



"If you don't learn who you are first, you'll just be like everyone else."

- Ann Powers

Rock Journalist/Senior Curator
Experience Music Project

Ann Powers

Music Writing

Ann Powers grew up reading; as a young kid, she felt like the only worlds that accepted her were those of books, novels, and magazines. Her passion for reading led her to become an English major in college. Ann defied taking what her parents considered a more financially stable path in life, such as accounting or teaching, to study what she loved. As a result, Ann has forged a path as one of the most respected and well-known pop music and culture writers. She has written for publications such as *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Blender* magazine. She has also authored several books, one of which she cowrote with musician Tori Amos. Ann has had many successes, but she never really planned for them—she just followed what she loved. "Be determined," she says, "but don't plan."

ACTIVITY DETAILS

Materials



Computer



Internet



Projector
(for whole-class viewing)



Speakers or
Headphones

What To Do



25 min

Introduce students to the Roadtrip Nation Leader, play the Leader interview, and facilitate a discussion about the interview.

Big Idea

Each Leader's story shows students how they can combine their Interests to create greater academic and career possibilities. Each Leader also gives insights into complex themes like shedding The Noise, overcoming financial hardship, or dealing with self-doubt.

Tips and Tricks

1. Each Leader interview is designed to spark conversations on three topics:

- Future aspirations, including career and academic pursuits

- Students' Interests

- Themes from the Road

2. The lesson will guide you through key points in the Leader's story and the **Interview Breakdown** includes questions you can use to start conversations on the topics above.

1. **Meet the Leader:** Introduce the Leader by sharing the Leader collage, name, and career information with your students.
2. **Leader Quote:** Display the Leader quote on the projector. Ask students to discuss or respond in writing to the following question:
Which do you think is harder, getting to know yourself or standing out from the crowd?
3. **Ask the Leader:** Read the Leader biography or pass out copies to students to read individually. Ask students to create an interview question for Ann based on her biography. Call on students to share their interview questions and record them on chart paper or on the board.
4. **The Interview:** Play the Leader interview on the projector. If students have their own computers and headphones, they can watch the video individually if you provide the link.
5. **Interview Breakdown:** Have students address these questions with a partner, in small groups, or through written response.

Future Aspirations

What are some possible companies Ann could work for as a rock journalist?

My Interests

How did you spend your free time as a young child? How could you translate that hobby into an Interest you can explore?

Themes From the Road

Why do you think Ann was willing to accept "dedicated poverty" if it meant she could pursue her Interests?

6. **Wrap Up:** Revisit the Leader questions from the beginning of the lesson. Review the questions with the class, asking them to answer the questions based on the information from the interview.