

Student name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

C21 SKILLS


COMMUNICATION: Presentation tips

Giving a good presentation is not only a question of organizing your information well. You will also need to think about:

- where and how you stand
- visuals – photographs, charts, tables
- how to engage the audience's attention

You learn about giving presentations in *C21 English for the 21st Century*, Level 5. Presenting is a key skill in academic settings, where you are asked to deliver presentations for project work, research and other coursework. Effective presentations require good planning, positive body language, maintaining the interest of the audience and an ability to answer questions successfully.

Practice


1  In pairs, number the planning stages in order (1–6). Then match the 'Key points to consider' to the stages.

Planning stage

- ☐ Make presentation notes
- ☐ Practise
- ☐ Research
- ☐ Identify the topic
- ☐ Structure the material
- ☐ Create visuals

Key points to consider

- ☐ Add references and sources of data.
- ☐ Choose a theme.
- ☐ Decide on a title for the talk.
- ☐ Identify main points and make notes.
- ☐ Look for new information (internet, library, etc.).
- ☐ Plan a summary and main conclusions.
- ☐ Plan the introduction and outline.
- ☐ Prepare clear images, charts, etc. to support your ideas.
- ☐ Put key ideas/keywords on small notecards.
- ☐ Think about signposting, voice and body language.
- ☐ Try not to rely on a script when rehearsing.
- ☐ Use bullet points to organize key ideas.
- ☐ Write down what you know.

2  In pairs, look at the pictures on the next page and discuss the questions. Then write some bullet points about what speakers should and shouldn't do.

- a** Is the body language overall positive or negative?
- b** Does the speaker maintain eye contact?
- c** Is the speaker standing with positive or negative posture?
- d** Does the speaker use gestures to guide the audience?
- e** Is the speaker using notes or reading a script?
- f** Does the speaker have a positive or negative expression?
- g** Are the gestures friendly or threatening?



3 **02** Read out the extract from a transcript and discuss the questions. Then listen. Is the speaker's delivery effective?

Good morning. I'm Lucy, an MSc Chemistry student here at the university. Let me just check if you can all see and hear me ... OK, let's continue. I'm going to talk about the long-term effects of plastics in the ocean's ecosystem today. It's an issue I care deeply about and is the subject of my thesis. I'll initially be highlighting the types of plastic entering our oceans, such as HDPEs ... do you know what they are? OK – that's high-density polyethylene – a common plastic used. I think we've all seen bags, fast food cartons and bottles on beaches or around ports. It's a problem here and globally, right? Well, I'll move onto what we are currently doing to clean up our seas. I know many of you care about this passionately. Finally, I'll include some recent data for our local area about fish and wildlife numbers dropping due to bisphenol A – that's a common pollutant from plastics, for those who don't know. Maybe some of you have never seen ocean wildlife? Maybe you never will? Something that should concern us all. If we're going to solve this crisis right now, we need to consider current trends. So, let me begin by asking: who has seen piles of plastic around town? Anyone?

- a Does the speaker say why they chose the topic?
- b Does the speaker highlight the significance of the topic?
- c Does the speaker give examples?
- d Does the speaker try to make the presentation interesting?
- e Does the speaker explain specialized terms?
- f Does the speaker check that the audience understands?

TIP

Keep the audience interested by asking questions, explaining technical terms and checking they understand.

4 Which set of notes did the speaker in Exercise 3 use for her presentation?

a

(10 minutes)
Opening: 'Long-term effects of plastics in the ecosystem'
1 Motivation, audience check
2 Signal talk structure
• HDPEs in seas – everyday examples
• Current methods
• Fish figures (dramatic slide)

b

(15 minutes)
STAGE 1: 'Plastic effects in the ecosystem'
1 Audio/visual check
2 Key points
• Natural ocean plastics – technical details
• Cleaning methods – list processes
• Charts – local plastic levels

c

(5 minutes)
Introduction: 'Long-term effects of plastics in the ocean's ecosystem'
1 Motivation
2 Outline talk
• Types plastic entering oceans – examples, significance
• Current action to clean up seas
• Recent sea-life data – relevance (plastic crisis) etc.

Choose a topic you're interested in and write a similar set of notes for the first part of a talk.

TIP

Use talk notes to remind you of stages of your talk without reading a script. Practising with notes will help you feel confident delivering your presentation without a script.

5 Match the questions and answers from a presentation. Then discuss the questions below.

Audience

- a** Do you have the figures for this year available?
- b** How do you think the government will address the issue?
- c** What will the impact be on the seal population?
- d** Where did you get all your data? What are your sources?
- e** Which plastics are the most important pollutants in the south-east Indian ocean?
- f** You explained something in your chart. What, if anything might be the consequences? You know, a direct impact in the general sense?

Speaker

- 1** Sorry, I'm not sure I understand your question. Which data are you referring to?
- 2** As I mentioned earlier, this year's data isn't published yet.
- 3** As the slides show, the *Chemistry and Oceanography Journal*. Next question?
- 4** I'm afraid I don't know the effects for their numbers. Perhaps someone else knows?
- 5** Sorry, I didn't catch the last part. Could you say where again, please?
- 6** Well, it's a good question, but public policy is outside the topic of this presentation, really.


Which of the speaker's answers ...

- admit they don't know?
- are polite responses to questions?
- ask for clarification?
- ask for repetition?
- avoid irrelevant questions politely?

- engage the audience by asking them a question?
- give the speaker time to think?
- give a brief response and ask the audience to move on?
- refer to information already given?

TIP

Try predicting any questions that may be asked when you practise. This will help you handle the questions better during the presentation.

- 6**  Reread the notes you made for a talk introduction in Exercise 4. Plan the rest of the presentation. Then present your talk to your group and answer their questions. Record your presentations.

Reflect

- 7** Listen to your recording from Exercise 6. Think about what you did well and what you need to improve.