

# **Making Oral Presentations**

Speaking in front of a group can be exciting, but it can also be scary. If the thought of any formal speaking situation makes you nervous, you are not alone. Speaking in front of a group is a common fear, but one that you can overcome.

Just think of speaking as a type of performance. You may already perform quite well on a basketball court, in a band, in a play, or at a dance. With planning and patience, you will also be able to give effective oral presentations.

During this unit, you will learn how to prepare and present an oral presentation based on research you have done. You will also learn how to turn your presentation into a multimedia report.

- **Planning Your Presentation**
- **Creating Note Cards**
- **Considering Visual Aids**
- **Practicing Your Speech**
- **Delivering Your Presentation**
- **Evaluating a Presentation**

# Planning Your Presentation

To transform research into an oral presentation, you need to consider your purpose, your audience, and the content of your report.

## ▪ **Determine your purpose.**

Your purpose is your reason for giving a presentation.

- **Informative** speeches educate by providing valuable information.
- **Persuasive** speeches argue for or against something.
- **Demonstration** speeches show how to do or make something.

## ▪ **Consider your audience.**

As you think about your audience, keep the following points in mind.

- **Be clear** so that listeners understand your main points immediately.
- **Anticipate questions** the audience might have and answer them. This helps keep the audience connected.
- **Engage the listeners** through thought-provoking questions, revealing anecdotes, interesting details, and effective visuals.

## ▪ **Review your report.**

During an oral report, your audience obviously cannot go back and listen again to anything you have said, so you must be sure to share your ideas clearly from beginning to end. Review your report to see how the different parts will work in an oral presentation. Use the following questions as a review guide.

- Will my opening grab the listeners' attention?
- What are the main supporting points that listeners need to know?
- How many supporting details should I include for each main point?
- What visual aids can I use to create interest in my topic?
- Will the ending part have the proper impact on the listener?

# Creating Note Cards

If you are giving a prepared speech rather than an oral reading of your report, you should use note cards to help you remember your ideas. The guidelines below will help you make effective cards.

## ▪ Follow these note-card guidelines.

Write out your entire introduction and conclusion on separate note cards. In the body of your speech, write one point per card, along with specific details. Clearly number your cards.

- Place each main point on a separate note card, using key words and phrases to help you remember your details.
- Number each card.
- Note the main idea at the top of each card.
- Write supporting ideas on the lines below the main idea.
- Highlight any ideas you especially want to emphasize.
- Mark cards that call for visual aids.

Parents

1

- Cronos (father) & Rhea (mother)

Siblings

2

- Hera
- Hades
- Poseidon
- Demeter
- Hestia
- Artemis
- Aphrodite

# Consider Visual Aids

Consider using visual aids during your speech. They can make your presentation clearer and more meaningful. Here are some examples.

<b>Posters</b>	include words, pictures, or both.
<b>Photographs</b>	help people see what you are talking about.
<b>Charts</b>	explain points, compare facts, or show statistics.
<b>Maps</b>	identify or locate specific places being discussed.
<b>Objects</b>	show the audience important items related to your topic.
<b>Power Point / Keynote</b>	project your photographs, charts, and maps onto a screen and turn your speech into a multimedia presentation.

## ▪ Indicate when to present visuals.

Write notes in the margins of your note cards to indicate where a visual aid would be helpful.



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When creating visual aids, keep these points in mind.

- Make them big. Your visuals should be large enough for everyone in the audience to see.
  - Keep them simple. Use labels and short phrases rather than full sentences.
  - Make them eye-catching. Use color, bold lines, and simple shapes to attract the audience.
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# Practicing Your Speech

Practice is the key to giving an effective oral presentation. Knowing what to say and how to say it will help eliminate those “butterflies” speakers often feel. Here are some hints for an effective practice session.

- **Arrange your note cards in the proper order.** This will eliminate any confusion as you practice.
- **Practice in front of a mirror.** That way you can check your posture and eye contact and determine if your visuals are easy to see.
- **Practice in front of others.** Friends and family can help you identify parts that need work.
- **Record a practice presentation.** A recording will let you know if you sound interested and if your voice and message are clear.
- **Time yourself.** If your teacher has set a time limit, practice staying within it.
- **Speak clearly.** Do not rush your words, especially later when you are in front of your audience.
- **Work on eye contact.** Look down only to glance at a card.
- **Speak up.** Your voice will sound louder to you than it will to the audience. Rule of thumb: if you sound *too* loud to yourself, you are probably sounding just right to your audience.
- **Look interested and confident.** This will help you engage the listeners.

## Practice Checklist

To review each practice session, ask yourself the following questions.

1. Did I appear at ease?
2. Could my voice be heard and my words understood?
3. Did I sound like I enjoyed and understood my topic?
4. Were my visual aids interesting and used effectively?
5. Did I feel like I was rushing through my speech?
6. Did I miss anything I wanted to say?

# Delivering Your Presentation

When you deliver a speech, concentrate on your voice and body language. Voice quality and body language communicate as much as your words do.

## ▪ **Control your voice.**

*Volume, tone, and pace* are three aspects of your formal speaking voice. If you can control these three aspects of voice, your listeners will clearly follow your ideas.

- **Volume** is the loudness of your voice. Imagine you are speaking to someone in the back of the room and adjust the volume accordingly.
- **Tone** expresses your feelings. Be enthusiastic about your topic and let your voice show that.
- **Pace** is the speed at which you speak. For the most part, speak at a relaxed pace.



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You can make an important point by slowing down, by pausing, by increasing your volume, or by emphasizing individual words.

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## ▪ **Consider your body language.**

Your body language (*posture, gestures, and facial expressions*) plays an important role during a speech. Follow the suggestions given below to communicate effectively.

- **Assume a straight but relaxed posture.** This tells the audience that you are confident and prepared. If you are using a podium, let your hands rest lightly on the surface.
- **Pause before you begin.** Take a deep breath and relax.
- **Look at your audience.** Try to look toward every section of the room at least once during your speech.
- **Think about what you are saying** and let your facial expressions reflect your true feelings.
- **Point to your visual aids** or use natural gestures to make a point.

# Evaluating a Presentation

Your presentation will be evaluated using the following evaluation sheet. Circle the number that best fits each assessed area.

## CONTENT

**Subject/Knowledge** (was the subject appropriate for the assignment and did the speaker appear knowledgeable?)

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
2	4	6	8	10

**Structure** (was it easy to follow where the speaker was going, organizationally, during the speech?)

2	4	6	8	10
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**Attention Getter** (did the speaker grab your attention and make you want to listen?)

1	2	3	4	5
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**Sources** (did the speaker cite where they found their information?)

1	2	3	4	5
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**Time Limit** (how well did the speaker utilize the time that was allotted?)

1	2	2	4	5
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## DELIVERY SKILLS

**Variety** (did the speaker's personality and vitality come through? Or were they monotone?)

2	4	6	8	10
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**Volume** (was the speaker loud enough for everyone to easily hear them?)

1	2	3	4	5
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**Rate** (was the speaker's rate nice and conversational?)

1	2	3	4	5
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**Vocal Pauses** (did the speaker refrain from using "um," "er," "ah," or repetitive words?)

1	2	3	4	5
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**Pronunciation/Grammar** (did the speaker pronounce their words correctly and use correct grammar?)

1	2	3	4	5
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**Eye Contact** (did the speaker look at the audience member's eyes during most of the presentation?)

2	4	6	8	10
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**Facial Expression** (did the speaker have natural and appropriate facial expressions?)

1	2	3	4	5
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**Hand Gestures** (did the speaker have natural and appropriate hand gestures?)

1	2	3	4	5
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**Posture/Feet** (did the speaker stand up straight and keep their feet still?)

1	2	3	4	5
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**Visual Aid** (does the visual aid help the audience understand and remember the subject? Also, you might take into consideration the speaker's professionalism in handling questions, and attire)

2	4	6	8	10
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**TOTAL POINTS:** \_\_\_\_\_ / 100