

Presentation Notes:

1. **Prepare in advance.**

- a. Know your topic well enough that you don't need lots of notes.
- b. Know your presentation; there should be no hemming and hawing.
- c. Practice! Say your entire presentation out loud several times to make sure you know what to say, how to say it, and how long it will take.
- d. Have all your props, posters, costumes, etc., ready to go.
- e. There should be no set-up delays once you have started.
- f. If you have hand-outs, have them passed out before you begin, if they are necessary for your presentation, or save them until you are finished, to minimize audience distraction.
- g. Everything that you say, do, use, or give out during your presentation should be related to your topic.

2. **Get the audience's attention** with an interesting beginning.

- a. Set the tone for the presentation. If it's going to be a silly presentation, show the audience that immediately. If it's going to be a serious presentation, don't start with a joke.
- b. Don't just get up and say, "I did my presentation on..." Start with a thought-provoking question, an interesting fact, a humorous anecdote - something that relates to your topic and will get attention. This is a "hook", just like in an essay
- c. Play a song, do a dance, shoot off fireworks... Be loud, be flashy, be weird, but get your audience's attention!
- d. Just make sure whatever you do relates to your topic in some way.

3. **Look confident.**

- a. Appear comfortable and relaxed - you should look like you know what you're doing.
- b. Don't slouch; keep your chin up, back straight.
- c. Keep your arms and hands relaxed.
- d. Don't do the "wee-wee" dance, shifting back and forth from foot to foot; stand still.
- e. You can move about, if it is appropriate to your presentation, but movement distracts the audience from the words being said, so move sparingly.

4. **Make good eye contact** with your audience.

- a. Simply staring at one point the whole time, be it your feet or the ceiling or a wall or one person, is not going to get the audience to think you know what you're doing, or encourage them to pay

attention.

- b. Try to look into the eyes of all your audience members at least once.

5. **Have a plan and follow it.**

- a. You should always write down the basic points you want to cover, then figure out a logical order for the presentation of those ideas.
- b. If you were doing a presentation on “How To...” do something, what you say during your presentation should be what you said to do in your written directions.
- c. There shouldn’t be any surprises during the presentation; we should see you doing what you wrote you would do.
- d. Write down the names of your main ideas/points either in a short list or one per note card. During the presentation, use this list/set of cards to remind you what is next to make sure you hit all your main points.

6. **Use your voice.**

- a. Clarity
 - i. Speak clearly – if the audience can’t understand your mumbling, it doesn’t matter how good your information is.
- b. Projection
 - i. Speak loudly and clearly so your audience can hear you.
 - ii. You do not have to shout to project, but when addressing a group you do need to use more volume than you would to speak to someone standing next to you.
- c. Volume
 - i. Use the volume level of your voice to show emotion, add emphasis, or build tension
- d. Tone
 - i. Use the tone of your voice to show emotion, add emphasis, or build tension
 - ii. Your tone should go with what you are saying at that moment in your presentation – if you’re talking about something sad, sound sad; if you’re talking about something happy, sound happy.
- e. Speed
 - i. If you speak too quickly, your words become unclear.
 - ii. If you speak too slowly, you’re boring.
 - iii. Practice speaking at a regular rate.
 - iv. You can use changes in the speed of your speaking to convey feeling, add emphasis, or build tension

7. **Make your information useful.**

- a. If your audience doesn’t find your presentation useful, they’re going

- to tune you out and ignore you.
- b. If you're going to show a classroom full of boys how to braid hair, start by explaining to them why this is a good skill to have.
 - c. If you're going to show a classroom full of non-baseball players how to figure out a batting average, start by explaining the reason why they should know this information.
8. **Engage your audience.**
- a. If you have the audience do something, they are involved in what you are showing them.
 - b. It might be physical engagement, because you've given them materials to work with, or it might be mental engagement, because you are asking them questions and seeing if they understand what you're doing.
 - c. Using volunteers is good; getting the entire audience doing something is very good.
 - d. Bribery can work well – “If you can answer my question, you get a prize!”
 - e. If you're going to give out food or prizes to the audience, the prizes should be related to your topic in some way.
9. **Entertain your audience.**
- a. If you're not saying or doing something they find interesting, they're going to tune you out.
 - b. Be unusual, be interesting, be loud, be bright.
 - c. You started with a strong beginning; now hold their attention.
 - d. If it's appropriate, act out or pantomime actions during your presentation, especially particularly dramatic parts.
 - e. Use your posture, stage position, and delivery of your presentation to add to particularly dramatic moments.
10. **Have a strong ending.**
- a. When you are done, have a BIG CLOSING, something that lets the audience know you are, indeed, finished.
 - b. Leave the audience with a final fact, a final question, a final thought, a final action that's going to keep them thinking or make them go “Wow!”
 - c. It's your “big finish.” Rock bands do it all the time, ending with fireworks or laser-light spectacles. Take a lesson from them (but try not to burn anyone).
 - d. It should be showy and attention-getting, and it should include a loud announcement that you are done.

- e. If you just stop talking and stand there, they may think you've died.

Things to include with your presentation:

1. **Props** –
 - a. Something for the audience to touch, smell, taste, or hear
 - b. Props are also good for you to demonstrate with.
 - c. Any props you use should be related to your topic.
2. **Visuals** –
 - a. Something for the audience to look at that pertains to your topics; perhaps an illustration, photograph, collage, poster, handout, etc.
 - b. Slide Shows
 - i. You should not use a slideshow for your presentation.
 - ii. If you feel you have to do a slideshow, you should not put words on the slides – use them for pictures and images that relate to your point.
 - iii. If you put words on your slides, each slide should have not more than six words on it.
 - iv. Slideshow “6 Word” Exceptions
 1. An example of a particular piece of writing, such as a poem.
 2. A glossary list (the terms only)
 3. A term and its definition (one item from a glossary)
 4. A bibliography (Works Cited list)
 - v. If you have to use a slideshow, you should keep the number of slides to a minimum – generally, you should not have more than 2-3 slides per minute of presentation. Slides should SUPPLEMENT your presentation, they shouldn't BE your presentation.
3. **A glossary** - if there are terms in your presentation people may not know or understand, you should define them for the audience, either by writing them down for the audience, or by saying the words and their meanings. Don't include a glossary if it is not needed.
4. **Source citations** – if you get information from a book, website, or other source, and you use the same words and numbers they use during your presentation, you HAVE TO say where your information is from; otherwise, you are **PLAGIARIZING**, which is stealing someone else's words and/or ideas.
5. A **bibliography** – if you have **citations**, you need a **Works Cited page**.