

## Presenting Literature

### Discussion

- What is the best definition of “presentation” for you?
- What are the features of a good presentation?
- What makes a good speaker?
- What are the most important “don’ts” when giving presentations?
- Do you have any experience with giving presentations?
- What kinds of presentations do you think you may need in your career and why?

### A Brief Structure of the Presentation Process

- 1 PREPARATION – think about topic selection – audience analysis – purpose statement
- 2 TITLE DEVELOPMENT – develop an informative & interesting title
- 3 INTRODUCTION – present yourself & your topic with a purpose statement (aim of talk) & outline
- 4 MAIN BODY – arrange content in a logical structure
- 5 ENDING – signal to end – provide a summary, conclusion & closing – invite questions
- 6 REHEARSAL – focus on phrases & timing
- 7 DELIVERY – think about body language & how to speak confidently
- 8 DISCUSSION – be prepared to handle questions

### Step by step

*Think about topic selection – conduct an audience analysis – write out a purpose statement – think about the content & plan of your presentation – consider using visuals*

### Topic Selection

*Here are some examples of presentation themes or topics that are too general for a short presentation. Try to find a more interesting and specific perspective on one of the following topics:*

1. Pop Literature \_\_\_\_\_
2. Trends for Literature in the 21st Century \_\_\_\_\_
3. Architecture in Literature \_\_\_\_\_
4. Gender and Literature \_\_\_\_\_
5. Literature Reflecting Changes in Society \_\_\_\_\_

### Audience Analysis

*What points are there to be considered:*

- What is their ..... of the subject? What is their ..... level?
- What do they ..... from me? What are my ..... as the speaker?

### Purpose Statement

*Determine the purpose of the presentation. Write out a single declarative sentence which states the specific objective you wish to achieve. Could any of these sentences serve as purpose statements relevant to this course? How could they be modified to be suitable?*

- a) “I hope to persuade the teacher that the topic ‘My Favourite Writer’ is the best and most scientific one, so that I can pass the presentation part of the exam.”
- b) “I hope to illustrate to the audience the impact of Nobel Prize on European perception of non-Western writing, so that they get an insight into the changing reading patterns.”

- c) "I hope to inform the audience about feminist literary criticism in Great Britain, the USA, France, Italy, and Spain, all compared to Czech feminism, so that they understand the situation in this country."
- d) "I hope to communicate the greatness of Gabriel García Márquez's writing, so that they can admire and love it as much as I do."

### Title Development

*Develop an informative & interesting title. A title must attract your audience, describe your topic clearly, and give a precise idea about what to expect in the presentation. Here are some useful points to keep in mind when creating your title.*

- Avoid using redundant words and phrases
- Avoid using abbreviations and jargon
- Avoid using "cute" or sensational titles
- Avoid being too vague or too general

*Which of the following titles would be acceptable for an academic presentation?  
How could they be changed to be more acceptable?*

1. A Study of Married Male Characters in Shakespeare's Comedies
2. Auto-biographies: A Post-colonial View
3. Black Identity and the Role of Reggae
4. Murder, She Wrote!
5. Narrative Skills in Improvisational Theatre

### Introduction

*An introduction is the most important part of a presentation. The audience should get the impression that your topic is well thought out and that you have a clear idea about the actual content of the presentation. As introductions can become repetitive, it is important to have a choice of words and expressions ready. Use one of the following expressions to replace the synonyms in bold. Find the purpose statement.*

don't hesitate      a chance      I take care      I'm delighted      sections      to communicate  
                          go through      in more depth\*      my purpose is      finally      divide      to  
 emphasise

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It's a pleasure to be with you today. My name is Gordon Mathews and I'm in charge of teaching presentation skills. We are here today to review some key ideas about why it is important to learn effective communication skills. As we are living in the information age and may often be overwhelmed with massive amounts of information, it is important to know how to highlight the main ideas and provide a framework for what we are trying to get across. What I intend to do is to break down this presentation into three parts: first, the preparation phase; second, the use of sign-posting language, and third, the actual delivery of the presentation. If you have any questions, please, feel free to interrupt me, but I should also say that there'll be an opportunity to discuss issues at greater length after my talk.

## Sign Posting Language

Try to match the phrases with their functions.

### FUNCTIONS:

1. Signal to end
2. Summarizing
3. Concluding
4. Explaining visuals
5. Recommending
6. Closing
7. Inviting questions

### PHRASES:

- a) So, I would suggest that we...
- b) The upper left part of the poster gives information about ...
- c) As you can see, there are some very good reasons...
- d) That completes my presentation.
- e) Thank you for your attention.
- f) Before I stop/finish, let me just say...
- g) I'd like to propose... (more formal)
- h) In conclusion...
- i) Let me just run over the key points again.
- j) The lower chart compares ....
- k) I hope you have gained an insight into...
- l) If you have any questions, I'd be pleased to answer them.
- m) I'll briefly summarize the main issues.
- n) To sum up, I would like to say that...
- o) That brings me to the end of my presentation.
- p) I'd like to leave you with the following thought/idea.
- q) You can see in the middle ....
- r) I would welcome any comments/suggestions.

## Ending

Complete the following ENDING with words from the list and find the concluding statement.

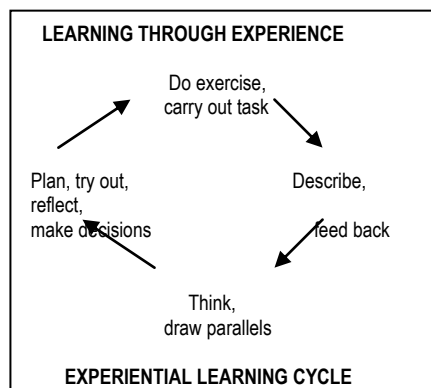
questions      that's all      secondly      discussion      meaningful  
conclude      issues      briefly      finally      begin

So, \_\_\_\_\_ I have planned to say about the topic. Let me summarize the main \_\_\_\_\_ . Very \_\_\_\_\_ , they are four. First, I spoke about the preparation phase, where it's very important to determine the aim and its relevance to the audience; \_\_\_\_\_ , the use of sign-posting language, which is used to provide optimal orientation; and \_\_\_\_\_ , the actual delivery, where it's good to think about your voice and body language. I'd like to \_\_\_\_\_ by emphasizing that many presentations could be greatly improved by providing the audience with a \_\_\_\_\_ concluding statement that stresses the position of the speaker on the topic. I suggest we start the \_\_\_\_\_ , but before we \_\_\_\_\_ , let me thank you for your attention. I'd be glad to answer any \_\_\_\_\_ now.

## Visuals

Look at the visuals below and try to characterize their qualities.

1. **NATIONALISM**  
There are four core debates which permeate the study of nations and nationalism.
  - Nationalists argue that nations are timeless phenomena.
  - The next major school of thought is that of the perennialists who argue that nations have been around for a very long time.
  - Postmodernists and Marxists also play in the larger debates surrounding this topic, the modernization school is perhaps the most prevalent scholarly argument at the moment. These scholars see nations as entirely modern and constructed.



*Complete some useful tips:*

Don't use visuals to ..... exactly what you are saying. Don't ..... visuals with too much information. Don't ..... from the visuals. Don't use ..... visuals.

### Handling Questions

*What would you say or do in the following situations?*

SITUATIONS:

1. Instead of asking a question, a person strongly and rather angrily disagrees with you.
2. Instead of asking a question, a person states a viewpoint that agrees with yours.
3. A person says that some of your information is inaccurate\*, but you are absolutely sure that you are correct.
4. A person says that some of your information is inaccurate, and you are not sure whether your information is correct or not.
5. A person asks you a question that will require a very long, complicated answer.

Match the situations above with the following responses.

RESPONSES:

- A. Do not regard this as an attack. You can say: "I appreciate your bringing this to my attention. I'll have to recheck my sources to see what is correct."
- B. If possible, give your source of information. If you cannot do so, you can say: "I believe that my information is correct, but I will certainly recheck my facts."
- C. Address the person's question, noting that you cannot answer it at this time. You can say: "That's an interesting question, but it would take much too long to answer it. Perhaps we can discuss it later."
- D. Listen politely, then restate your point of view, with additional evidence, if possible. Do not argue with the person. If they repeat their position, you can say: "Well, we'll have to agree to disagree on this point." or "Unfortunately, there's no time to go into this more deeply right now."
- E. Show how this person's ideas support your own point of view. You can say: "Yes, that fits in exactly with what I was saying."

IALS TEST materials (1997) in M. Pavlovová, Oral Presentations, 2002.

### Language

*Choose the right expression:*

1. If you have **some** / **any** questions, don't hesitate to ask me.
2. She is in charge of the Department of English Literature at **Masaryk** / **the Masaryk** University.
3. **At first** / **First** I'd like to speak about translation theories in general.
4. I'd like **explaining** / **to explain** more about Salman Rushdie's use of symbols.
5. If I understand you **correctly** / **correct**, you are **saying** / **telling** that crime fiction is not literature.
6. I'm afraid **I can't see** / **I'm not seeing** the point of adapting novels for the stage.
7. **Do you mean** / **Are you meaning** to say that there is some justification for censorship in literature?
8. That's a good point, but I prefer **not answer** / **not to answer** / **not answering** that today.
9. **Saying** / **Telling** jokes might not go down well with the audience.
10. Could you give us some **advice** / **advices** about translating poetry?