

PRESENTATION STRATEGIES

You will often have to give individual or group presentations in your class. The strategies below will help you to prepare, present, and reflect on your presentations.

Prepare

Consider Your Topic

- **Choose a topic you are excited about.** If you are excited, your audience will be more interested and excited, too.

Organize Your Presentation

- **Make an outline** to help you organize your ideas.
- **Start strong.** Use a quotation, an interesting example, a rhetorical question, or a powerful image to get your audience's attention. Include one sentence that explains what you will do in your presentation and why.
- **Stay focused.** Make sure your details and examples support your main points.
- **Use visuals.** Drawings, photos, video clips, infographics, charts, maps, slides, and objects can get your audience's attention and help explain ideas. For example, a photo or map of a location you mention can help your audience picture a place they have never been.
- **End strong.** Good conclusions often refer back to the beginning of the presentation. For example, if you ask a question in the beginning, you can answer it in the conclusion. Remember to restate your main points.

Consider How to Connect with Your Audience

- **Think about your audience.** Ask yourself: Where are the people in the audience from? What is their background? What do they already know about my topic? What information do I need to explain? Use language and ideas they will understand.
- **Share a personal story.** Present information that will get an emotional reaction; for example, information that will make your audience feel surprised, curious, worried, or upset.
- **Be authentic (be yourself!).** Use words that you know and are comfortable using.

Rehearse

- **Write notes on notecards.** Do not write full sentences, just key words and phrases to help you remember important ideas. Mark the words you should stress and places to pause.
- **Review pronunciation.** Check the pronunciation of words you are uncertain about. Practice the pronunciation of difficult words.
- **Practice your presentation.** Practice saying it out loud several times—perhaps in front of a mirror, on video, or in front of others. You may want to memorize the introduction and conclusion.
- **Ask for feedback.** If something isn't clear or doesn't work, change it.

Present

- **Speak slowly and clearly.** Pause to allow your audience time to understand the information.
- **Speak loud enough to be heard** by everyone, but not too loud. Ask the audience if your volume is OK at the beginning of your talk.
- **Be friendly and relaxed.** Remember to smile! Use body language to emphasize your points.
- **Don't read directly from your notes.** Use them to help you remember ideas.
- **Make frequent eye contact** with the entire audience.

Reflect

- **Consider what went well** during your presentation and how you can improve.
- **Get feedback** from your classmates and teacher. Are their comments the same or different from your own thoughts? How can you use their feedback in your next presentation?

Presentation Outline

When you plan a presentation, it is helpful to use an outline. If it is a group presentation, the outline gives an easy way to divide the presentation. For example, one student can do the introduction, another student the first idea in the body, and so on.

1. Introduction

Topic: _____

Hook: _____

Statement of main idea: _____

2. Body

First step/example/reason: _____

Supporting details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Second step/example/reason: _____

Supporting details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Third step/example/reason: _____

Supporting details:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. Conclusion

Restate main point(s): _____

Suggestions/Predictions: _____

Final thought: _____