

Book Report Oral Presentation with Project

Everyone—even the President of the United States—gets nervous when they have to speak in front of a crowd. But it doesn't have to be a miserable experience. The more carefully you prepare, the better you'll feel when it's time to make your presentation.

Task 1: Requirements

Make sure you understand the task at hand and know exactly what your teacher expects of you. Review all of the information you have and make sure you can answer the following questions. If you don't know, ask your teacher.

- When are you scheduled to give your presentation?
- How much time will you be allowed?
- Did your teacher provide any other guidelines for your presentation?

Task 2: Topic

You've been assigned to give an oral presentation of your book report. This means you already have a general topic—your book.

1. Read through your book report and make a list of the information you feel must be included in your presentation. Most book reports cover information about the book's author, publisher, and a summary of the important elements and themes.
2. Narrow your point of focus. No one in your audience wants to hear every word of your written book report. Your goal is to limit your discussion to the most important information in your report and the key elements of the story.

Task 3: Audience profile

You discuss a movie differently with those who have seen it than with those who haven't. This same principle applies to public speaking.

Take a few minutes to think about your audience:

- Who is your audience?
- Is everyone in the audience as familiar with your book as you are?
- How can you make your report interesting to everyone?

Task 4: Outline

A speech consists of three parts: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Plan what you're going to cover in each section of your presentation.

1. List the things you want to cover in each section. You may choose to translate your outline to note cards or slides later, or you may want to work directly from your outline. Be sure to write legibly—you don't want to get up in front of the class and find out you can't read your own writing.

Introduction. Use the introduction to tell your audience the general information about your book, such as its title, author, publisher, and year of publication. You may choose to start with an attention-grabber, like a joke or an anecdote about your experiment. Telling it will help you relax and warm your audience to the presentation.

Body. Use the body of your presentation to describe key elements of the story, such as its setting and time period, an overview of the main characters, and a *very brief* summary of the plot.

Conclusion. Use your conclusion to describe any recurring themes or symbolism in the book and how the author uses them to reinforce important messages. At the end of your presentation, tell your audience what you thought of the book. Would you recommend it? Are you planning to read additional work by this author?

Task 5: Visual Aids

Remember the old saying “a picture is worth a thousand words?” It's true.

1. Go over your outline looking for opportunities to illustrate your presentation visually. Collect pictures, such as a photocopy of the book jacket, a photograph of the author, or pictures of the setting. Consider examples of things used in the book, or even music characters listened to if it played an important role, to reinforce your main points.

2. Sort through the collection and select the very best candidates. Limit yourself to one visual aid for the introduction, one or two for each main point, and one for the conclusion. Make sure each visual aid is clear and easy to read and that it reinforces an important aspect of your presentation. Plan to briefly discuss each visual aid that you display. You want your audience to understand what they're looking at and why you're showing it to them.

3. Note in the outline where you will show each visual aid to the audience. List the key things about the visual aid that you intend to call out. This will help you remember to display the right visual aid at the right time, even if you're nervous.

4. Make arrangements with your teacher for any special equipment you require, such as a laptop computer, overhead projector, or slide projector.

Task 6: Rehearse

Practice, practice, practice. Repeat your presentation speech over and over again. Give it to your family. Give it to your friends. Give it to your pets. Practice in front of a mirror. Practice in front of a camcorder. Practice in your imagination.

1. Time yourself to make sure your presentation fits in the allotted time.
2. Practice with your visual aids. Make sure they're easy to see and understand, and that they illustrate your points without detracting from them.
3. Speak slowly, clearly, and not too softly. Be careful not to say "um" or fidget.
4. Ask your friends and family if your presentation is interesting. Do they get the main point?

Task 7: Live presentation

Relax! You know your material well and you've practiced it relentlessly. Have faith in yourself because **YOU CAN DO IT!**

- Keep your thoughts on what you are saying rather than on how you are feeling.
- Speak informally and conversationally. Be friendly. Smile!
- Make eye contact with a friend you trust, or focus on a spot at the back of the room and imagine someone you love is sitting there, cheering you on.

Have fun!