



C: Vivacious Visuals

Often, it isn't that exciting to simply watch someone talking. Make your oral presentation more interesting by including visual aids. People enjoy visual aids because they add interest, life, and color to a presentation. In addition, a large number of people are visual learners, so visual aids help them see and remember the information.

Today, create a visual aid for your oral presentation: a poster board, a model or find an object that helps you graphically represent an key point in your paper. Or, if Mom or Dad agree, advanced students may put together a PowerPoint slideshow. Keep these tips in mind as you create your visual aid:

- **Use your visual aid to highlight only one key point of your presentation.** Is there a chart or table that would help to graphically show a statistic you used for support in your paper? Are there pictures or one key image that would enhance one of the major points you'd like to make? Think of a way to visually represent one of the main ideas you'd like your audience to take away from your presentation and design your visual aid to represent this idea.
- **Choose your colors carefully.** While a hot pink poster board may look pretty to you, your audience may find it too bright. Also, avoid light colors when writing. Although yellow is bright, it can be difficult to read from a distance. Make sure your colors match and are easy to see.
- **Write and draw on a large scale.** Visual aids should be legible by people some distance away. This distance is determined by the size of the place where you will present your speech. Test sizes by writing on scrap paper and stepping back to see how easy the words are to read. If you are unsure, go for the larger size to be safe.
- **Don't clutter your visual aids.** Don't try to write out entire sentences or paragraphs. Use your visual aid to highlight a few key points with words or phrases. People feel overwhelmed when they see large amounts of text. Remember this and keep your text amounts short.
- **Balance your visual aids.** This means that you don't have a large amount of blank space on one side of your poster or slide; instead, have your images and text spread evenly over the poster. Make sure the white space, or blank areas, on your poster are close to even on all sides.
- **Reveal and Conceal.** Practice your speech again today with your visual aid. The effects of a visual aid quickly diminish when you set it out for the audience to see before you begin to speak, and leave it next to you the entire presentation. Instead, "tell" your audience when you'd like to focus their attention on

the visual by revealing it when it supports what you're talking about, and taking it down again when you've completed that portion of your talk. Make a note on your index cards when you reach the point in the presentation where you'd like to reveal your visual aid and again when you're ready to conceal it to help you remember these motions during your presentation.

• Tips for an effective PowerPoint slideshow:

- ~ Use slides to highlight key phrases or points—either with words or pictures. You want your audience to focus their attention primarily on what you're saying and use the slideshow as support. The words you say should not become support to a distracting slideshow.
- ~ Keep the "Reveal and Conceal" technique in mind as you work through the slides of your presentation. Consider adding blank slides to regain the full attention of your audience when you have something important you'd like them to hear. Remember, you want to interact with your audience and not "hide" behind a slideshow, so don't hesitate to pull your audience away from the screen every now and then.
- ~ Don't transfer your entire outline into the slideshow. You will keep your audience more engaged if you don't reveal everything you're going to say with every new slide.
- ~ Your slideshow should not be your presentation "crutch." Minimizing the information on your slides will also help you to avoid the temptation to stand in front of your audience and read them the information on the slides. Boring! The index cards you made on Day 2 should be your main guide for what you'd like to say, the slideshow simply adds visual interest and support for your audience. If you lean more heavily on your cards than on the slideshow, it will also be easier to keep your body facing toward your audience rather than toward the screen during your presentation.
- ~ Practice your presentation with the slideshow so you know when you'd like to change to the next slide. Make notes on your index cards to help you remember to change slides.

D: The Presentation

Today, you will deliver your oral presentation to an audience: family, friends, or neighbors. You have a subject and note cards, you have rehearsed, and you have a visual aid. Here are a few final points to remember about quality public speaking:



©2015 by Sonlight Curriculum, Ltd. All rights reserved.

- **Look your audience in the eyes.** If you don't look at people, they don't feel connected to you. When you look down, you tend to read your notes, which makes your voice sound flat instead of animated. Looking at your audience also lets you see when they need you to slow down or speed up. Don't feel intimidated by your audience. Remember that people want you to do well. They won't remember the word you stumbled on, but they will remember that you were engaging and made a connection with them.
- **If you used citations** (references crediting research you did) **in your paper, make sure you mention them in your speech.** This adds credibility to your information. Simply say, "John Davidson, in his article 'Why We Should Read More' wrote ..." and read your information. This way, you give credit to the author and let your audience know about the hard work you did researching your information.
- **Don't fidget.** If you do, you will look uncomfortable and distract your audience. Even if you are nervous about public speaking, your audience won't know that unless you show them. If you stand still and speak confidently with eye contact, your audience will think, "Wow! What confidence! Very informative!" If you look nervous, they will think you're nervous. Your audience will believe what you show them.
- **Speak loudly and clearly.** Some time before your speech, have someone sit at the very back of the room where you will speak. Say a few sentences and ask if you are loud enough. Adjust your volume, accordingly. Have that person sit in your audience and send a signal that you are not speaking loudly enough to be heard.

Now relax! You've done your preparation! You'll do a wonderful job! Give your speech and have someone (or a few people) complete the "Presentation Survey" below. Consider the feedback and write a paragraph on the prompt found under "Oral Presentation Reflection".

Presentation Survey

Thank you for taking the time to answer a few brief questions about my presentation.

Did I make eye contact with the audience.

Yes **No**

Did I stand confidently without fidgeting?

Yes **No**

Was my voice loud and clear enough to be easily understood?

Yes **No**

Was my visual aid easy to read?

Yes **No**

Did I cover the information in an understandable fashion or was information confusing and hard to follow?

Did I spend too much time on points that the audience understood easily?

Yes **No**

Anything else you'd like to add or suggest?

Oral Presentation Reflection

Using the completed checklist, write a short paragraph about your oral presentation. What did you feel you did well? What would you like to improve? What unexpected challenges did you face?
