

## General Comments

- Above all, remember that a presentation is about **managing the audience's ATTENTION**: attracting it, keeping it, and guiding it.
- At every moment in your presentation, you want the audience focused only on what you are saying and showing them *at that moment*. And what you are saying at any given moment should match--and be supported by--what you are showing them.
- As a presenter, you should think of yourself as **an actor on a stage**: you have a "script" (i.e., your carefully prepared thoughts about your topic), which you should strive to memorize as completely as possible. However, like an actor, you must bring your script to life. Your presentation should convey your enthusiasm for and interest in your topic. If *you* don't care about what you're doing, neither will your audience.
- Practice, practice, practice.

## Specific Suggestions (for voice and body language)

- The entire class is your audience--not just your teacher--so your eye contact should be distributed widely and generously.
- Speak slowly, clearly, and with enough volume that the person farthest from you can easily hear you. Remember: unlike you, your audience is hearing this information for the first time, so you want to give them every reason to listen.
- Think about how to skillfully use "signposting" (<http://bit.ly/39KYzxE>) to help your audience follow your presentation, especially its transitions.

## Specific Suggestions (for slides)

- Above all, remember that slides are for your audience, *NOT for you*.
- imagine what your slides look like from the perspective of someone seated the farthest from the projection screen. Can they easily read the text? Can they clearly see any images? Are the colors on your slides (especially the background and font colors) sufficiently contrasting?
- Avoid creating "noisy" slides, i.e., ones with too much information.
  - In particular, avoid presenting multiple bullet points all at once. Remember that you want to focus your audience's attention on what you're saying and showing at a given moment. If they're busy reading ahead, they'll have difficulty also paying attention to you.
  - Two solutions for multiple bullet points:
    - Animate them: do this if the bullets contain very brief information that requires only brief mention (e.g., a series of statistical data).
    - Separate slides for each bullet: do this if the bullets require elaboration and/or would benefit from some kind of visual support.
- Compare your presentation to the template ("Presentation template with LOR"); make sure your argument contains all the elements in the template, in the right order: title, background, research question, why the issue matters, big claim/thesis statement, etc.

- Headings (like the one at the head of this list of bullet points: “Specific Suggestions (for slides)”) should be larger than any other text on a slide. In other words, size should indicate the text’s relative level of generality: larger text should be more general than smaller text.
- If you put a graph, chart, or other data visualization on a slide, it must be directly relevant to what you’re discussing *at the moment* your audience sees it--and you must explain it to your audience.
- Really think about how your visuals are working for you. If an image is only decoration and provides no substantive support for what you’re presenting, remove it.
- Be sure to cite your sources: “According to ...”