

LEADERS THAT LISTEN
PUBLIC SPEAKING CURRICULUM

Presentation Guide



As a leader, presentations should be more meaningful than just relaying information to an audience; instead, they should help you connect to your audience and promote deeper learning. This toolkit contains guiding principles for crafting clear and engaging presentations, from well-organized content to intentional oral delivery. Use these resources to present in a way that is authentic to you and your message by exploring speech templates, warm-ups and practice drills, principles of presentation content and delivery, methods for using your voice and body, presentation project ideas and rubrics, and how to create youth-led events.



Why We Need Leaders That Listen:

A Note from the Author

As a teacher and public speaking coach, I have always been drawn to the quirkiest students.

I love unexpected perspectives that make me think about an issue in a different way and inspire me to care about experiences I never understood. Unfortunately, we are surrounded by images of leadership and models of public speaking dominated by examples that are loud, angry, and driven by ego. Every day, I encounter students from as young as 7 all the way to adulthood who have beautiful voices and incredible stories but do not believe they are important. They have been taught that they aren't leaders because they do not look, act, or sound like the people in power.

It is important to have mentors and a community to help you have the courage of your own convictions; just because you don't look or sound like everyone else doesn't mean you don't deserve to have a voice. Our society needs leaders who know how to facilitate diverse perspectives, learn from different experiences, care about human beings, and listen without an agenda. This curriculum is a starting point for educators, coaches, and emerging public speakers of all ages who want methods for communicating in a way that is authentic and real, empowering their inner leader and encouraging diverse voices through inclusive education. Explore the guides in any order and choose tools that best fit your needs and build your confidence. Gather inspiration and feel free to adapt as you develop your skills and the abilities of those you lead.



AnnMarie D. Baines, PhD, Executive Director

About the Author

As Founder and Executive Director of Bay Area non-profit, The Practice Space, AnnMarie Baines brings 20 years of experience coaching public speaking for youth and adults and currently teaches public speaking at UC Berkeley. As a Filipina leader, Dr. Baines is deeply committed to equity, and was awarded a Deeper Learning Equity Fellowship. In prior work, Dr. Baines was a program officer at the George Lucas Educational Foundation, where she applied her expertise in curriculum, project-based learning, and professional development. She began her career as a high school special education teacher and utilizes the Universal Design for Learning framework. Dr. Baines received her PhD in Learning Sciences from University of Washington, teaching credential from Boston Teacher Residency, and Master's in Education Policy from Harvard Graduate School of Education.

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PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 1

Presentation: The Life of a Leader



Why Effective Presentation Can Redefine Leadership

Presentations are opportunities for leaders to lead in a way that serves others, as opposed to simply exerting authority. Too often, leadership is portrayed to young people in terms of status and success, where leadership means you are the “best” in a group and presentations are a way to demonstrate that you know the “most”. Unfortunately, presentations that serve only to prove to everyone that you are worthy and valuable are less effective because they end up overemphasizing the quantity of content over its quality. Trying too hard to prove yourself can also result in oral delivery that is distant, defensive, and lacking in pathos, or the ability to appeal to the emotions of an audience. The end result is a presentation that is all about the slide deck instead of about connecting with people through powerful oral delivery and eye contact.

A Lead-To-Serve Mindset

While we may sometimes work or learn in places that mandate that we present to prove ourselves, we cannot let that culture dominate the way we present. For presentations to be effective, we need to think about guiding, directing, and inspiring our audiences, providing them with valuable content that will impact their thinking. When we have the mindset that leaders serve people, then our presentations become all about helping people learn, listen, and remember new information. Ask yourself:

- Why am I presenting this content?
- Why is it significant to my audience and why should they care?
- What can I teach them so that we can be on the same page about this content in the future?
- What will help them listen and retain the most important information?
- What do they need to know now and what can wait until later?

By asking ourselves questions that are oriented towards learning, presentations become vehicles for teaching content and providing audiences with a reason to listen, retain, and ultimately, connect.

Elements of Effective Presentation

When presentations are used as a tool for learning, choices about structure, sequence, and language are important to being as clear and as credible as possible. (For more guidance on how to improve your presentation structure and language and implement elements of effective presentation, see “Presentation Cheat Sheet: Tips for Structure and Language” later on in this guide.) More specifically, most effective presentations include the following elements:

- **Connect:** Connect to the audience by referencing a common experience or concern.
- **Contribute:** State how you will be contributing something new to the conversation.
- **Preview:** Frame the main idea in terms of how your presentation will help the audience.
- **Illustrate:** Teach new information by illustrating complex ideas with examples or case studies.
- **Synthesize:** Synthesize or sum up key takeaways.
- **Extend:** Take the main idea one step further by offering one more final thought or implication that is especially memorable.

The exact presentation structure will vary widely depending on the purpose of the talk, length, audience, context, format, and whether you are presenting with others. What to avoid, however, is jumping into complex information without preparing your audience and priming the conditions for listening. Too many presentations start without stating why we should listen to the presentation in the first place and end without stating why this content matters. As a speaker and leader, it is also important to reflect on why the presentation content excites you and matters to you. If it doesn't, then it won't matter to anyone else.

Adapting to Audiences

Given the focus on listening and learning, crafting effective presentations also require public speakers to consider the needs and interests of the audience. During the brainstorming process, this involves asking the following questions:

- Why am I being asked to speak?
- What does my audience already know?
- What do they want to know?
 - What are they worried about?
 - What are they excited about?
- What level of information interests them?
- What helps them learn?

When working with young speakers, it is important that presentations are more than just a culminating assignment. Instead, a key part of the presentation preparation process is for speakers to learn how to reflect on the purpose of the presentation and why they might be an important voice on the selected topic.

The Final Takeaway

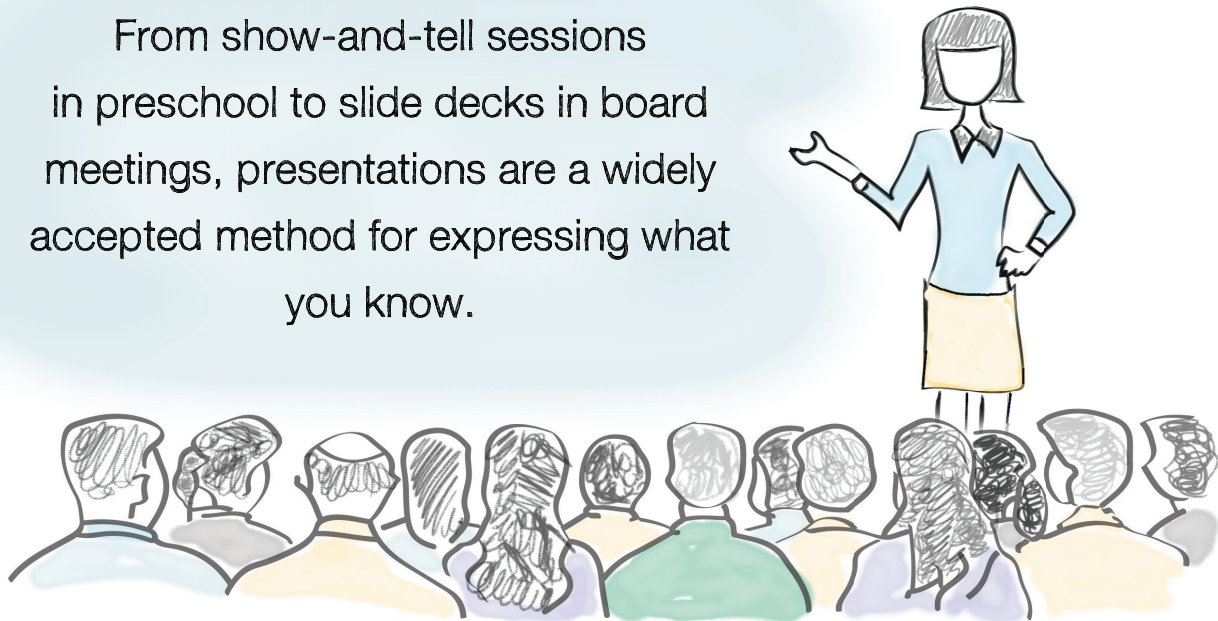
Presentations are a classic form of public speaking that can be powerful opportunities to teach, guide, and inspire others. They are opportunities to clarify complex ideas and establish credibility as a leader who can serve people effectively. To present effectively, it is important to remember the relationship with the audience and consider how to help them learn. Rather than fading into the background, presentations are opportunities to lay the groundwork for future conversations and frame new ideas in a way that is thought-provoking, clear, and memorable.



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 2

Using Presentations to Encourage Diversity

From show-and-tell sessions in preschool to slide decks in board meetings, presentations are a widely accepted method for expressing what you know.



Presentations provide people with uninterrupted time to share detailed information about a topic of expertise and interest, making them important tools for self-expression. At the same time, presentations also indicate who has the most power in the room. In class, there are a few students who stand out as group leaders because they say the most in a presentation. At work, if a person is able to give a presentation at all, they are likely higher-ranking than someone who does not. In both places, those who decide the focus of the presentations and get to evaluate their worth are especially powerful. Since presentations can signal privilege and power, there needs to be concerted effort to disrupt power dynamics associated with who gets to present and what is valued.

Where Diversity Gets Lost

Presentations are often treated as displays of information, where the actual presenter fades into the background as a messenger who is able to answer the occasional question. As one of the most common forms of public speaking, there is a missed opportunity to bring human beings back to the center of presentations. Diversity gets lost when the same people have to talk about the same thing in the same way. When this lack of diversity is solidified as an unquestioned norm in schools and workplaces, patterns of exclusion are allowed to continue.

Discussions about diversity cannot gloss over who gets to present and why, nor should they ignore who gets to be successful under current norms. Instead, discussions should examine which voices

are privileged by the long-standing norms of what a presentation should look and sound like. Why is it that presentations must all look and sound the same? Even the most formal presentations should have opportunities for creativity and individuality without allowing diverse viewpoints to be stifled by the decisions of a group or restrictive evaluation criteria. In short, bringing back the humanity in presentations means asking:

- Who decides what topics are worth presenting?
- Who is a “successful” presenter and what about the context makes him succeed?
- Who is the least “successful” presenter and what about the context makes this the case?
- Who has never presented and why?
- Is there anything about the style and format of the presentations that privilege some voices over others?
- What power dynamics prevent some people from presenting effectively or even presenting at all?
- Is there variety in what presentations look and sound like? If not, why not?
- How are presentations evaluated? Do the criteria welcome diverse views and styles?

Conditions for Diversity

When rigid presentation norms are deeply entrenched in a workplace or classroom culture, it can feel virtually impossible to change them. These same norms are a barrier to diversity and also lead to lower-quality presentations. Effective presentations are infused with unique ideas and distinct viewpoints, with clear and intentional decisions about the best way to present them. There must be a good reason for presenting information in a certain way, not just because it is the way it has always been done. People in positions of power have a responsibility to shape the conditions for valuing diversity, beginning with who gets to present. Some starting points:

- **Identify what expertise is valued.** Are there other areas of expertise that can provide an unexpected and unusual perspective on a topic? Do not make assumptions about what people are experts in and pay attention to what people are genuinely interested in.
- **Create meaningful low-stakes opportunities for people to share their expertise in any style or format they choose.** The ability to choose is especially important to avoid making assumptions about people. Once shared, it is important for people to feel like their expertise was actually valued. Discuss what was surprisingly valuable information and how that knowledge might inform important shifts in thinking or work.
- **Temporarily ban “traditional” formats of presentation** and encourage people to think about formats that are more effective vehicles for the content, such as presentation without slides, debates, or quick pitches with discussion. Make sure people do not resort to gimmicks or media for the sake of media. Facilitate their thinking around where the audience might get stuck and what delivery mechanisms might help clarify content.
- **Actively redefine how presentations are evaluated** and how people choose their presentation topics. Involve different people in defining evaluation criteria.
- **Make public speaking practice sessions part of the culture.** Institute peer coaching and buddy systems to share talents and expertise that might help improve everyone’s presentations. Keep an eye on power dynamics and do not position some people as better speakers than others -- make practice and improvement the norm for everyone.

- **Celebrate diversity in presentations.** Offer positive reinforcement to presenters who connected with their audience, provided a new way of thinking about a topic, or helped people understand a complex idea in a clear way. Encourage people to speak and think authentically, where being themselves in presentations is a good thing.
- **Hold a discussion that explicitly addresses the complexities involved in being “authentic.”** How can you be authentic when many institutions currently privilege some voices (and ways of speaking) over others? How can you still express yourself when the people around you do not accept who you are? How can you adapt while still being yourself and how can you push back on norms and still be heard?

The Final Takeaway

Diversity is more than making sure people from diverse backgrounds have the chance to speak. The culture itself needs to be designed and facilitated in a way that fosters diverse thinking and forms of expression. When people are forced into one model of giving presentations, it is easy to lose themselves and what they think. The point isn’t to rethink presentation formats for the sake of doing something differently. Sometimes, a single speaker with a slide deck reporting out on research is exactly what will portray the necessary information. The point is to question who gets to participate and what gets communicated when this is the only format to present ideas. Ultimately, encouraging diversity starts with disrupting the power dynamics that lie beneath something as simple as a presentation.

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Diversity gets lost when the same people have to talk about the same thing in the same way. When this lack of diversity is solidified as an unquestioned norm in schools and workplaces, patterns of exclusion are allowed to continue.

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PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 3

Getting Presentations Started: For Educators and Facilitators

Presentations don't appear out of nowhere—they take a great deal of preparation and practice, which no one ever talks about!

As a facilitator, you can help people present in a way that engages the audience (instead of simply reciting information). Encourage people to think about their purpose and the unique, creative ways they can portray information or opinions in a way that connects to their audience. Use this guide as a set of reminders for how you can help improve the quality of presentations in your classroom or workplace. **Note: These suggestions are intended as personal checkpoints rather than used as a formula. Feel free to add steps or skip suggestions that do not work for you or the situation you are in—make it your own!**

<p>Build Culture</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Discuss presentations: why we present, who we present for, and what we hope to achieve. 2) Watch examples of presentations that recite information vs. ones that connect and make people think. 3) Create audience norms and routines, such as having the audience share what resonated. 	<p>Define an Authentic Purpose</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Define a powerful “why” for the presentation. Make the presentation meaningful with an authentic audience that matters. 2) Help people set short-term and long-term goals for their presentations, including how they want to feel and what they hope to achieve with their remarks. 	<p>Co-Create Rubrics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Outline a rubric with categories for content, delivery, and process-oriented skills. Define specific elements. Weight each category to emphasize immediate goals. 2) Work with people to revise the rubric, including adjusting language and the weighting or suggesting other categories.
<p>Group Thoughtfully</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Instead of assigning groups, do an activity to identify common interests and views. Later, have people pair up with others with similar interests. 2) For peer coaching, do an activity where people state where and how they need help and find peers that match their needs and style. 	<p>Avoid Overwhelm</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) During preparation, keep an eye on the scope of someone's presentation and research. How much do they want to cover? Help them narrow their ideas. 2) Help people identify their specific preparation steps and how long they plan to spend. Create checklists to guide work. 	<p>Practice and Preparation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Make dedicated time for practice, standing and speaking out loud. 2) Gradually practice small parts of presentations, first seated, then snippets at the front. Lower the stakes by beginning with phrases like “This is what I have so far...” 3) Prepare outside audiences and guest judges thoroughly.



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 4

Getting Presentations Started: For Speakers

Creating an engaging presentation takes planning and preparation.

The clearer you are in your preparation, the clearer your speech will be when you present it! Use this guide to get started the next time you have to craft a presentation. Note: These suggestions can take place in any order that works for you and should be used as a set of reminders, not a formula. Feel free to skip suggestions that do not work for you or the situation you are in – make it your own!

Know Your Audience

- 1) Know what your audience cares about. What interests or drives them? What concerns them?
- 2) Figure out their prior knowledge and learning preferences. What do they already know and what is confusing? What is the right amount of material and how should it be communicated?

Know the Context

- 1) Prepare yourself: if you can, ask questions to figure out the purpose of talk, ideal length, time of day, space, sound, tech provided, etc.
- 2) Know your listener's context. Why are they there and what are they trying to get out of it? What comes before your talk and what comes after? Who else is speaking?

Define the Objectives

- 1) Before you craft the talk, define what success looks like. How do you want to feel? What do you want the audience to take away? How will you know if they did?
- 2) List 1-3 objectives or learning goals for what you want your audience to learn. The shorter the talk, the fewer objectives you have.

Generate Ideas

- 1) Get all the ideas out there! Brainstorm freely about any ideas that come to mind that fit the audience, context, and objectives. Don't wordsmith or script – just get your ideas out.
- 2) Group all ideas that go together and label each category with a brief phrase, tagline, or thesis.

Structure the Arc

- 1) Choose a structure. Inspirational talks need stories, informative talks need data and examples. It is generally useful to have a problem, illustration, and takeaways.
- 2) Outline your talking points. Avoid scripting everything, but instead be selective, like scripting the first and last lines or the transitions.

Make Delivery Choices

- 1) Decide the length of each section and write approximate timing on your outline. Put the number of slides for each section, if any. Short sections have fewer slides.
- 2) Decide your walks and movements, if any. Practice tone, speed, volume, gestures, and facials to enhance your content.



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 5

Getting Presentations Started: For Listeners

Presentations should contribute something new to benefit the listener.

As a listener, you should reflect on the content and how it makes you react. What did the presentation teach you? What was confusing?

What was memorable and why? Reserve judgment long enough to be able to understand the presenter's goals and appreciate that they are sharing this information with you. If providing feedback, take notes, define goals, ask clarifying questions, and react to content before focusing on quirks and fillers. Use this guide to get started on becoming a better listener. Note: These suggestions are intended as reminders and personal checkpoints rather than used as a formula. Feel free to skip suggestions that do not work for you or the situation you are in – make it your own!

Be Interested

- 1) Remind yourself to be genuinely interested in the presenter and the content. Set aside judgment and open your mind to new ideas.
- 2) Show that you are interested with your facial expressions and non-verbal behavior.
- 3) Take notes and be curious about why this content is being shared.

Listen for Goals

- 1) Listen for the purpose of the talk and what objectives the presenter is trying to achieve. Focus on what they want to cover, not on what else they could have covered.
- 2) If giving feedback, make sure to ask the presenter beforehand what feedback is needed and only focus on helping with these goals.

Appreciate the Presentation

- 1) Make sure to applaud. Regardless of what you thought of the talk, show your appreciation for the viewpoints and information shared with you. Reserve judgment.
- 2) Stop and think about what you appreciated about the experience of listening to the talk. What point of view did it offer?

Clarify First

- 1) Write down clarifying questions first. What confused you? What do you need more information about? What assumptions do you want to check? If interacting with the presenter, start by asking these types of questions first.
- 2) Think deeply about your reaction and reflect on what brought it on.

Go Beyond Little Things

- 1) Avoid getting overly caught up in technical things like filler words and whether they said “um”. Listen to their ideas, not just on whether the presenter is stumbling or has speaking habits you find odd.
- 2) When giving feedback, you should mention what distracted you, but only after reacting to the content.

Provide Just Enough Help

- 1) Only give feedback when someone asks for it. Feedback should be specific, helpful, kind, and actionable. Remember to say what was memorable and what resonated with you.
- 2) Limit feedback to what is most important and don't overwhelm. Watch their face as you comment.



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 6

Presentation Cheat Sheet: Tips for Structure and Language

Preparing presentations is different than putting together an essay or some other written form of report.

To present effectively, you need to first think about making your ideas memorable enough that they do not need to be written down. Think about the needs of your audience and the purpose of your talk. The structure of your presentation should be informed by audience needs and driven by what will help you communicate your ideas in a clear, relevant, and engaging way. Use short sentences, powerful word choice, and emotional writing to make ideas stick in the minds of your audience, with or without slides.

Common Structure Elements:

Regardless of the topic, most presentations are structured by these common elements:

Connect

Connect to the audience by referencing a common experience or concern.

Contribute

State how you will be contributing something new to the conversation.

Preview

Frame the main idea in terms of how your presentation will help the audience.

Illustrate

Teach new information by illustrating complex ideas with examples, case studies, research, or stories.

Synthesize

Synthesize or sum up key takeaways.

Extend

Take the main idea one step further by offering one more final thought or implication that is especially memorable.

Possible Arcs (and Variations):

While every speech contains the structure elements listed above, the exact flow can vary based on the “arc” that appeals most to your audience:

- **Problem-Solution-Result:** Good for proposing new ideas or reporting out on a project
 - o Variations:
 - Problem-Failed Solution-Solution-Result
 - Problem-Proposed Action-Short Term Impact-Long Term Impact
 - Problem-Current Approach-Short Term Result-Long Term Impact
- **Question-Case Study-Takeaway:** Good for teaching new concepts or research talks
 - o Variations:
 - Question-Lesson-Example-Why it Matters
 - Question-Lesson-Example-What's Next
- **Universal Idea-Personal Connection-Application to World:** Good for keynotes
 - o Variation:
 - Personal-Universal-Application
 - Personal-Application-Universal



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 7

Persuasive Speaking—A Template for Presentation

When we take a stand on an issue and advocate for others, we sometimes need to give persuasive speeches.

We use persuasive speaking when we are trying to give an opinion or convince the audience to adopt an idea. To effectively persuade people, we need to start by describing the context of the problem to get everyone on the same page before advocating for a specific plan or idea. Even when we disagree, it is helpful to frame issues in terms of a larger, universal purpose that we can all understand.

**For persuasive speeches, you should begin by outlining your central argument.
All arguments cover the following key pieces of information:**

Claim

a short statement about your belief or opinion.

Warrant

your reasoning, examples, and logic that backs up your claim.

Impact

the implications of your point and why it matters, especially in the long run.

12 Tips for Persuasive Speaking:

1

Identify an argument with multiple sides, going beyond what your audience already believes.

2

Connect to universal themes and frame the importance to everyone, not just to you.

3

Start your speech with the context behind the issue and magnitude of the problem.

4

State the central question you want to answer along with the main need and central claim.

5

Elaborate on the problem or issue at hand with examples and logical reasoning.

6

Explain what is happening in the status quo and why it isn't enough.

7

Compare your arguments with the arguments on the other side.

8

Tell us what should be done and how it will solve the problem.

9

Describe what the world looks like with your solution, compared to without your solution.

10

Illustrate what your solution will look like in the short-term and in the long-term.

11

Throughout your speech, use intentional repetition of key messages or takeaways.

12

Use strong and powerful action words and vivid and colorful descriptive language.

The following template can be used to organize content in a persuasive presentation.

Description	Example
1. Describe the context/purpose of your talk.	Tell a story that describes a moment that captures the central issue at hand, or mention something about the local context that we need to consider.
2. State the central question you want to answer.	"Therefore, today, we need to consider the issue of whether..."
3. State the main need and thesis sentence and preview what you will cover.	"We need..." "Today, I will cover three arguments...first...second...finally..."
4. Elaborate on the problem or issue at hand, using reasoning, statistics, research, and other expert opinion.	"According to..."
5. Make an argument that is fairly easy to grasp as a result of expert opinion.	"From this research, we can see that..."
6. Conclude by telling us what we should consider moving forward to best serve this need for you.	"Moving forward, I hope..."
7. Make a final argument about the ripple effects and why this issue will not change without action.	"Without action, this problem will continue affecting..." "Over time, this will lead to..."
8. State your call to action and clearly outline what you want the audience to do with this information. If you have a specific solution or plan, describe what the plan will take to implement.	"Therefore, we need to take the following action..." "We can accomplish this by implementing a plan that..."
9. End with a comparative conclusion and repeat your final core message.	"If we do not take action then..." "With this plan, then..."



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 8

Informational Speaking—A Template for Presentation

For informational speeches, you should begin by identifying a set of learning objectives that you are attempting to teach the audience.

After your presentation, what should be clearer for them? What new understandings will they walk away with? Once you identify your objectives, you will need to determine what context and background information your audience will need before introducing them to new ideas.

12 Tips for Informational Speaking:

1

During preparation, plan ways to organize your thoughts and manage your time well.

2

At the start of the speech, use a greeting or hook to connect to the audience.

3

Frame the relevance of the topic and your unique angle.

4

Signpost by outlining the purpose of the talk and what you are going to cover.

5

Introduce each point by posing a rhetorical question.

6

Make sure your points are clearly distinct from one another.

7

Provide context and clarify unfamiliar information.

8

Inspire trust by weaving in statements that demonstrate expertise and experience.

9

Weave in real-world examples and trustworthy sources.

10

Transition smoothly from one point to another by including bridge sentences.

11

Provide a recap or summary of what you have covered.

12

Conclude by suggesting ways to use the information and why it is significant.

The following template can be used as a guide for organizing content in an informational presentation. While this content will vary depending on the setting, purpose, audience, and other variables involved, you generally want to make sure you include the following elements: 1) stating the purpose and need; 2) providing context (including information about yourself); 3) defining any unfamiliar terms; 4) explaining the relevance to your audience; 5) offering real-world examples to make ideas concrete; and 6) tying everything together with a clear statement about why this information is significant.

Description	Example
1. Describe (or illustrate with a “hook” or vivid example) what we need in the world, what you care about, and the topic you will cover.	Example “Hi, my name is _____, and I will be telling you about.... This topic is particularly important because we need”
2. Describe your personal relationship to the topic and establish relevant expertise.	“I have/haven’t always cared about this topic because” I became interested in this type of work because”
3. Provide an overview of the objectives of your presentation.	“In this presentation, we will be covering....” “Hopefully, this will be helpful by....”
4. Open your first point with a question that connects to your first idea. Explain the first idea about the work, journey, or concept (start with the most familiar).	“So, [pose a question that you will then answer]....?”
5. Clarify any potentially confusing ideas or necessary background information.	“Before telling you more about this work, we need to clarify a few ideas:”
6. Again, open with a question. Explain the second idea about the work, journey, or concept (provide real-world examples).	“Now, let’s consider the question of...” “For example.....”
7. Open with a final question. Explain the third idea about the work journey, or concept (connect to something that is relevant to us)	“Finally, [pose another question you will then answer]....?” “This topic is particularly relevant because....”
8. Tell us why this message is significant and relevant to our lives...	“This topic is significant today because” “I hope we can use this information to”



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 9

Presentation Warm-Ups and Practice Drills

Public speaking and communication is a full body experience, especially since it is something that makes many of us tense and nervous.

The purpose of warming up is to:

Relax and cope with anxiety

Promote good vocal technique

Get focused and “in the zone”

Prepare for the needs of the speech

Ideally, a warm-up should take around 10-15 minutes to be truly effective.

The focus of a warm-up should be on any or all of the following:

- Establishing a neutral standing or seated position (i.e. no leaning, hands in pockets, hunched shoulders, fidgeting).
- Breathing exercises (i.e. deep breathing and slow hissing releases to practice breath control)
- Stomach muscles (i.e. going through consonants with a hand on your stomach)
- Stretching and relaxing the jaw, tongue, face, shoulders, neck, knees, hips, feet and hands—basically anywhere that gets tense when speaking or interferes with good vocal production, facial expressions, gestures, and movement
- Face and facial expression—wake up your mouth, eyebrows, eyes
- Gestures (i.e. review different gestures, such as pointing, painting a picture, circling the hand)
- Enunciation (i.e. tongue twisters, diction exercises and consonants, gradually increasing/decreasing in speed)
- Volume, including practicing speaking quietly with energy, gradually increasing volume, maintaining volume at the ends of sentences, and not yelling or pushing the voice.



Warm-up Activity	Purpose
<p>Tongue Twisters Run through tongue twisters of different lengths to practice consonants and breath control. Variations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say the same tongue twisters using different emotions (i.e. sad, excited, angry, relaxed). • Repeat the tongue twister while using gestures and giving eye contact to different people or objects. • Repeat the tongue twister while varying volume and/or speed (i.e. slow and quiet, fast and loud, fast and quiet, slow and loud). 	<p>Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precise diction. • Sounding louder. • Emotional tone. • Eye contact. • Variation in speed and volume.
<p>Tell Me About a Time When...(eye contact version) Tell a 2-minute story describing a memory of an event. Prompts should be concrete and short (i.e. it was cold, it was raining, you were lonely, you lost track of time) and stories should be true. Tell the story to another person, trying to use eye contact in a comfortable way (looking away or down at appropriate moments, and communicating the emotion of the story while looking at the other person. At the end, have the other person give feedback on whether the eye contact felt natural.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice natural eye contact. • Get feedback on eye contact.
<p>Vocal Warm-Ups Warm up your voice, especially in the morning, end of day, or when you are sick.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sigh using your voice, starting at the very top of your voice and sliding down to the bottom. • Yawn loudly (lift the roof of your mouth to make yourself yawn) • Trill your r's and buzz your lips. • Sing! (doesn't matter if you think you can't, it's a good warm up regardless...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice healthy vocal habits. • Create a rounder tone.



<p>Physical Warm-Ups</p> <p>Use physical stretches to relax any areas of tension and physical exercises to energize you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close your eyes and take deep breaths, tune into any places you notice tension and relax them. • While taking deep breaths, roll your shoulders, followed by rolling your neck and your wrists and ankles. • Reach up to the sky, reach to the middle, and reach to the ground. Slowly roll up. • Bounce in place, making sure your knees are loose. • Make a “big” face by stretching your face wide open and then a “small” face by scrunching everything. • Tense everything with shoulders up and fists clenched, then relax everything. • Do energizing things -- run in place, do jumping jacks, wiggle yourself out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cope with anxiety. • Establish a relaxed energy before speaking. • Wake up the brain before speaking.
<p>Count the Sounds</p> <p>Close your eyes and listen deeply to all the sounds around you. Count how many sounds you can hear. After you’ve counted, turn those sounds into a song or a pattern (i.e. if you listen to a dryer for long enough, you can make it sound like a waltz).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cope with anxiety. • Practice listening skills. • Quiet your brain.
<p>Walk to the Front</p> <p>In a group, line up in a single file line. One by one, practice walking up to the front of the room and land at a spot in the center with hands at the side. After pausing and looking at the audience, say “hello” or some other practice line using a gesture, then return to your seat. Repeat one by one, making sure to land at the spot in the middle first before talking and making sure hands are all at the side.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice pausing to acknowledge the audience instead of rushing into the words. • Practice grounding yourself before speaking. • Practice hands at side.



<p>Contrasting Colors</p> <p><i>Note: To understand this warm-up, please read “Resource 11: Vocal Technique for Presenters”</i></p> <p>Using a book of fairy tales (or any other random text), select 2-4 lines for practice. First, read the text aloud in a flat voice with little emotion. Then, try reading the text aloud using different colors of your voice -- first, try reading as “red” (passionate and excited), then try “gray” (urgent and forceful), then “blue” (serious and calm), then “green” (breezy and conversational), and finally “orange” (kind and encouraging). After you’ve tried each color, practice switching from one color to another in the middle of the text. For an extra challenge, have others guess which colors you are applying to the text.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice using different colors, including ones that don’t come as naturally.• Practice transitioning in vocal tone
<p>Paraphrase It</p> <p>Open a text to any random page and read the content. Without any preparation, try rewording or paraphrasing the text in your own words. Repeat this activity, trying to reword the content in as few words as possible, without any filler words. If working alone, audio record yourself and listen back to hear if there are any distracting habits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice being concise and breaking filler word habits.• Paraphrasing helps you speak from notes without getting caught up in trying to say the exact words you’ve written.
<p>Confidence Contest</p> <p>In a group circle, have one person start with a simple argument or statement of opinion, like “Blueberries are the best fruit because they are good for you and full of antioxidants.” The next person says the same exact sentence, but tries to say the statement even more confidently (volume, facial expressions, and landing the ends of sentences help here). Repeat for 4 people and then have someone create a new sentence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice speaking energetically and confidently.• Practice landing the ends of sentences and not losing volume at the ends of sentences.• Practice doing more than you think you’re doing to sound confident.



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 10

Oral Delivery Cheat Sheet

Oral delivery techniques are what public speakers use to bring their content to life.

Vocal and physical moves are used to help the audience feel and visualize what you are trying to communicate, which helps build a connection to the audience. The best delivery is the simplest delivery: instead of trying too hard or overthinking what they are doing, the speaker is wholeheartedly in the moment and developing a relationship with the audience. It is important to be aware of any habits you may have that distract from your message and practice vocal and physical techniques to the point where you internalize them.

Tips for Eye Contact:

- Shrink the room. Never scan the entire audience. Choose a few people to spend some time with (preferably people who are smiling and nodding), who are on different sides of the room.
- Change your eye contact when you change ideas. Don't move your eyes around too much.
- When looking at people, see them. This is ideal, but if that makes you nervous, then look at their shoulder or chin. Make sure your focal point isn't too high (it's usually lower than you think).
- Look at people until you get them to react. Make it your goal to get them to nod or make a face.
- Know your "thinking habits". When you are thinking of an idea, do you look to the side, up, or down? Work on looking straight forward, even when you are thinking.
- Keep your eyes up at the end and own that final moment.

Tips for Gestures:

- Gestures should highlight or emphasize your points.
- Vary your hand gestures.
 - One-handed circle gesture – use when you're thinking or telling a story
 - One-handed open palm gesture – use when making a point
 - Counting gestures – use to outline numbers of points or outlines
 - Chopping gesture – use when making an argument
 - Paint a picture gesture – help audience visualize big/little, start/end, something growing

- Keep your gestures high enough (chest-level) and strong enough (not floppy).
- Put your hands down when you aren't using them.
- Never clutch your paper or a podium with both hands.

Types of Vocal Tone:

- Your tone should match your content – look and sound serious for serious content, look and sound passionate or excited for positive content.
- To help vary your vocal tone, there are different "colors of your voice" that you can work with:
 - Red: energetic, passionate, excited
 - Gray: forceful, stern, urgent
 - Blue: calm, factual, serious
 - Orange: kind, warm, encouraging
 - Green: casual, breezy, conversational

Avoiding Bad Habits:

- Tackling filler words is all about preparation and being okay with silences/pauses.
- To reduce filler words, slow down your overall speed and pause in between ideas.
- It helps to shorten your sentences and to make your voice go down ("landing") at the ends of sentences (as opposed to going up like a question), and make sure it doesn't end quieter.
- Have a clear endpoint for your thoughts. It's okay to stop.



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 11

Vocal Technique for Presenters

As a presenter, your voice is one of your most powerful tools.

As a presenter, your voice is one of your most powerful tools. To utilize the power of your voice, you need to make sure your voice stays healthy and well-supported. It is also important to be self-aware of your own natural vocal style and explore how you can develop even more range in your vocal color and tone. Volume also comes from breath support and healthy vocal production; that said, being a good speaker doesn't necessarily mean you need to be loud.

Vocal Health

- Drink water and keep your vocal cords lubricated (avoid “sticky” drinks like milk or soda, which can make it hard to enunciate).
- Breathe deeply and make sure your shoulders and chest don't lift up when you breathe – it should be coming from your diaphragm. Use your stomach muscles as you speak.
- Make sure your voice doesn't dip too low into the vocal “fry” (that uhhhh sound at the very bottom of your range). Keep your overall pitch a little higher than you think.
- Warm up before you speak, especially if it is a long talk or early/late in the day.

Volume and Support

- Remember: Breath drives the ability to speak loudly. Breathe deeply – as you speak, make sure you take pauses so that you actually have time to breathe.
- Using crisp and precise diction and consonants can imitate volume.
- Lift up the roof of your mouth and yawn to create more space in your mouth and allow for more vocal resonance (look up “exercises to raise soft palate”).
- Release your jaw and make sure you are opening your mouth enough. Place a thumb on your chin to release your jaw and massage the hinges by your ears. Massage your cheeks and make sure they are loose.

Vocal Colors

Developed by voiceover artist Thom Pinto, the “Colors” approach was designed to help explore the full spectrum of the human voice. This approach was intended to help voiceover artists to portray different characters using only their voice and to add a range of depth and feeling to their performances. In the context of public speaking, this method can be applied to help you become more self-aware of your most natural communication style and make more intentional choices about your vocal tone. Colors can be used with a light or heavy degree of treatment, and your choice of color should be driven by the content and context.

NOTE: Vocal colors are different than emotion – while they may overlap, these colors refer to how the voice sounds (not always how the person feels).

High-Energy Colors			
Red <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Robust enthusiasm, outgoing, excited, passionate• Quick gestures directed forward; lower and louder voice; fast-paced, big smile, heavy delivery; vocal pitch varies; direct eye contact	Gray <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assertive, no-nonsense, tough, forceful, stark, business-like• Stern facial expression; choppy, pointed hand gestures; clipped and choppy vocal rhythm; very straight posture; very direct eye contact; loud volume; lower vocal pitch without much variation	Yellow <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joyful, giggly, childlike, hyper, energetic, young• Bouncy physicality; hand gestures directed upward; high-pitched voice; fast-paced delivery; not always direct eye contact	
Relaxed Colors			
Orange <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Motherly, warm, loving, kind, encouraging• Smiling; warmth in the eyes; circling hands; slightly higher and lighter voice; smooth and comforting delivery style	Blue <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grounded, cool, intellectual, centered, calm, understated, subtle• Hands at side or cupped in front; straight posture; serious facial expression; lower voice with even pitch	Green <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Off-the-cuff, spontaneous, casual, fresh, breezy, conversational, noncommittal• Leaning on one side; shrugging; free-form hands with wavy gestures; not always direct eye contact; thoughtful or upbeat facial expressions; vocal pitch varies	Brown <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Earthy, textured, salt-of-the-earth, gritty, tough with a smile• Hands on hips or leaning on something; slight side smile; circling hand gestures; slow overall speed; gruff, throaty texture to voice; lower pitch, towards the bottom of vocal range; lilting, smooth vocal delivery
Character Colors (more for acting than everyday life):			
Violet <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seductive, flirty, sensual, playful• Swaying hips; slight smile; playing up and down the notes of your voice; smooth, round vocal tone; musical voice; flowing gestures	Black <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monotone, ominous, emotionless• No facial expression; slow overall delivery, taking time on certain key words; lowest part of the vocal range with no change in pitch; straight posture	Pink <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Airy, dreamlike, breathy, disconnected, spacey• Little to no facial expression; slow overall delivery; highest part of the vocal range with no change in pitch; floaty hand gestures; very breathy pitch with a “spray can effect” to the overall vocal quality	



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 12

Using Your Body to Communicate: A Checklist

As a presenter, your content, voice, and physical delivery should all be aligned to enhance the impact of your performance. As you practice using your body to communicate, check in with yourself about the following questions:

Stance and Hands

- ☐ Are my feet grounded so that they line up with my shoulders?
- ☐ Is my weight equally distributed between my feet?
- ☐ Is my stance strong enough to avoid rocking, swaying, or fiddling with my feet?
- ☐ Is my chest raised slightly with a small lift to the chin, like there's an imaginary string pulling me from my head?
- ☐ When I use my hands, are my gestures at chest level, and not too low or too high?
- ☐ When I use my hands, are they in a relaxed enough position so that my elbows are not glued to my side and my shoulders are not raised?
- ☐ When I use my hands, are they strong gestures supported by my arms without limp, floppy wrists?

Movement

- ☐ Have I reflected on my personal style for walking and movement? Am I relaxed and conversational, or polished and professional, or something else?
- ☐ When I walk up to the front of the room, do I feel and look confident?
- ☐ When I walk around the stage, is it intentional and purposeful, or am I pacing too much?
- ☐ If I cannot walk around the stage, do I have something to hold my notes so that they don't make noise or create any distractions?
- ☐ If I use slides, am I keeping my body facing forward with an occasional glance at slides, as opposed to turning entirely to face the slides?
- ☐ If I am presenting in a group, do we know how we are planning to stand and what each person should do when it is their time to speak?

- ☐ Do I have a plan for transitioning between ideas? Will I take a moment to pause, look somewhere in particular, make a gesture, walk somewhere on stage, or something else?

Emotional Connection

- ☐ Do I feel comfortable enough with my content to be able to let go and feel the emotions? Or am I overly worried about all the technical aspects of my physical delivery?
- ☐ Have I practiced enough to feel like I can internalize the physical delivery and not have to worry about it too much when I am in front of the room?
- ☐ If I feel emotionally connected, am I able to show that feeling on my face using my eyebrows, mouth, and eyes?
- ☐ When I speak, do I visualize the human impact of my ideas and why they matter? Or am I just reciting the words?
- ☐ Am I taking enough pauses and moments to show how I feel about the content through my face and gestures? Or am I rushing through the movements?



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 13

Acting Techniques to Improve Public Speaking

Acting requires a performer to make clear choices about their motivations and intentions and how they plan to communicate them to an audience.

When public speakers are clear about who they are talking to and why, it can help them connect with their audiences and connect emotionally to their content (rather than just stating lines). Similar to acting, public speakers also have to make some clear technical choices about their movements, vocal colors, and how they will break up ideas with pauses and shifts in tone. The clearer the choice, the stronger the performance – the goal is to take risks and own your choices, not be “middle of the road”.

“Character” Choices

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Who am I in this context?
- Who am I talking to?
- What is my relationship to my audience?
- Why am I talking? What is my motivation?

Technical Choices

Ask yourself the following questions:

- How are my ideas broken up? Where are the transitions between ideas?
- What is the purpose of different lines/paragraphs? Where are there big shifts in emotion and tone?
- What color choices best fit my content? (see colors described under “Vocal Technique for Presenters”)
- What is my overall “speed”? (speed refers to how fast I speak and move my hands)
- What is my overall “weight”? (weight refers to how light or heavy I feel when I speak)
- What is my overall “directness”? (directness refers to how intensely I focus my eye contact on a given focal point)
- Where are my pauses and silences? Where is it necessary to take a moment and take more time for a reaction?
- Will it be necessary to move around or “block”? If so, when and where will I move?

Preparation Checklist:

- ☐ Read through your script material.
- ☐ On the top of the page, write brief answers to:
1) Who am I? 2) Who am I talking to? 3) What is our relationship? 4) What is my motivation? If it isn't clear, make it up and make sure it is a clear choice.
- ☐ Bracket how the ideas are broken up. Note any big shifts in emotion and tone and transitions between ideas. Sometimes, this can be large paragraphs, but sometimes, it might be a single line. Make notes on the side to remind yourself.
- ☐ Write down the emotions and vocal tone colors that logically go with each bracket.
- ☐ Add slashes to note any big pauses or silences.
- ☐ Note down any planned movement or blocking.
- ☐ Practice! Revise your choices if it doesn't feel right. Remember that your goal is to make choices that best communicate the overall purpose of the content and own it!



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 14

Activity Examples: Morality on the Spot and Expert Shares

In the real world, presentations are often spontaneous in nature, with limited preparation in high-stakes situations.

Mixing short spontaneous presentation opportunities with more formal presentation assignments can help students become more comfortable with the discomfort of spontaneous speaking. Discussions and conversations should also be framed as a form of spontaneous speaking, since they require students to give immediate reactions to prompts and questions. Assessing spontaneous speaking should mostly be based on student self-assessment, where they reflect on their performance and what they need to improve. Aside from self-assessment, provide students with timely, bite-sized feedback on spontaneous speaking (either from peers or a teacher or coach), rather than a major grade.

What is the purpose of these activities?

- Students practice presenting, questioning, responding, and summarizing ideas without preparation. Students also practice speaking about their interests, strengths, and opinions.
- These activities can be done in small groups for a faster, more low-stakes version, but can also become more high-stakes presentations when done for the entire group.

How do these assignments connect to Common Core Speaking & Listening Standards?


- Regardless of grade level, the anchor standards for “Comprehension and Collaboration” require students of all ages to “prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.” (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1). This includes situations where students have limited time to prepare themselves.
- Anchor standards for all ages also require students to “adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.” (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.6) Spontaneous speaking skills are also involved in adapting to different audiences on the spot.
- Starting in Grade 1, the anchor standards for “Comprehension and Collaboration” require students to be able to build on others’ talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.1.B).
- Starting in Grade 2, the anchor standards for “Comprehension and Collaboration” require students to be able to build on others’ talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1.B).

- Starting in Grade 4, students need to be able to review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.D).
- Starting in Grade 8, students need to engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions, building on other’s ideas and expressing their own clearly (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1).
- In Grades 11 and 12, students need to propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C).

What do these assignments look like?

Morality on the Spot: Students get into groups of 4. Give each group 4 index cards, labeled with different roles, “Presenter”, “Clarifier”, “Elaborator”, and “Devil’s Advocate”. Students draw a card to decide what role they will be taking in a short 5-10 minute conversation about a moral issue. Give each group an index card, which includes a controversial question on an issue of morality that will be the focus of their conversation (these cards can be created by the teacher initially, but can later be generated by students once they get the hang of the routine). Note: the choice of topics is one of the most important pieces for teachers to prepare -- see the list of “Morality on the Spot Question Prompts” at the end of this resource. More detail on each role includes:

- **Presenter:** This person kicks off the conversation by introducing the issue along with an initial opinion with reasoning. They offer opinions throughout the conversation and also bring the conversation to an end by summarizing what was covered after time is up.
- **Devil’s Advocate:** This person offers opposing points of view or “what if” situations that provide a different perspective on the



issue. They don't have to necessarily debate the presenter, but instead be the person to push everyone's thinking.

- **Clarifier:** This person asks for clarity throughout the conversation, asking for definitions and for detail about what people mean by their points or questions.
- **Elaborator:** This person adds to the ideas of any of the other students, building on their questions, opinions, or challenges. This role does not have to take their own stance.

Expert Shares: This activity is a grown-up version of show-and-tell, asking students to share their areas of expertise, talent, strengths, interests, and experiences. For an easy version, students can get into groups of 4; for a harder version, this can be done with the entire class. To get everyone started, the teacher provides a prompt related to expertise, like the following:

- My special talent is....
- When I was a child, I was interested in...
- I felt proud when...
- I feel like I lose track of time when I....
- My favorite hobby is...
- In school, I became interested in ____ when...
- One of the hardest moments I've faced lately is....
- My superpower is...
- People turn to me for...
- I am good at...

Advice for Expert Share Activity

Please note that students often struggle with saying that they are good at something, especially as they get older. When introducing the activity, discuss why it is hard to talk about yourself and why it is difficult to remember your personal strengths and interests. Discuss why it is still worth it to develop this skill, including needing to write about strengths in personal statements and talk about them in job interviews and networking situations.

For the activity itself, spend 5-10 minutes having someone share a story related to the prompt. Afterwards, everyone else can choose to either ask questions or relate to the story with their own personal experience connected to the initial story, which can then roll into a conversation. This activity can be repeated as a routine over time and can also be linked as a warm up for larger projects, like personal statements or personal essays.

Spontaneous Participation Self-Assessment

	Developing/Meets Standard	Gold Standard
Skill 1: Discussing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can express my thoughts and ideas through whole group discussions OR small group discussions. • I am present and attentive during multiple forms of discussion. • I can demonstrate active listening. • I am tolerant and respectful of others' ideas. • My participation in discussions is meaningful and genuine, not just to get "credit" or get "counted". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am able to regularly express my thoughts and ideas through multiple forms of discussion. • I am able to enhance and build on the ideas of others during multiple forms of discussion. • I am able to help other group members participate and join in the discussion. • I am receptive to new ideas and can demonstrate interest and curiosity. • I can take multiple roles in discussion.
Skill 2: Questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can come up with clarifying questions to better understand important points. • I can ask probing questions to request follow-up information. • I can ask my questions in a respectful manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can ask questions that take the conversation to a deeper level. • I am not afraid to say when I don't understand something. • I can ask questions that help other people in my group learn about something new. • I know when to ask questions and when to just listen to the speaker. • I am able to jump in to ask questions without waiting to be called on and I can do so in a respectful manner.
Skill 3: Presenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am able to participate in spontaneous presentations. • I can put my ideas together in an organized fashion. • I put in effort and push past my comfort zone. • I can brainstorm ideas to present without any preparation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am thoughtful about the ideas I present, adding something unique to each presentation to enhance ideas. • I am eager to present in order to practice and improve. • I try to improve with every presentation. • I am aware of my presentation strengths and needs and can identify specific areas for improvement.



	Student Notes/Evidence Using the qualities listed above, write your reflections on each participation skill, citing examples where necessary.	Quick Teacher Notes
Skill 1: Discussing		
Skill 2: Questioning		
Skill 1: Presenting		

Morality on the Spot Question Prompts

Note: These are for high school students, but some may work for elementary and middle school students.

1. Is it ever okay to lie?
2. Is stealing ever okay?
3. Does equal opportunity exist in sports?
4. Is violence ever the appropriate response to injustice?
5. Is war ever necessary?
6. Do people who commit violent crimes deserve the death penalty?
7. Should student evaluations determine teacher job security?
8. Is it okay for teachers to play favorites?
9. Is it okay to block websites in schools?
10. Should life primarily revolve around serving others?
11. Should children participate in armed conflicts?
12. Do we have a moral obligation to intervene when we see suffering?
13. Is there such a thing as being morally right or wrong?
14. Would you kill 10 people to save one?
15. If a child somehow survived and grew up in the wilderness without any human contact, would they still be considered human without the influence of society and culture?
16. Is suffering a necessary part of the human condition?
17. Does hardship make a person stronger?
18. Does art hurt society?
19. If freedom is simply being able to do what you want, are animals freer than humans?
20. Is humanity headed in the wrong direction?
21. Is it better for a person to have a broad knowledge base or a deep knowledge base?
22. Is it more important to help yourself or help society?
23. Is it more important to help your family or help the world?
24. Is it better to be a big fish in a small pond or a small fish in a big pond?
25. Can human nature be changed?
26. Does absolute power corrupt absolutely?
27. Does knowledge need to have a practical use to have value?
28. Are we wasting human potential?
29. Is jealousy important to driving us to improve ourselves?
30. Are there limits to human creativity?
31. Is taking a human life ever justified?
32. If you could press a button and receive a million dollars, but one stranger would die, would you press the button?
33. Is privacy a right?
34. Should there be limitations on the right to free speech?
35. Do business owners have the right to refuse service to customers?
36. If you can save another's life and don't because doing so would break the law, are you ethically justified in your decision?
37. Are all individuals morally obligated to save another person's life if they are able?
38. Is it just and right to deny entry to a country when doing so probably means death for the immigrant and their family?
39. Is a person's value based on their actions?
40. Would the world be a better or worse place if everyone looked the same?
41. Is poverty in society inevitable?
42. Has social media been a net positive for our society?
43. Is some degree of censorship necessary?
44. Should full access to the internet be a fundamental human right?
45. Should the illegal use of drugs be treated as a matter of public health or criminal justice?
46. Should the United States provide military aid to countries with oppressive governments?
47. Should the public's right to know be valued over the right to privacy of candidates for public office?
48. Is the use of targeted killing in foreign countries unjust?
49. Do wealthy countries have an obligation to provide development assistance to other countries?
50. Should national service be required in the United States?
51. Which is more important: civil liberties or national security?
52. Should immigration be a human right?
53. Should the private ownership of handguns be banned?
54. Which is better: an oppressive government or no government?
55. In the criminal justice system, should we value rehabilitation over retribution?
56. Is it okay to kill one innocent person to save the lives of more innocent people?
57. Should an individual's freedom of speech be valued over a community's moral standards?
58. Is it possible to cure poverty?



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!



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 16

Final Presentation Rubric

Note to Teachers: To emphasize the subjectivity of public speaking, have multiple graders for each talk (i.e. teacher and peer) and ask for a self-assessment.

(3-Still Developing, 4-Meets Standard, 5-Exceeds Standard)

	Questions (To what extent...)	Rating (3-5)
PREPARATION		
Authenticity (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Was the presenter at ease in front of the audience and able to be him/herself? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the presenter talk about a topic that was clearly important to him/her? <input type="checkbox"/> Was the presenter able to express personal perspectives or vulnerability?	
Idea Development (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Did the idea unfold and build throughout the speech? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the content include specific examples to illustrate the impact of the main idea? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the speech offer a unique perspective that pushed the audience's thinking?	
Audience Connection (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Was it clear that the presenter had selected a specific audience for the speech? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the speech focus on a main idea that was relevant to the intended audience? <input type="checkbox"/> Was the speech clearly constructed with the audience in mind?	
Delivery Intentionality (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Were there specific choices about physical delivery (walking across the stage, gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, etc)? <input type="checkbox"/> Were there specific choices about vocal delivery (volume, speed, pauses, emotion, etc)?	
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS		
Overall Content Effectiveness (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Was the content clear, easy-to-follow, and well-organized? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the presenter incorporate a mixture of cases/stories and factual evidence to both contextualize and illustrate the main idea? <input type="checkbox"/> Was the language powerful and memorable? <input type="checkbox"/> Were the slides a helpful illustrative tool and backdrop?	
Overall Delivery Effectiveness (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/> Was the presenter confident, at ease, memorized, and prepared? <input type="checkbox"/> Was the overall speaking delivery engaging and compelling? <input type="checkbox"/> Was the presenter able to maintain our attention? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the presenter manage his/her presentation time effectively?	

Speaker Name:

Grade:

Feedback Person's Name:

Overall Comments:



What was effective and/or memorable about the content of the presentation?	
What was effective and/or memorable about the delivery of the presentation?	
Areas to focus on next (both content and delivery):	

Speaker Name:

Feedback Person's Name:



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 17

Community Change Idea: Youth-Led, Youth Voice Events

School and community events can be a great way for youth to practice presenting their ideas in public.

This experience is even more powerful when youth have played a central role in designing the event. Events are a big undertaking for anyone, so it is important to create collaborative structures so that youth are partnering with adults who can help organize their timelines and execute harder tasks (like getting permissions for spaces or making purchases).

This list of events is intended as a starting point to inspire the creation of youth-led youth voice events, not necessarily as a comprehensive to-do list. That said, any youth-led event planning process should enable youth to lead decisions about the following:

- Vision of the event
- Theme of the event (i.e. names, color, feel)
- Focal issues or topics covered in the event
- Day-of hosting and MC duties
- Choice of speakers
- Target audience
- Publicity methods
- Key activities for audience
- Sharing via social media

While these kinds of creative decisions can be empowering for youth, it is deeply demoralizing when youth feel like they are impossible to pull off. Adult collaborators can be important partners in making sure this doesn't happen by serving some of the following roles:

- Offering templates or examples of ideas to kick off the brainstorming process
- Keeping an eye on the scope of ideas within the given timeline and helping prioritize
- Guiding the process of creating a timeline and list of planning steps
- Guiding the process of creating any necessary committees (i.e. program, publicity)
- Keeping youth accountable by asking them to report on progress towards deadlines
- Helping create contingency plans in case something goes wrong
- Helping youth shift direction or downsize if running out of time
- Providing encouragement and feedback along the way and/or mediating conflicts

As with any event, the process gets easier once there are chances to repeat the event model, which can also create a valuable tradition for the school every year. When an event becomes a tradition, then future youth have an idea of what an event model looks like, which can help them be even more innovative about the experience. A few ideas for possible events includes:

1. **Youth Mini-Conferences.** (*Level of Difficulty: Hard*) This type of event is intended as a way for youth to share what they find exciting or interesting about their school. Mini-conferences should take place once a year during an evening or weekend time slot and are best when they involve different grade levels and diverse representation of the student population. While the format varies, mini-conferences involve a keynote speaker (or several, depending on time), youth panels, and poster sessions. Poster sessions are science-fair style, where youth present posters about student life at the school. Depending on time, mini-conferences might also include a demonstration activity (i.e. having a student demonstrate basketball or skateboard moves, or teach the audience how to draw). They also can add more low-key elements, including fireside chat or roundtable discussions that youth lead about issues at the school.
2. **Get Involved Event.** (*Level of Difficulty: Medium*) This type of event helps youth advocate for issues that they care about, where they raise awareness and persuade people to get involved. It can take place during the school day or as an after-school or evening event. These events can range in difficulty -- they can be a simpler event with tables/booths or more like a mini-conference. For the simpler option, youth can set up tables around the school all on one day, with each table focusing on a particular cause or issue of importance. Tables should include literature about the topic, a display of some kind, and a clear call to action on how people can get involved or follow up. Depending on the campus set up, these events are nice when tables can be scattered all around campus, but can also take place in a multi-purpose room.

3. **Youth-Led Assemblies.** *(Level of Difficulty: Easy-Medium)*

This takes school-wide structures that already exist and asks youth to put their own unique spin to focus the event on what is important to them. The easy version assumes that the school already has some kind of assembly; the harder version is when that structure has to be created from scratch. Youth-led assemblies are flexible, but should include these roles: youth MC, featured youth speaker, featured youth performer, and featured youth reporter. The MC opens the assembly and facilitates the event, while the featured speaker and performer share powerful stories, experiences, and talents with the group. The reporter is someone who reports out on exciting but lesser-known happenings at the school as well as opportunities for youth involvement. Assemblies work best when there is a youth committee who works with educators to select a rotating group of youth for these roles.

4. **Youth Voice Parties.** *(Level of Difficulty: Hard)* These events create a sense of community that celebrates youth voice. Similar to a talent show, open mic, or showcase event, youth voice parties invite youth to sign up for slots to express their voice. Options include telling a true personal story or a fictional creative story, a comedy act or group improv, an advocacy speech on an issue they are passionate about, or an informative presentation on a topic they are obsessed with. There can be 6 to 8 youth speakers (more than that loses attention), interspersed with fun, carnival-like activities (e.g. cookie decorating). It can also include an audience participation activity (i.e. writing ideas about a prompt on slips of paper and then posting them or tying them somewhere or creating a large group art project). At a smaller scale, these events can be repeated; otherwise, they make a great schoolwide tradition at the end of the year or before the holidays.



PRESENTATION GUIDE: RESOURCE 18

Project Sketcher

This tool is to help you map out a plan for your public speaking project, beginning with the big picture idea, the anticipated struggles and needs, the milestones and activities, and finally the specific timeline and actions.

I. Overall Description

Summary of Change Idea: What do you want to change through your voice project or activity?

What work is public?

What are your speaking/listening goals
(or required standards)?

II. Skills and Struggles

What communication skills, techniques, or capabilities are the focus of this work? (while they are all relevant to strong public speaking, choose a few areas for more targeted focus)

Content-Related	Delivery-Related	Process-Related
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming <input type="checkbox"/> Selecting content relevant to audience <input type="checkbox"/> Outlining <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing and sequencing content <input type="checkbox"/> Explaining complex ideas clearly <input type="checkbox"/> Speech writing <input type="checkbox"/> Use of compelling language and memorable phrases <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to be succinct and to-the-point when needed <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasive speech construction <input type="checkbox"/> Story construction <input type="checkbox"/> Slide design <input type="checkbox"/> Spontaneous speaking <input type="checkbox"/> Argumentation skills <input type="checkbox"/> Identifying and using credible sources <input type="checkbox"/> Research skills <input type="checkbox"/> Strong beginnings that capture audience attention <input type="checkbox"/> Strong transitions between ideas <input type="checkbox"/> Strong endings that definitively conclude and leave audience wanting more <input type="checkbox"/> Summarizing or recapping ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Breath support and control <input type="checkbox"/> Strong posture and stance <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to balance being relaxed with being energized <input type="checkbox"/> Using gestures to highlight content <input type="checkbox"/> Volume: Appropriate use and variation <input type="checkbox"/> Using voice to strengthen content (including sounding confident and using the right tone) <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate use of eye contact <input type="checkbox"/> Speed: Appropriate use and variation <input type="checkbox"/> Using facial expressions to highlight emotions <input type="checkbox"/> Movement and use of stage <input type="checkbox"/> Correct use of a microphone and/or other sound equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to avoid distracting movements and fiddling <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to avoid distracting filler phrases or words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety-coping <input type="checkbox"/> Listening <input type="checkbox"/> Asking clarifying questions <input type="checkbox"/> Asking probing questions <input type="checkbox"/> Note-taking <input type="checkbox"/> Time management <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration with others <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitation of discussions and/or teamwork <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to be authentic (true to self, style, and beliefs) <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to be connected with the emotions behind the content <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to get “in the zone” and be fully focused on the material <input type="checkbox"/> Adapting to different audiences <input type="checkbox"/> Relating to others <input type="checkbox"/> Coaching others <input type="checkbox"/> Providing constructive feedback



Out of the skills, techniques, and capabilities, what high-priority needs do you anticipate taking longer to address?

III. High-Level Plan

Public Speaking Milestones

Activities to Include

Materials Needed

People Involved and Help Needed

IV. Calendar

The calendar on the following page is intended to be used as a hard copy to be used with small post-its to color code and/or move around different milestones and activities. After mapping out the plan for each month, use any system you usually use for planning out specific daily activities and their timing.

Color Key: (suggested categories: 1) learning new content; 2) preparation day; 3) practice day; 4) performance day; 5) reflection day.

MONTH _____

					MONDAY
					TUESDAY
					WEDNESDAY
					THURSDAY
					FRIDAY



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10261 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530
www.practice-space.org
admin@practice-space.org



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