Mojave Field Trip
Presentations

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Pathfinder 202

Overview

- Introduction
- Plan
- Prepare
- Practice
- Present
- Wrap-up
Introduction

- Facts
  - 15-minute presentation with visuals
  - Focus on specific topic
  - Given at Desert Studies Center during field trip

- Purpose
  - Become expert in specific area of Mojave Desert
  - Provide information to class
  - Gain experience in presenting

Choosing a topic

- Relevant to Mojave Desert
- Are you interested in the topic?
- Will you enjoy talking about this topic?
- Will the audience be interested in your topic?
- Examples on class web site
Example topics

- Biology
  - Ecosystem overview
  - Specific animals and plants, e.g., burros, ravens, bighorn sheep, desert tortoise, tamarisk
  - BLM vs MNP land use practices and impact on ecosystem
- Human Interaction
  - Mining
  - Ranching
  - Desert economy
- Geology
  - Geologic history
  - Earthquakes
  - Fluvial and lacustrine processes
  - Wind erosion and dunes
  - Climate history
- Policy
  - CDPA and formation of MNP
  - BLM and NPS charters
  - Relations between NPS and indigenous people

Research

- Become an expert on your topic
- Use multiple sources
  - Popular media
  - Library (local and online)
  - Government agencies online
  - Personal interviews
- Be wary of online sources
Define key points

- What do you want audience to remember?

Supporting your points

- Supporting material
  - Facts and figures
  - Descriptive statistics
  - Statements by authority
  - Narratives (short story supporting a point)
  - Definitions

- Maintain your credibility
  - Do not present opinions as fact
  - Keep presentation free of errors
Outlining your points

- Topical (natural flow of ideas)
- Chronological (by time)
- Spatial (by physical location)
- Classification (by category)
- Problem/solution
- Cause/effect

Visual aids

- Give your audience direct sensory contact with your presentation
- Enhance understanding of the topic
- Add authenticity
- Add variety
- Help your speech have lasting impact
- Help the speaker build ethos (speaker character credibility)
Types of visual aids

- Sketches
- Maps
- Graphs (pie, bar, line)
- Charts (flow, tree, sequence)
- Photographs/pictures
- Handouts
- You! (body, clothes, grooming, actions, gestures, voice, facial expressions, demeanor)

Visual aid construction

- Visibility
- Emphasis
- Relevance
- Simplicity
- Balance
- Color
Preparation Tools

- PowerPoint
  - Making slides (transparencies)
- Excel
  - Making charts
- Agfa Scanner
  - Scanning hardcopy

Creating your presentation

- Opening
  - Gets the audience's attention
  - Introduces the topic
  - Presents the thesis or key points
- Key Points
  - What you want audience to remember
  - Use supporting material
- Closing
  - Summarize the key points
  - Leave the audience with an idea to remember
Practice

- Know your presentation
  - Be prepared for unexpected (e.g., dropped slides)
  - Be able to start anywhere in your presentation
- Be comfortable using visual aids
- Make sure visual aids are integrated into speech
- Practice in front of others

Personal Style

- Concentrate on non-verbal communication
  - Eye contact will make you appear more credible
  - Good posture leads to easier breathing and better voice projection
- Use movement when emphasizing points
- Gesture appropriately when expressing emotions
Present

- Being prepared
  - Have outline on note card if needed
  - Have visual aids in order (number slides)
- Personal style
  - Be natural and lively
  - Pair delivery and message
  - Speak conversationally (don’t “read” your presentation)

Stage Fright

- Number one: know your material
- Relax
- Realize people want you to succeed
- Don’t apologize for being nervous
- Concentrate on message (not audience)
- Turn nervousness into positive energy (enthusiasm, vitality)
Making a bad presentation

- Skip spell checking
- Write small to get the most onto slides
- Write slides by hand
- Don’t use color
- Don’t use visual aids
- Avoid making eye contact
- Don’t skip anything in your talk
- Don’t practice

Conclusion

- Pick a topic that interests you
- Identify key points
- Practice, practice, practice
Schedule

- Plan
  - Select your topic – late January/early February
- Prepare
  - Help session if needed
- Practice
  - On your own
  - In groups with Tom, two weeks before trip
- Present
  - In Mojave during field trip