

Dynamic Presentations

or How to Nail Your Presentation

Here's what you'll (likely) be graded on:

- That you've presented relevant information about your research, your conclusions, and the advice
- That you've delivered a clear, concise, and well-structured presentation
- That you can convince your examiner that you have a good command of the subject matter
- The level of engagement and interest that you can develop in your examiner while you're presenting.

The 'Typical' Student Presentation

- Title and speaker introduction (**Who am I? Who are the main players in the research?**)
- Outline (**What is the problem you're trying to fix? What is coming in the presentation?**)
- Background
 - Motivation and problem statement (**Why is it important?**)
 - Related work (**What have other people done?**)
 - Methods (**What was your approach?**)

The 'Typical' Student Presentation (cont.)

- Results (**What did you learn?**)
- Summary (**What are the three most important things that your listener should remember by the end of this talk?**)
- Future work (**What comes next?**)

Students often make mistakes when:

- They don't know their presentation well enough (umming and ahing, clutching their notes, visibly hesitating)
- Their presentation style is not engaging (speaking in a monotone, reading directly from the slides)
- Their presentation is structured poorly (slides do not support the spoken script, student makes reference to things that are not relevant or distracting from the main point)
- They seem bored/uninterested in the topic (if you don't care, why should the person grading you?)

Know your presentation

- Don't distract your viewer by holding big sheets of notes in your hands – use small cue cards only if necessary
- Practice, practice, practice
- Make sure that when you are practicing your speech, you practice with the slide show that you plan to use.
 - This will create a visual memory cue so that if you forget what you were going to say you can look at the slide to jog your memory
- Don't 'Um' too much.
 - When you do it once or twice every few minutes then you're fine, but if you do it every other word then it will seriously affect the engagement of your viewer.

How to stop 'Umming' – The 30 Second Challenge

- Set up a stopwatch for 30 seconds. Challenge yourself to speak for 30 seconds about your project (**without looking at your notes**) without saying 'Um'
 - This works better when you are practicing in front of your supervisor or a friend. Sometimes we 'Um' without noticing – but your viewer will *always* notice.
 - If you don't have a friend (we've all been there!), record yourself and watch it back
 - It is okay to pause briefly to think about what you're going to say
- As you get better, extend the time that you speak so that you're speaking for increasingly long intervals.

Engage your audience

How do you feel when you are in an audience and the presenter has their head craned around, reading the presentation on the slides instead of looking at people? How do you feel when they speak in a monotone, don't smile, or stand perfectly still?

- Record yourself performing the presentation. When you watch back, ask yourself: is this fun to watch? How can I make this better?
- Consider the teachers you've had who had an engaging presentation style, or the TED talks you've seen that you really enjoyed. What can you learn from them?

Important things to remember:

- Don't position yourself so that you cover the slides
- Always point your toes to the audience. This will prevent you from turning too far away from them
- Make eye contact. It's not creepy – it is just you and your two examiners in the room, it would be creepy if you *didn't* acknowledge them
- Speak clearly. However clearly you think you speak in general, make an effort to be clearer for your presentation

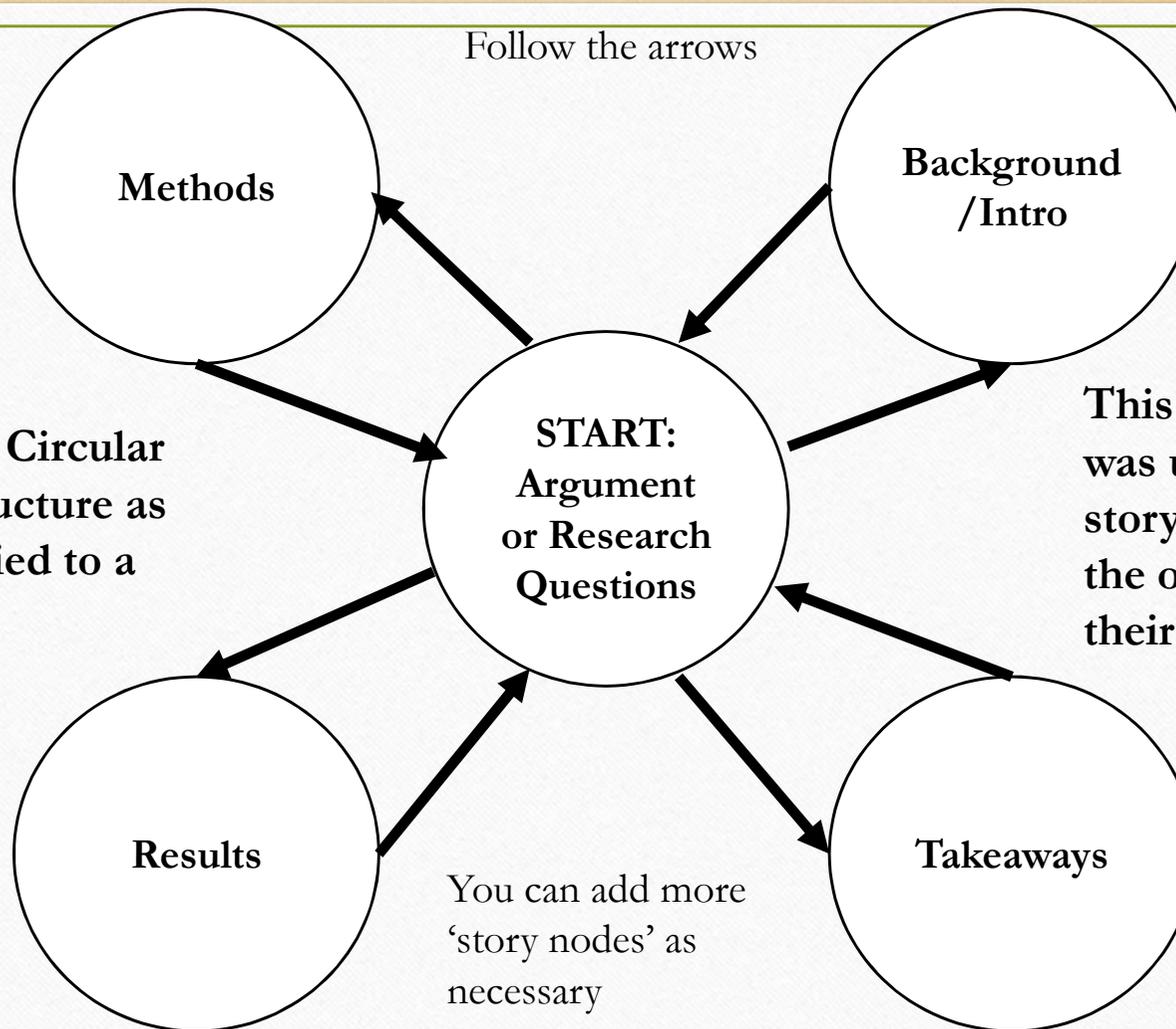
Structure

- Make sure that your slides match up with what you're saying.
- Don't clutter the slides or the examiner will try to read them while you're talking and they'll lose the thread of what you're saying
- Oral communication is different from written
 - Use simple, direct language
 - Repeat the key points that you want your listener to remember

Structure (cont.)

- Create a story with your presentation
 - Every good story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Good stories also have a climax. What elements of the GA fit these criteria?
 - It has a theme that keeps coming back – in your case, it will be your argument or your questions
 - Foreshadow the plot twists (or conclusions) at the beginning so that the viewer does not get lost
- A great way to do this is to use a Circular story-telling structure

Example of the Circular story-telling structure as it could be applied to a presentation



This is a structure that was used in Classical storytelling to help the orator remember their story

Don't care?

- No matter how you feel about your topic, your job is to convince the examiners that your work is worthwhile. To do this, you will need to at least pretend to care.
- Smile, look enthusiastic.
- Draw the examiners' attention to the points of interest in your research. Show them why they should be engaged with the topic.

Check these out



<https://bit.ly/2ypiC3B>



<https://bit.ly/2tPVNqD>



**KEEP
CALM
AND
ENJOY YOUR
ORAL PRESENTATION**