

## PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 15

### “Mission to Connect”: Keynote Presentation Assignment Sheet

#### A Note to Teachers



This assignment is intended as a longer 2-3 week class project, ideally later on in the year, or as one of the culminating projects, since there are a number of complex public speaking skills involved. The purpose of this project is to help students combine presentation, persuasion, and informative speaking in way that inspires the audience. More than typical presentations, a keynote also elevates what is required in terms of oral delivery skills, which makes it a good assignment to apply the skills learned over time. Being a keynote speaker also frames public speaking as a leadership skill.

As you facilitate this project, make sure students begin by clearly defining their imaginary audience and as much detail about the imagined context as possible. For instance, a student might decide to be an invited speaker at a conference for emerging professionals in the computer science industry. Another student might decide to be an invited speaker at a high school graduation ceremony. Regardless of their choice, make sure that they are focused on the “mission to connect”.

Depending on your class size and length, you will need to plan ahead about the best ways to make it through all the presentations – ideally, do not try to do all performances at once in a row, but spread them out over a longer period of time. For a large class, you will need to think creatively about the best ways to squeeze in these talks, even doing them by video submission. Adapt the length, but ideally do not shorten to less than 5 minutes. If possible, try to keep this as an individual assignment, instead of assigning groups.

# Keynote Presentation Assignment Sheet

Becoming a strong public speaker requires courage, vulnerability, and self-awareness to connect with others and communicate a powerful message. This assignment combines all of our learning in the course through a final keynote presentation that communicates a powerful message to a specific audience, using your presentation, oral delivery, language choices, and persuasive speaking skills to craft an inspirational talk. It also gives you a final chance to identify a public speaking skill that still rattles you and have a chance to practice until you feel more comfortable.

## *What is the purpose of this assignment?*

- To communicate a powerful message to a specific audience, inspiring them to reflect, learn, and act as a result of this talk.

## *What does this presentation focus on?*

- As a class, we will discuss how to adapt to different audiences, thinking about what an audience might care about, what they know/don't know, what they are personally and professionally facing, and what might be relevant to their lives. You will then choose a specific situation and audience for your keynote. After this discussion, you will select a theme and craft the single idea that is most powerful and important to your selected audience.
- In terms of content, less is more. Do not try to pack in too many ideas. Keep the content focused and driven by meaningful context and emotional reflection.
- In addition to the content, you will also focus on specific areas of your oral delivery, setting goals for your own improvement.
- You may not use notes for this presentation, so it is a good idea to balance your planned ideas and more spontaneous outline, rather than trying to memorize a full script perfectly.

## *How long is the presentation and what should the content include?*

- You will present for a total of 5 minutes, during which you must use slides to enhance your message (the number is up to you). Do not go overtime. Slides should be treated as an illustrative backdrop, relying heavily on pictures or single words, sentences, or numbers to enhance the message (do not use too much text or read from the slides).

- Your keynote should be designed for a specific audience and should include the following: 1) a title; 2) a clear and powerful message as a single sentence; 3) story or stories that give the audience a sense of who you are and why you care about this topic; 4) clear context/background information/research to illustrate the issue and bigger picture, as well as establish your credibility; 5) clear call to action for what you want the audience to do moving forward.
- Your oral delivery is especially important in this keynote speech, so you should plan to walk purposefully and use the entire "stage" (rather than using a podium). Create a clear plan for what you will do in your transitions and how you will use your voice and gestures to highlight key points. Practice feeling the emotions of your speech (not to mention write speech content that actually contains emotions), showing them on your face and through your variation in volume, speed, and use of silences/pauses.

## *When is it due?*

- Final presentations will take place during class time on \_\_\_\_\_.  
The order will be decided randomly, and will be announced on \_\_\_\_\_.
- You will spend time practicing in class with feedback from peers and teachers. To take advantage of individual feedback, please have some content ready to practice by the class sessions on \_\_\_\_\_.
- The presentations will be graded the same way as all past assignments (rubrics from self, peer, and teacher). It is worth \_\_\_\_% of your grade.
- Good luck!

