

## Want to Use Presentations in *Your Class*?

Presentations are crafted speeches or lessons by students. Allowing students to give presentations strengthens their oral communication skills, diversifies the voices heard in the classroom, reveals how students are understanding course content, and solidifies their learning by allowing them to “teach back” what they have learned.

Presentations At-A-Glance	
<b>Prep</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Decide if presentations will be individual or group projects.</li><li>● Set clear expectations for the presentations.</li><li>● Provide examples of strong presentations.</li></ul>
<b>During</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Provide supports to allay students’ performance anxiety.</li></ul>
<b>After</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Give students constructive feedback.</li></ul>

### Prep

Decide if presentations will be individual or group projects.

- This depends on the amount of time available and the content to be covered.
- Group presentations have been shown to alleviate performance anxiety and activate cooperative learning processes. See: <http://ablconnect.harvard.edu/presentations-research>.

Set clear expectations for the presentations.

- Give clear instructions on what the presentation should contain. How long should it be? What format should it be? Should students use a PowerPoint presentation? A handout? Will students have to field questions?
- Give all students a rubric of what will be assessed or explain the basis on which they will be evaluated.
- If students are presenting in groups, allow students to evaluate their colleagues on their contribution. This will relieve the frustration of unequal contributions by group members.

Provide examples of strong presentations.

- Show students examples of different types of effective presentations.
- Highlight what works so students will have clear takeaways.
- If copyright permissions allow, post presentations online so students can access and analyze them on their own time.

### During

Provide supports to allay students’ performance anxiety.

- This can take many forms. Some include:
  - Inviting a guest speaker to talk about breathing and voice techniques used to calm nerves.
  - Create an imaginary scenario where the instructor and students are playing specific roles relevant to the content. For instance, in a marketing class, have the students pretend to be a firm pitching an idea to a client.
  - Provide music and snacks on presentation days to make students feel more relaxed.

**After**

Give students constructive feedback.

- Very soon after the presentation, provide students with specific constructive feedback on not only the content but the delivery of the presentation.
- You could also allow for peer review by other students, after modeling what constructive criticism looks and sounds like. This can also be accomplished with a written rubric or guiding questions for students to use.

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