

Suggestions for Creating a Successful Slideshow Presentation

A slideshow is a nice visual way to complement your presentation, and it can help keep your audience engaged. Remember, though, that most of the content of your presentation should be in the words you speak, not in the powerpoint slides.

1. Avoid slides with too much text.

In general, your audience should be able to read a slide in 10 seconds. This allows them to give you their full attention while you speak. Only include lengthy text if you intend to read the text aloud to the audience while they follow along. (This is sometimes a good idea if you're sharing a quotation from an ancient author.)

2. Keep bullet points short.

Each slide that has text should have 2 to 5 bullet points. You do not need to use complete sentences -- this way the slides are easier to read quickly. However, very short sentences work well also.

Good bullet point items: names, places, short sentences or phrases

3. Include appropriate images as often as possible.

Your presentation will be more interesting if most slides have an image on them. These images should be drawn from fine art, especially art from ancient Greece and Rome (though later periods like the Renaissance can work well too); the images should not be fan art or amateur art. (A good rule of thumb: is the piece you are looking at located in a museum? If the answer is yes, you have probably found an acceptable image.) Feel free to make slides with just one image (or more) and no text. Be sure, however, to explain/describe each image in your presentation.

I *strongly discourage* conducting general Google searches for images; this is neither a safe nor the most productive way to find high quality art for your slideshow. For ancient Greek and Roman images, try searching the Perseus Digital Library (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu>) using the following directions:

- from the home page, click "All Search Options" in the top right
- scroll down to the "Art and Archaeology Search" and click "show"
- uncheck "search artifacts," then enter your search term and click "search"
- click "browse all image results" near the top middle of the page

Online art encyclopedias like the *Web Gallery of Art* (www.wga.hu) and *Artstor* (<https://library.artstor.org>) are also excellent resources. The websites *theoi.com* and *heritage-history.com* also have many appropriate images.

4. Rehearse your presentation ahead of time, using a stopwatch.

You only have a short amount of time to present your topic: 3-5 minutes. Plan how much time you'd like to speak *for each slide* or *each topic*. Figure out the important points to mention, mention them, and then move on to the next slide or topic. Allot an appropriate amount of time for each slide or each topic of your presentation, and then time yourself to see how close you get to your goal.

Repeat this process as often as necessary to make a perfect presentation.

Suggestions for Making a Successful Delivery of Any Presentation

1. Address the entire audience; make frequent eye contact with them.

Making eye contact is a helpful tool for keeping your audience listening. Avoid addressing the teacher, but rather your fellow classmates. Also, make sure to give each person or each side of a room equal eye contact.

2. Speak with confidence and clarity; vary your delivery.

Make sure when you make a statement, you say it in such a way that you believe what you're saying. Speak clearly, so that everyone can hear without difficulty. Avoid sounding monotonous; rather, vary your pace or tone in order to emphasize important points. This makes it easier for your audience to pay attention. Do not be afraid to pause when it helps.

3. Use suitable diction.

Avoid meaningless filler words such as "like," "um," "uh," etc. Avoid slang; rather, use academic language. Since this is not how we normally speak, this will require practice.