

Power Point presentations

Objectives: At the end of this lesson you shall be able to

- explain the usage of power point as a teaching aid.

Using Power Point as teaching aid

As technology enters the classroom more and more each year, there are always new innovations being brought into the fold that can help teachers to get their points across better, and help students learn more efficiently. One such tool that has been utilized in the classroom for some time now and continues to be used heavily is the Microsoft PowerPoint program.

This program is one that enables teachers and students alike to prepare presentations. When used effectively, PowerPoint can really enhance teacher presentations and the overall comprehension of students. It is a program that allows teachers to present their lessons in a more dynamic way than simply lecturing and writing on the blackboard.

Power Point has become very popular because it's easy to learn and widely available. It provides the ability to equip your presentations with different types of media - including images, sounds, animations, and much more. This enhances the students' abilities to retain what they're being taught, especially those who are visual learners. Teachers can focus on the class and interacting with the students instead of writing on a board, because the text and the entire presentation is already there in the form of a Power Point file.

Power Point is not just for the teachers though, another way to use Power Point in an educational setting is to have the students create their own presentations. This is a great way to teach them how to use visual aids while working on their presentation and public speaking abilities.

However, it is also important to note that when used incorrectly, PowerPoint presentations can actually be less effective than regular, old-fashioned teaching methods. Mistakes can be made not only in the way that the presentation is made, but in the way it is presented as well. One common mistake teachers make is that by simply reading the slides to students word-for-word, which is terribly boring to watch, and won't keep their attention or enhance the learning experience in any way. Not using Power Point effectively can render your presentations PowerPoint-less.

Advantages

Potential benefits of using presentation graphics include:

- Increasing visual impact
- Improving audience focus
- Providing annotations and highlights
- Analyzing and synthesizing complexities
- Enriching curriculum with interdisciplinarity
- Increasing spontaneity and interactivity
- Increasing wonder



Challenges

Although there are many potential benefits to Power Point, there are several issues that could create problems or disengagement:

- **Teacher-centered** : Students often respond better when instructors have designed sessions for greater classroom interaction, such as the use of student response clickers, designing Power Point to facilitate case studies, or use the slides as a replacement for paper worksheets.

- **Lack of feedback** : Power Point-based lectures tell you nothing about student learning. Design them to include opportunities for feedback (not simply asking if there are questions, but more actively quizzing your students). This often takes the form of listing questions, not information, on the slide itself.
- **Student inactivity** : Slide shows do little to model how students should interact with the material on their own. Include student activities or demonstrations to overcome this, either before or after the slideshow presentation.
- **Potentially reductive** : Power Point was designed to promote simple persuasive arguments. Design for critical engagement, not just for exposure to a "point."
- Presentation graphics should be about learning, not about presentation.
- Power Point presentations should help students organize their notes, not just "be" the notes. This is a particular danger with students who grew up accustomed to receiving Power Point notes to study from. Some require convincing notes that should be taken beyond what is already on the slides.

Three Possible Approaches

This single presentation about the anatomy of the human eye has been rewritten in three different ways:

- **Text-heavy** : this version offers complete phrases and a comprehensive recording in words of the material. The text-heavy version can be used as the lecturer's speaking notes, and doubles as student notes that can be made available for download either before or after the lecture has taken place. If the information can be accessed elsewhere, such as a textbook, it may be preferable to avoid a text-heavy approach, which many students find disengaging during the delivery.
- **Some images** : this version sacrifices some of the completeness of the material to create space for accompanying images. The mixed approach appeals to more visual learners while keeping some lecture notes visible, though perhaps in a more abbreviated format. This is a common mode of delivery in large classes. However, there are still some challenges. There is enough material already present in text format that some students may feel obliged to write it all down in their own notes, thus paying less attention to the verbal lecture. Conversely, if the slides are available for download, some students may be able to eschew note-taking in class, yet be tempted to consider these fragmentary notes sufficient for studying for exams.
- **Image-heavy** : this version relies almost exclusively on images, with little text. The image-heavy approach signals to students that they will have to take their own notes, as these are plainly insufficient on their own for studying. However, lecturers often need more

than visual clues to remind themselves how to propel the lecture forward, and separate notes may be required. One elegant solution is to use "Presenter View" on the speaker's screen (which displays the notes only to you) and project the slides without notes onto the larger screen visible to the audience.

Power Point for Case Studies

Elizabeth Rash (Nursing) provided this sample iterative case study (where parameters evolve over time) given to a midsize class. Students are required to come to class prepared having read online resources, the text, and a narrated slideshow presentation that accompanies each module. The classroom is problem-based (case-based) and interactive, where students are introduced to a young woman who ages as the semester progresses and confronts multiple health issues. Since the nurse practitioner students are being prepared to interact with patients, some slides require students to interview another classmate in a micro role-play.

Problem-based lectures frequently alternate between providing information and posing problems to the students, which alters the entire character of the presentation. Rather than explaining and conveying information, many slides ask questions that are intended to prompt critical thinking or discussion.

Power Point Interactions: Student Response "Clickers"

Classroom response systems can improve students' learning by engaging them actively in the learning process. Instructors can employ the systems to gather individual responses from students or to gather anonymous feedback. It is possible to use the technology to give quizzes and tests, to take attendance, and to quantify class participation. Some of the systems provide game formats that encourage debate and team competition. Reports are typically exported to Excel for upload to the instructor's grade book. Learn more about how to use this system in your own classes.

Power Point as Worksheet

Instructors who do not have sufficient photocopying opportunities in their departments may be less likely to use paper worksheets with their students, especially in large classes. Power Point offers the ability to approximate worksheets to illustrate processes or to provide "worked examples" that shows problem-solving step-by-step. One valuable technique is to first demonstrate a process or problem on one slide, then ask students to work on a similar problem revealed on the next slide, using their own paper rather than worksheets handed out.

Narrated Power Point Downloads

The Power Point software itself includes built-in functionality to record your audio commentary. In this fashion, instructors can literally deliver their entire lecture electronically, which can be especially useful in an online course. The resulting file is still a standard Power Point file, but when the slideshow is "played," the recorded instructor's voice narrates the action, and the slides advance on their own, turning whenever they had been advanced by the lecturer during the recording.

It is also possible to use AuthorPoint Lite, a free software download, to take the narrated Power Point presentation and transform it all into a Flash video movie, which plays in any Web browser. To create such a video, you must first record a narrated presentation, and then use AuthorPoint Lite to convert the file. Our tutorial explains the process.

Presenter View

Using this mode of Power Point, your slides are projected as usual on the big screen and fill the entire space, but the computer used by the lecturer displays the slides in preview mode, with the space for notes visible at the bottom of the screen. In this fashion, lecturers can have a set of notes separate from what is displayed to the students, which has the overall effect of increasing the engagement of the presentation.

- This example of "Life in Elizabethan England" shows how to structure a presentation with nothing but images on screen, using the Presenter View to hold the lecturer's notes.
- Microsoft's tutorial explains how to configure the Presenter View.

Best practices : Delivery

- **Avoid reading** : if your slides contain lengthy text, lecture "around" the material rather than reading it directly.
- **Dark screen** : an effective trick to focus attention on you and your words is to temporarily darken the screen, which can be accomplished by clicking the "B" button on the keyboard. Hitting "B" again will toggle the screen back to your presentation.
- **Navigate slides smoothly** : the left-mouse click advances to the next slide, but it's more cumbersome to right-click to move back one slide. The keyboard's arrow keys work more smoothly to go forward and backward in the presentation. Also, if you know the number of a particular slide, you can simply type that number, followed by the ENTER key, to jump directly to that slide.

Best Practices: Slideshow Construction

- **Text size**: text must be clearly readable from the back of the classroom. Too much text or too small a font will be difficult to read.
- **Avoid too much text**: one common suggestion is to adhere to the 6x6 rule (no more than six words per line, and no more than six lines per slide). The "Takahasi Method" goes so far as to recommend enormous text and nothing else on the slide, not even pictures, perhaps as little as just one word on each slide.
- **Contrast**: light text on dark backgrounds will strain the eyes. Minimize this contrast, and opt instead for dark text on light backgrounds. Combinations to avoid, in case of partial color blindness in the audience, is to include red-green, or blue-yellow.
- **Transitions and animations** should be used sparingly and consistently to avoid distractions.
- **Template**: do not change the template often. The basic format should be consistent and minimal.
- **Use graphics and pictures** to illustrate and enhance the message, not just for prettiness.



Other ideas for use on a Power Point presentation include:

- Change font
- Shapes
- Clip art
- Images
- Charts
- Tables
- Transitions
- Animations
- Animating text or chart

Create Power Point presentations

Objective: At the end of this lesson you shall be able to

- create PowerPoint presentations.

Creating a Power Point Slide

Step 1:

Open Microsoft Power Point.

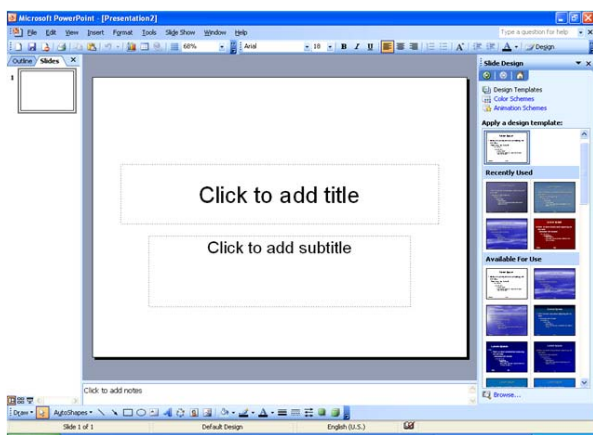
Step 2:

Go to File at the top of the screen and click New. A box that says "New Presentation" should appear on the right side of your screen.

Step 3:

In the "New Presentation" dialog box, click on "From Design Template." You may then scan through design templates and choose one that you like. (Fig 1)

Fig 1



Step 4: Slide Design

Select a design template by clicking on the template you like. You may choose a different color for your template by clicking on "Color Schemes" in the "New Presentation" dialog box.

Step 5: Slide Layout

Change the Slide Layout. You may change the slide layout (how information is presented in the slide) by going to the top of the screen and clicking on "Format" - "Slide Layout." A box will appear on the right side of your screen (where "New Presentation" appeared) labeled "Slide Layout." You may select a design by clicking on it.

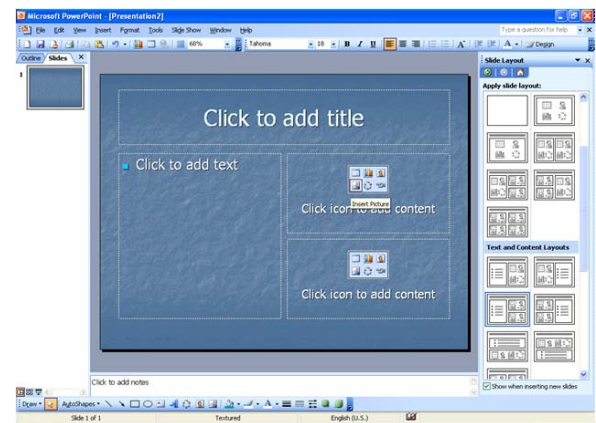
Step 6: Adding Text

Enter your text by clicking and then typing in the box titled "Click to Add Text" or "Click to Add Title."

Step 7: Adding Pictures

You may add pictures by clicking on the box that says "Click to add content." Inside that box, there will be a smaller box with six icons. Click on the icon that looks like a photograph of a mountain. A new window will open, allowing you to browse for a picture on your computer or a CD. Once you find your picture, click on it and then click "Insert." (Fig 2)

Fig 2



Step 8: Resizing Pictures

You may change the size of your picture by clicking on the picture. The picture will then have black lines around it with small bubbles or boxes in the corners. Place your mouse over the bubbles or boxes and click. Holding the mouse pointer down, drag the picture to the size you want.

Step 9: After creating slide, save it using 'file' - 'save' as ppt. To view presentation press "F5".

Step 10: You're Done! Wasn't that easy? Now you can do it again to make more. (Fig 3)

Fig 3

