called Gcast (www.gcast.com). I will be creating the class blog for the podcast and monitoring the posts using a Web application called Blogger (www.blogger.com/start/). Because the purpose of the assignment is to allow students to publish their work and receive feedback, the blog will be public. Students will be taught how to appropriately publish online and ways to protect their privacy. For safety, students will be using pseudonyms (as many famous authors have done, including Mark Twain, whose real name was Samuel Clemens). Additionally, we will be going over Internet safety protocol in class, and students will have to pass a quiz before they can participate in the project. (A sample Internet safety quiz can be found here: www.safekids.com/quiz/.)

I worked with the district technology coordinator to decide on the podcasting resource that would best fit our needs. Gcast allows us to use the resource for no cost and has a toll-free phone number so that students who do not have cell phone access can use a landline to do their podcasting.

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Figure 2.1, Continued

I would like you to be able to view and comment on the students' poetry. Here is the link to the Poetry Slam Podcast Blog: www.poetryslam987.blogspot.com/.

The opportunity to use these learning resources is a privilege, and students will be given instructions on how to use these resources appropriately. If they abuse this privilege, they will be given an alternative assignment that does not involve cell phones or the Internet. Since we will be publishing the poetry and using cell phones, we would like your permission to allow your child to participate. We also ask that your child sign the agreement.

I _____

agree to allow my child _____

to participate in the Poetry Slam Podcast project.

I _____ agree to follow the rules for the Poetry Slam Podcast project.

Parent's signature _____

Student's signature _____

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me or our building principal (he has approved the project). We think this is a wonderful opportunity for students to learn how to use their cell phones as educational tools as well as to learn about Internet safety and publishing information online. We hope that you will also participate in our project by viewing and commenting on the original poems.

Sincerely,

Liz Kolb
Eighth-Grade Language Arts Teacher
Anyschool
Contact Information Here