

Creative Slide Decks

Quick Overview

What is a Slide Deck?

Whether you use PowerPoint, Keynote, Presi, or any other presentation software, the goal is the same - to reinforce your main speaking points and deepen audience engagement.

Effective slide decks are:

1. **Simple.** They are uncluttered and easy to understand.
2. **Highly Visual.** They use as few words as possible because they illustrate rather than duplicate what the presenter is saying.
3. **Impactful.** They arrest audience attention through their images, timing, and connection to what the presenter is saying.

PECHA KUCHA

At these locally-run events presenters give talks illustrated by 20 PowerPoint slides. Topics are often left open, but the presentation structure is always the same. Each slide is shown for exactly 20 seconds, forcing presenters to carefully rehearse their timing.

Why is it Valuable?

Entrepreneurs use decks to quickly pitch ideas. An effective deck is ideal for this purpose because it:

- helps with presentation pacing and timing
- reinforces the most important ideas in the presentation

The process of building an effective deck is also invaluable because:

- creating uncluttered slides requires you to focus on the most essential elements of your idea
- considering multiple ways of presenting content deepens your understanding of the material
- creating visual cues for content is a powerful mnemonic process

Slide Decks in Your Classroom

Refine presentation techniques with a Pecha Kucha style activity

- Students select a topic related to your course. They then present this topic in 10 - 20 slides, with the slides set to automatically advance every 20 seconds.
- Keen students may also want to share their presentation at a formal Pecha Kucha event. [Click here to check for upcoming Pecha Kucha events in Toronto.](#)

Structure creative study sessions using visual presentation techniques

- Provide students with 10 - 20 slides containing images and key words/phrases from the current unit of study.
- In groups, their task is to arrange and present these images to the class in a way that clearly explains the topic.

Test the effectiveness of visual presentations by posting them on SlideShare

- Visit SlideShare at www.slideshare.net to get inspired by creative presentations from around the world.
- Post student presentations on this site and track how many times they are viewed. Students can then experiment with changes to their presentations in order to increase the number of views.

Use a 3 slide deck to structure a student pitch

- The three slides should be: 1. The Problem 2. The Solution 3. The Call to Action

Sample Activity: Crafting a Slide Deck Story

Activity Time: 60 - 90 minutes

Exercise Description

The foundation of any effective presentation is compelling storytelling. This activity is an opportunity for students to practice creating and presenting interesting narratives based on visual cues.

Interpret



[CLICK HERE to download a pre-made PowerPoint deck](#). Give students 10 minutes to come up with creative interpretations for the images and animations on each of the deck's 5 slides.

HINT: IF STUDENTS DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO COMPUTERS, YOU CAN RUN THIS ACTIVITY WITH 5 IMAGES CUT FROM MAGAZINES.

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Narrativize



Students have 30 minutes to create a short story that unifies the 5 images in the PowerPoint deck. They may reorder the slides to create new narrative possibilities, but must not change the slides themselves.

HINT: THE SHORT STORY SHOULD BE WRITTEN IN POINT FORM NOTES. WHEN PRESENTING, STUDENTS SHOULD PARAPHRASE RATHER THAN READ.

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Present



Students have 2 - 3 minutes to present their stories in conjunction with their 5 slide decks.

HINT: REMIND STUDENTS TO PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO TRANSITIONS BETWEEN SLIDES, AND TO USE WELL PLACED PAUSES TO GIVE THE AUDIENCE TIME TO CONSIDER IMPORTANT INFORMATION.

Ideas for Modifying this Exercise

- Provide students with a specific theme, phrase, or character that they must incorporate into their story.
- Transform it into an improvisation activity by having students make up a story as they view the slides for the first time.

What Success Looks Like

Non-literal interpretations of the slide images are used

- Presenters explore the symbolic potential of each slide to open up creative narrative possibilities.

Transitions in the slides are used to emphasize turning points in the story

- There is a clear relationship between the pace of the slides and the volume/pace of the delivery.

Students demonstrate the ability to improvise and embellish while presenting

- Presenters have learned the structure of their story without memorizing or reading specific lines, allowing them to present it in a natural, conversational manner.