

Student name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

C21 SKILLS

COMMUNICATION: Structuring a presentation

Presentations need a clearly defined structure to avoid confusing or frustrating an audience. When preparing a presentation, you should think about how you can most efficiently and effectively follow a clear progression of ideas.

You learn the communication skill of 'structuring a presentation' in *C21 English for the 21st Century*, Level 5. Providing a clear structure to your presentation is a key skill when delivering presentations in an academic setting. By using signposts – key phrases to indicate where you are in your argument – your audience will be able to follow the ideas in your talk more easily and focus on what you have to say. By presenting in a clear and audible voice, with correct word and sentence stress to mark keywords, you will help your audience understand the key points and help them not to become confused or get lost.

Practice

1 🗣️ Complete the information about the presentation sections with the words from the box. Then, in pairs, match the signpost phrases to the presentation sections.

audience purpose	finished source	introduce structure	main summarize	overall summarize	points visual
---------------------	--------------------	------------------------	-------------------	----------------------	------------------

Presentation sections

1 Introduction

_____ yourself
Introduce the main _____
State the _____ of the talk
Outline the presentation _____

2 Main points

Introduce a _____ point
Refer to a _____ or slide
Cite a data _____ or reference

3 Conclusion

Signal you have _____ the talk
_____ the key points
Make an _____ conclusion
Invite questions from the _____

Signpost phrases

- As Harris described in her paper in 2017 ...
- Can I turn your attention to figure 4 ...
- Finally, let's look at ...
- First I'll introduce ... then I'll talk about ...
- I'll do my best to answer questions now.
- I'll take questions from the audience now.
- If we look at this chart of ...
- In conclusion, I think it's clear ...
- In summary, I talked about ...
- Let me end by saying ...
- Let me introduce myself – I'm ...
- Let's begin by looking at ...
- Let's move on to ...
- My presentation is divided into three topics.
- So, to sum up, ...
- That brings me to the end ...
- The reason I'm presenting this is to ...
- The title of today's talk is ...
- This data is from ...
- To conclude, I recommend ...
- Today, I'm going to talk about ...
- Why am I giving a talk on this? Well, to ...

2  **Read three extracts from a student's presentation. Add the correct signpost phrases from the box in Exercise 1. Then, in pairs, read the transcripts to each other and record them.**

 **01**

Good morning. _____¹ Harry, a third year media studies student.
 _____² 'Giving a first class marketing presentation'. _____³ impress clients you need to deliver something very good. I'm here to tell you how. _____⁴
 _____⁵ how we can use our voice to deliver effective talks, _____⁶ how we can use key phrases – signposts, as they're called – to guide the audience, and then finally I'll look at body language and eye contact.

 **02**

_____⁷ your voice. If you really want to impress your audience, your client or your peers at a conference, then you must be able to use your voice effectively. Ask yourself: can they hear you at the back? Get someone to sit there and listen to you practise. Are you stressing the keywords, really putting a strong emphasis on the right part of a word, or the right words in a sentence, to get your message across?
 _____⁸ percentages of people actually understanding every word or idea, it really falls off at the back. It shows how much speaking up helps the audience focus on the important aspects of your talk. _____⁹ the British Marketing Journal from 2018. Pace is a key aspect also. Speak at a slower speed than you think, allowing the audience to listen and focus clearly. _____¹⁰ signposting, my second point.

 **03**

_____,¹¹ you really need to use your voice so people can hear your message and use clear signpost phrases so the audience can follow your presentation. Finally, use your body to look interested. If you do this, your audience will also be interested. _____¹² practising as much as you can using these three points, and you'll soon be giving great talks. Right, _____¹³ of my short talk. I hope it's been useful to you. _____¹⁴ Yes, at the back ...

3   **01 Listen to the first extract. Mark (/) where the presenter pauses.**

 **01**

Good morning. Let me introduce myself – I'm Harry, a third year media studies student. The title of today's talk is 'Giving a first class marketing presentation'. Why am I giving a talk on this? Well, to impress clients you need to deliver something very good. I'm here to tell you how. My presentation is divided into three topics. First I'll introduce how we can use our voice to deliver effective talks, then I'll talk about how we can use key phrases – signposts, as they're called – to guide the audience, and then finally I'll look at body language and eye contact.

4   **02-03** Listen to the other two extracts. Mark (/) where the presenter pauses.

 **02**

Let's begin by looking at your voice. If you really want to impress your audience, your client or your peers at a conference, then you must be able to use your voice effectively. Ask yourself: can they hear you at the back? Get someone to sit there and listen to you practise. Are you stressing the keywords, really putting a strong emphasis on the right part of a word, or the right words in a sentence, to get your message across? If we look at this chart of percentages of people actually understanding every word or idea, it really falls off at the back. It shows how much speaking up helps the audience focus on the important aspects of your talk. This data is from the British Marketing Journal from 2018. Pace is a key aspect also. Speak at a slower speed than you think, allowing the audience to listen and focus clearly. Let's move on to signposting, my second point.

 **03**

So, to sum up, you really need to use your voice so people can hear your message and use clear signpost phrases so the audience can follow your presentation. Finally, use your body to look interested. If you do this, your audience will also be interested. To conclude, I recommend practising as much as you can using these three points, and you'll soon be giving great talks. Right, that brings me to the end of my short talk. I hope it's been useful to you. I'll take questions from the audience now. Yes, at the back ...

TIP

You can help your audience understand your presentation by using pauses to divide up sentences into 'chunks'. Make sure you pause in a logical place!

5   **01-03** In pairs, highlight the keywords in each phrase. Identify the stressed syllable in each keyword.

6  In groups, practise delivering the introductions to these talks. Give feedback using the questions.

a Using your voice in talks

- clear and loud
- using pauses
- stress keywords/syllables

c Important academic skills

- writing essays
- taking notes
- reading academic texts

b Challenges students face at university

- organizing time
- doing assignments and research
- participating in seminars

d Issues raised in tutorials

- how to revise for exams
- how to write good reports
- how to use the library effectively

Presentation feedback

Did the presenter ...

- use correct signposts?
- pause between parts of sentences?
- stress the keywords in sentences?
- use the correct stress in keywords?
- use different intonation?

Can you ...

- remember the key points of the talk?
- understand what they say?
- hear what they say?

- 7**  Prepare a main point from one of the talks in Exercise 6. Write out your main point, adding signposts and marking both pauses and stressed keywords. Practise delivering the short talk to another student.

Reflect

- 8** Listen to the recordings you made in Exercise 2. Do you think you could improve any aspects of your delivery?