Do It Yourself TED Talks: A Comprehensive Guide

Definition:

"Do It Yourself TED Talks" is a strategy where students create and deliver short presentations, inspired by TED Talks, on topics they find meaningful and relevant from their lessons. This activity encourages students to identify key concepts and ideas, synthesize information, and present it in an engaging format. The presentations are typically concise, focusing on clarity and impact.

Benefits for Teachers:

- **Comprehensive Assessment**: Provides a holistic view of student understanding across multiple skills (content knowledge, communication, critical thinking).
- **Engagement Indicator:** Helps identify which topics resonate most with students, informing future lesson planning.
- **Differentiation Opportunity:** Allows for assessment of students with diverse learning styles and strengths.
- **Cross-curricular Integration:** Combines subject-specific knowledge with speaking and listening skills.
- **Formative Assessment Tool:** Offers real-time insight into student comprehension, allowing for immediate instructional adjustments.

Benefits for Students

- **Active Learning**: Encourages students to engage deeply with the material to explain it to others.
- **Public Speaking Practice**: Develops crucial communication skills in a supportive environment.
- **Creativity and Autonomy**: Allows students to explore topics of interest and present them in their own style.
- **Peer Learning**: Exposes students to different perspectives and explanations from their classmates.
- **Confidence Building**: Successful presentations boost self-esteem and academic confidence.
- **Metacognition**: Promotes reflection on their own learning process.

Tips for Facilitating Do It Yourself TED Talks

1. **Sample Ted Talks:** Share sample Ted Talks with students, then brainstorm a list of criteria for creating and presenting a talk. Here is a list of sample Ted Talks presented by children:
    - **Kids Need Recess**
    - **What Adults Can Learn Fom Kids**
    - **Climate Change - From One Kid to Another**
    - **Lemons to Lemonade**
    - **How Every Child Can Thrive by Five**
    - **Why Parents should Listen to Kids**
    - **Kids Can Too**
2. **Start Small**: Begin with partner or small group presentations before moving to full class talks.
3. **Provide Clear Guidelines**: Offer a simple rubric or checklist for what makes a good presentation.
    - **How To Write A TED Talk In 7 Quick And Easy Steps**
    - **How to Deliver a TED Talk**
    - **Monroe's Motivated Sequence**
4. **Allow Preparation Time**: Give students adequate time to organize their thoughts and practice.
5. **Encourage Multimedia:** Let students incorporate simple visual aids or props if desired.
6. **Create a Supportive Atmosphere**: Establish ground rules for respectful listening and constructive feedback.
7. **Model the Process**: Demonstrate a short TED-style talk yourself to set expectations.
8. **Offer Topic Suggestions**: Provide a list of potential topics for students who need inspiration.
9. **Encourage Inclusivity:** Make it a safe space for sharing by allowing students to opt-out of presenting in front of the whole class if they are uncomfortable.
10. **Celebrate Effort:** Recognize all students for their participation, not just the most polished speakers.

Variations of Do It Yourself TED Talks

- **Lightning Talks**: Limit presentations to 1-2 minutes for a fast-paced, high-energy session.
- **Video TED Talks**: Allow students to record their talks, which can be shared online or with other classes.
- **Team TED Talks:** Have small groups collaborate on a presentation, with each member responsible for a section.

- **TED Talk Debates**: Assign opposing viewpoints on a topic for students to present and discuss.
- **Progressive TED Talks**: Students give multiple short talks throughout a unit, building on their understanding.
- **Interactive TED Talks**: Incorporate audience participation elements into the presentations.

K-6 Examples:

1. **Mathematics (Grade 3-5):**
    - **Example:** A student presents on the importance of understanding fractions in real life, using examples such as cooking and sharing.
    - **How to Use:** After a unit on fractions, students create TED Talks explaining a fraction concept and its real-world application.
2. **Science (Grade K-2):**
    - **Example:** A student presents on the life cycle of a butterfly, using drawings and simple descriptions.
    - **How to Use:** After learning about life cycles, students choose an animal or plant and describe its life cycle in a short presentation.
3. **Social Studies (Grade 4-6):**
    - **Example:** A student presents on the significance of a historical figure they studied, explaining their impact on society.
    - **How to Use:** After a unit on historical figures, students choose a person and create a presentation about their contributions and legacy.

Student Materials

1. **TED Talk Planning Sheet:**
    - Topic: _____
    - Three main points:
        1. _____
        2. _____
        3. _____
    - Interesting fact or story to include: _____
    - Visual aid ideas: _____

2. **Practice Checklist:**
    - I've practiced my talk at least 3 times
    - I can give my talk without reading from notes
    - My talk is between 2-5 minutes long
    - I've shown my visual aid to a friend to make sure it's clear
3. **Research Guides:** Resources for finding information on their chosen topic.
4. **Presentation Aids:** Access to tools like poster boards, digital slides, or props.

Teacher-Initiated Assessment Examples:

- **Checklists:** Criteria for evaluating the content, clarity, and delivery of the presentation.
- **Exit Tickets:** Short reflections on what students learned from their peers' presentations.
- **Rubrics:** Detailed rubrics outlining expectations for content, organization, delivery, and creativity.

Student-Initiated Assessment Examples:

- **Peer Feedback Forms:** Structured forms for students to provide constructive feedback to their classmates.
- **Self-Assessment Checklists:** Tools for students to reflect on their own performance and identify areas for improvement.
- **Reflection Journals:** Entries where students discuss what they learned from the process and their peers' presentations.

By integrating Do It Yourself TED Talks into the classroom, teachers can create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that promotes student voice and deeper understanding of the curriculum.

Source: Paul Ketko @ Inspiring Inquiry