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**Canberra College**  
caring for your future

# LEARNER GUIDE

Book Three – Oral Presentations

*English*

## **This is an initiative of the Canberra College Literacy Plan**

This booklet is designed to give you information that will assist you with the preparation of your Oral Presentation.

This is **Book Three** in the English Learner Guide four part Assessment Items series.

This is also available on the Canberra College website and the CLC.

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## Oral Presentations – An Introduction

Oral presentations can be very scary for some people but come very naturally to others. If you get nervous just remember that this is normal and there are many others just like you. There are some things that you can do to help with your nervousness but it will probably never go away and a bit of adrenalin is a good thing; it keeps you focused and gives you energy. The best way to calm nerves is practice and experience. The oral presentations you do at college will give you experience and will help you develop your skills.

Oral presentations are taught and assessed because they are an increasingly important form of communication in both further education and in a wide variety of workplaces. At university, students are often required to make short presentations in seminars and tutorials. These can form part of their assessment. In the workplace, you might be expected to talk about your area of work or give your opinion at a meeting. Job interviews also require you to present information about yourself and present examples to support your application. So you can see that being able to speak effectively is a life-long skill.

In this booklet, you will find helpful hints about the planning and delivery of Oral Presentations. Make sure you pay close attention to the assignment sheet so that you are clear about your teacher's' directions about topics, style and process.

If you would like to look at the way some oral presentations are delivered, you can go to the **TED** Ideas worth spreading site ([www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com)). You will find a variety of presentations about a broad range of topics that have been delivered in many different ways.

## Oral Presentations – Important Advice

- Carefully read the task's details and requirements and follow the guidelines provided
- Study the oral presentation rubric and focus on the main assessment criteria and grade descriptors
- Discuss/negotiate with your teacher your choice of text, topic/focus, aims, content and structure of your oral and presentation ideas
- Use dot points and palm cards – avoid direct reading from a prepared script
- Be specific and analytical i.e. analyse particular excerpts/scenes from a text
- Your presentation should have a definite focus area(s) – avoid giving a general overview
- Your oral should have a definitive introduction and conclusion
- Submit your notes and bibliography at the end of the presentation.

NOTE: You will be assessed on **your** knowledge, textual interpretations and understanding as well as the quality of your presentation

### TIPS FOR REDUCING ANXIETY

1. Planning and preparation
2. Write out your introduction in full. Rehearse your opening sentences until you are word perfect. Nothing allays anxiety more quickly than a confident start.
3. Use your presentation speech cards. Even the preparation of these is helpful. You are memorising your main points as you write out your own cards. The main benefit of these cards is the feeling of security that they give you. You know you will not forget a main point and this confidence transmits to the audience.
4. Rehearse in the classroom if at all possible. This will ensure that there are no embarrassing pauses while you find the focus button, or the remote for the overhead projector. It will also enable you to reorganise the seating, adjust the lighting and feel as comfortable as possible in the space.
5. Thinking through your opening moments helps visualise the room.
6. Instead of thinking about the tension, focus on relaxing. Breathe deeply a number of times, relax your shoulders, look at the audience and begin.
7. Make eye contact with the audience. This helps the audience feel involved and they will want to respond positively to you. Eye contact with the audience makes you feel less isolated.
8. Move, even small movements and gestures will help release tension. A half step to the left of the screen or slightly towards the audience will draw them in to your presentation.
9. Rely on reading your palm notes and keep your body positioned toward the audience and not turn it away from them to read your screen notes; they are for the audience's use.

# Making an Oral Presentation

Developing oral presentation skills is important. You'll be required to make oral presentations in high school, college, university, in your career and variety of other settings. Developing good oral communication skills now will help you prepare for the rest of your life. To make effective oral presentations you must know the topic you're speaking about well and be able to convince your audience that they have something to gain by listening to what you have to say. The following are a few suggestions for making effective oral presentations.



## 1. BE PREPARED

There is no better preparation than preparation itself. Learn everything there is to know about the question/subject-matter you'll be exploring in your oral presentation. Make sure you can communicate all of the important information about your subject within the allotted time limit. Try to think of all the questions your audience might ask and be prepared to answer them. Practice your presentation a few times or until you feel very comfortable with it.

## 2. BE INTERESTED

Make sure you convey your interest in the subject-matter of your presentation. Your obvious interest in it will rub off on the audience.

## 3. TAILOR YOUR PRESENTATION TO THE AUDIENCE

Make sure that your presentation is adapted to your audience's level of understanding and their interests. If your presentation is boring and hard to understand you won't keep your audience's attention very long. To capture and maintain your audience's attention make sure your presentation is interesting, you may like to include interactive activities that the audience can participate in or ask questions that the audience can answer.

However, you need to remember that you **MUST** demonstrate a detailed knowledge of your material, use examples to support your comments and provide a thorough analysis of the work being examined.

## 4. DON'T READ YOUR PRESENTATION WORD FOR WORD

Make sure that you know your presentation well enough that you don't have to read it. Make sure to maintain regular eye contact with your audience. You may want to shift your eye contact around the room so that the entire audience feels that you are talking to them. Refer to your notes as you go along but make sure not to read your presentation word for word.

## 5. USE VISUAL AIDS

Use handouts, transparencies, slides and charts to help your audience to better understand the subject-matter of your presentation. But remember visual aids are intended to supplement what you say in presentation they should not be used as replacements. Make sure they will work on the day! You are responsible for this.

## 6. USE EXAMPLES

Examples are useful for helping your audience to better understand your subject. Using an example or two can help them visualize in their mind what you are saying.

## 7. USE YOUR VOICE EFFECTIVELY

Ever listened to someone speaking monotone? I have and it's not fun. Be sure to vary the tone of your voice. Speak clearly, at a normal pace and never speak too quickly. Practise!!

## 8. END ON A STRONG NOTE

End your presentation with the message you want your audience to take away. Make it a strong, memorable statement that is connected to your argument/focus.

Read more: <http://www.educationatlas.com/making-an-oral-presentation.html#ixzz1uLVGyCHz>

# ORAL PRESENTATION SCAFFOLD

## STRUCTURE

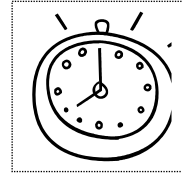
1. Begin with some opening introductory remarks which briefly explain your topic/question and the key areas/arguments you will be talking about
2. Then give in-depth analyses of these ideas ensuring you deal with one point at a time. You must use the text(s) as reference and provide page number citations to reference your use.
3. You may read quotes aloud, or show video excerpts, but these should be kept as short as possible, as they, like in an essay, do not constitute your own work. Use them wisely and well to support what you are saying.
4. Finally conclude your points and wrap up your ideas. You could end with a relevant quote, a pithy or insightful remark or thoughtful observation.
5. Use formal, but natural language. This is a speech so should use normal speaking patterns, however, do not swear or rely on colloquialisms and clichés. Use the language of literary analysis e.g. poetic devices (metaphor, rhyme, alliteration etc.)
6. Please produce a visual accompaniment to your talk – this **SHOULD NOT** repeat the text of your speech but it should identify the major points you are discussing. It should add to the information the class receives but not distract from what you are saying. It may include dot points. Never rely too heavily on a visual presentation or simply read directly from your slides.



# MAJOR MISTAKES SPEAKERS MAKE

## 1. FAILING TO SPEAK TO TIME

Once we start speaking, we sometimes forget to stop!  
Make sure you stay on time.  
Use a watch or clock – glance at it occasionally  
Practise your speech – know how long it will take.



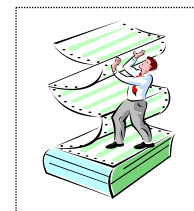
## 2. INFORMATION OVERLOAD

We can swamp the audience with too much information – they cannot take it in.  
Be selective in what you say. It is better for the audience to remember a few facts well, rather than forget a dozen facts.  
Present your information in bite-size pieces, just enough for your audience to take in one at a time.  
To communicate effectively you must make it easy for your audience to remember what you are saying. **PowerPoints** that are too detailed distract the audience from what you are saying.



## 3. THE MATERIAL IS TOO TECHNICAL

Translate your talk into a level of language which is appropriate for your audience.  
Avoid the use of terms that are unfamiliar to your class or have not been taught in class.



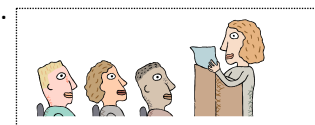
## 4. POOR PREPARATION

You need to go through the process of researching, planning and drafting your material.  
Start with a brainstorm – jot down everything that comes into your head to do with the subject.  
Highlight the keywords of material. Select a few words which are focus words, and build upon them.



## 5. FAILURE TO PRACTISE SPEECH

Giving a presentation is a skill you can develop. Practise your material, both independently and in front of an audience. Ask for comments, suggestions and act upon them.



## 6. INAPPROPRIATE PACE

Your audience needs time to take in what you are saying. The pace of your delivery should reinforce your message.  
Practise your speech, record it and listen to it and observe your audience as you speak and adjust your pace to maximise the effect on them.



## 7. DISTRACTING VISUALS/VERBALS/VOCALS

There are three main aspects of presentation which influence the effectiveness of your communication:

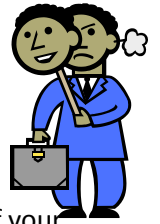
- Visual aspect – what they see you do
- Verbal aspect – what they hear you say
- Vocal aspect – how they hear you say it

All of these work together to make your message clear and interesting.

The most powerful of these are visual – facial expressions, gestures and stance.

Learn to control any distracting habits you have which may affect the visual, verbal or vocal aspects of your presentation. Do you sway from side to side? Scratch your nose? Use 'um', 'ah', 'you know', 'sort of', or used slurred, unclear or a monotonous way of speaking?

Tape yourself and analyse your voice or image.

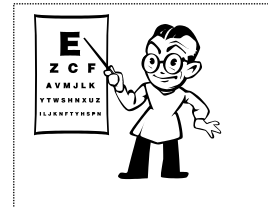


## 8. LACK OF EYE CONTACT

Don't look up at the ceiling, or down at the floor. You have an audience before you to deliver your information to.

Practise in front of the mirror, or before a friend.

If you look at your audience, they will keep listening.

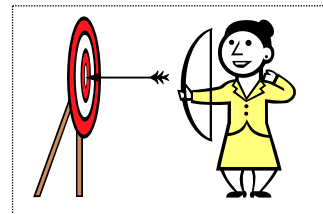


## 9. LACK OF ENTHUSIASM

You need to sell your material to the audience. You are projecting your personality.

If you are enthusiastic about a subject, it will come across in your talk. The audience will believe your subject is interesting.

- Start off in a way that will grab your audience's attention
- Keep up the pace
- Don't hide behind a table or lectern – be seen!
- Employ all your presentation skills to convey your enthusiasm – an expressive voice, appropriate gestures and emphasis, and humour.



### REMEMBER:

- Be well prepared – both for both your audience and with your material
- Practise! Practise! Practise!
- Communicate with your audience – maintain eye contact and speak with enthusiasm.

<b>ORAL PRESENTATION</b>	<b>Little Evidence</b>	<b>Some Evidence</b>	<b>Demonstrated</b>	<b>Established</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well do you know and understand the work/text?</li> <li>• How well does your material fit within the context of the unit</li> </ul>	<b>Little knowledge or understanding of the work/ text</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> little knowledge or understanding of the work/text</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> mainly irrelevant and/or inappropriate references to the text</li> </ul>	<b>Some knowledge or understanding of the work/ text</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> superficial knowledge and understanding of the work/text</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> some connection to the wider context of the unit</li> </ul>	<b>Adequate knowledge or understanding of the work/ text</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> adequate knowledge and understanding of the work/text</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> adequate connection to the wider context of the unit</li> </ul>	<b>Good knowledge or understanding of the work/ text</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> good knowledge and understanding of the work/text as well as some of the subtleties of the text</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> clear and appropriate connection to the wider context of the unit</li> </ul>	<b>Excellent knowledge or understanding of the work/ text</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> detailed knowledge and understanding of the work/text as well as the subtleties of the text</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> strong connection and highly relevant to the wider context of the unit</li> </ul>
<b>Interpretation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How relevant are your ideas about the work/text?</li> <li>• How well have you explored those ideas?</li> </ul>	<b>Little interpretation of the work/text</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> ideas are mainly weak and/or irrelevant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> response consists mainly of narration and/or repetition of content</li> </ul>	<b>Some interpretation of the work/text</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> ideas are sometimes irrelevant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> response consists mainly of unsubstantiated generalizations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> response is mainly a paraphrase of the text</li> </ul>	<b>Adequate interpretation of the work/text</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> ideas are generally relevant</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> analysis is adequate and appropriately illustrated by some relevant examples</li> </ul>	<b>Good interpretation of the work/text</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> ideas are clearly relevant and appropriate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> analysis is generally detailed and well illustrated by relevant examples</li> </ul>	<b>Excellent interpretation of the work/text</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> ideas are convincing, appropriate and considered</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> analysis is consistently detailed and persuasively illustrated by carefully chosen examples</li> </ul>
<b>Presentation and Delivery Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you performed or read your speech?</li> <li>• Is your approach imaginative and original?</li> <li>• How well do you use visual or other supporting material (quotes, handouts, powerpoints, DVD clips etc.)</li> <li>• How well have you delivered your information (sense of audience, eye contact, pace, how you use your voice)</li> <li>• How well have you managed the time allocated?</li> </ul>	<b>Little sense of a focused and developed delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> reads speech</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> no evidence of a creative approach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> little or no supporting material</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> ineffective delivery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> too short</li> </ul>	<b>Some sense of a focused and developed delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> too dependent on notes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> too much reliance on supporting material</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> too long</li> </ul>	<b>A generally focused and developed delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> some dependence on notes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> uses some creativity in approach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> adequate use of supporting material</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> adequate delivery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> aware of time restraints</li> </ul>	<b>A clearly focused and well-developed delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Effective use of notes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> good use of relevant supporting material</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> well developed skills of delivery</li> </ul>	<b>A clearly focused, well-developed and persuasive delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> highly skillful use of notes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> uses a highly original and imaginative approach</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> discerning use of effective and relevant supporting material</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> engaging delivery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> used time wisely and well</li> </ul>
<b>Structure and Organisation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How clear and logical is your organization?</li> <li>• Have you clearly identified the purpose of your presentation?</li> <li>• Does your presentation flow smoothly?</li> <li>• Is the vocabulary chosen easily understood?</li> </ul>	<b>The structure and organization are rarely clear or coherent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> little or no logical or clear direction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> little connection made between ideas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> vocabulary is rarely accurate or appropriate</li> </ul>	<b>The structure and organization are sometimes clear and coherent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> some degree of clarity and direction</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> some connection made between ideas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> vocabulary is sometimes appropriate to the discussion of the literature</li> </ul>	<b>The structure and organization are generally clear and coherent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> generally clear and coherent structure to the presentation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> obvious connection between ideas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> some care shown in the choice of vocabulary, idiom and style</li> </ul>	<b>The structure and organization are clear, logical with a sense of purpose</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> clear, logical and some sense of purpose evident</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> smooth progression from idea to idea</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> effective and appropriately varied use of vocabulary, idiom and style</li> </ul>	<b>The structure and organization are clear, coherent with a strong and obvious sense of purpose</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> clear, coherent and highly purposeful organisation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> natural and seamless progression from idea to idea</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> precise use of wide vocabulary and varied idiom and style</li> </ul>

