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PowerPoint | Creating Classroom Presentations



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practically counts as a generic, this lesson works using any presentation software. The most popular free presentation software would be found in the Open Office package at OpenOffice.org.



Your students have just completed some terrific reports on cold-blooded animals or Native American culture or photosynthesis. You'd love to incorporate a technology component into the activity. You've never used graphics software, though, and you certainly don't have time to learn new software now! What's a technological newbie to do? Included: Ideas for simple, teacher-created projects to build with your students!

WHY POWERPOINT?

You can use Microsoft PowerPoint to create interactive presentations containing text, art, animation, and audio and video elements. It is probably the best-known presentation graphics program available. If your computer arrived pre-loaded with Microsoft Office, you most likely have PowerPoint too. Just click **Start** and select Programs to find it.

PowerPoint's widespread availability isn't the only reason for its popularity, however. "I use it because I like technology and the choices it allows," LuAnn Kaiser, a teacher at Nebraska's Wausa Public School, told Education World. "With PowerPoint, you can animate words and graphics, add sound effects, include a QuickTime movie -- it's just awesome! PowerPoint captures the students' attention and helps keep them interested!"

"The kids like it," Kaiser added, "because it's so easy to use and because the ability to integrate graphics and text means there's always something new to learn and do."

TERRIFIC STUDENT PROJECTS!

Kaiser generously agreed to share some of her favorite PowerPoint projects with Education World users.

"One of my students' favorite projects is Today in History," she said. "Students research an event that happened on [a particular] day in history and then create a ten- to 15-slide presentation about it. They find graphics online or create their own. Most students incorporate sound effects in their presentations as well. One of the best ones was about the St. Valentine's Day massacre with Al Capone. The kids loved it!"

"We also use PowerPoint during creative writing classes," Kaiser noted. "For example, in the Visual Poetry activity, students read a favorite poem and create a PowerPoint presentation depicting a visual interpretation of the images in the poem."

In addition, students are currently writing and illustrating children's stories."

"In tech prep," Kaiser explained, "students create resume-style presentations that have even included pictures of them working at their job sites. In speech class, they create slide shows to accompany their oral presentations."

IT'S NOT JUST FOR KIDS

PowerPoint works well in the classroom in a number of ways.

- Present information or instruction to an entire class.
- Create graphically enhanced information and instructions for the learning centers.
- Create tutorials, reviews, or quizzes for individual students.
- Display student work and curriculum materials or accompany teacher presentations at parent open houses or technology fairs. You can set PowerPoint presentations to run automatically during such events, providing a slide show of classroom activities and events as parents tour your classroom or school.

RANTS AND RAVES

Although most of the applications we will cover in this series will be as new to me as they are to you, I did have some minimal (although not recent) experience with PowerPoint. Because I rarely find, however, that using software applications is as "unforgettable" as riding a bike, I was surprised at how quickly I learned enough to create a reasonably attractive, interactive presentation.

PowerPoint was both easy to learn (or relearn) and to use. The toolbar tools are easily accessible, clearly labeled, and relatively foolproof. Some of the shortcut icons seemed less intuitive than others -- I never would have "guessed," for example, that the star icon indicated the animation tool. The rollover labels for the icons cleared up any momentary confusion, though. Most important, no action is "undoable," so you can correct your mistakes easily -- even if you save them. (Do remember to save often!) In other words, you won't spend several hours creating the perfect presentation only to find you can't correct a typo, insert an additional slide, or add an animation.

USE THE TUTORIAL

As I explored the PowerPoint software, I used it to create a brief tutorial introducing new users to the basic functions of the program.

Follow the directions below to view the presentation.

- To view it online click [here](#)

Note: If you are viewing with *any* version of Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0, you might find that:

- Animations, including slide transitions, are not supported (except animated GIF pictures).
- The presentation cannot be viewed full screen.
- You cannot open or close frames.

- The active slide title is not highlighted in the outline pane.
 - The mouse does not highlight elements in the outline pane.
 - Sounds and movies do not play.
- If you don't have PowerPoint on your computer, search for the appropriate PowerPoint Viewer on the Microsoft Download page.
- Click **Slide Show**, choose **View Show**, and view the tutorial.
- Print the slides and use them as a guide as you create your own PowerPoint presentation.

Remember that this is an introductory tutorial; PowerPoint offers many features and options beyond those covered here. Once you're familiar with the program, you'll be able to

- Choose from a variety of presentation types, designs, and layouts;
- Create original designs and layouts as well as change colors and color schemes in pre-selected designs;
- Add, delete, and rearrange slides within a presentation;
- Insert Web art, scanned images, or create your own drawings;
- Create charts and graphs;
- Incorporate sound and videos;
- Add hyperlinks;
- Save work in html.

HELP YOUR STUDENTS CREATE PROJECTS

When you've finished your own presentation, you'll probably be ready to help your students create theirs. Encourage them to start with short presentations that contain only a few slides. Remind them to keep the text and graphic images simple. A plan never hurts either.

Project-Based Learning With Multimedia provides a workable outline for planning and completing multimedia projects. Advise students to follow the guidelines below.

- Plan the projects. Identify goals and content; determine overall project length and progress checkpoints; determine project activities.
- Prepare the information. Complete research and/or activity components.
- Plan presentations. Create storyboards, which are detailed plans of the text, graphics, and order of each slide.
- Create presentations.
- Present completed projects, review experiences, and discuss project highlights or trouble spots.


For an evaluation tool to use for evaluating the writing content, technical content, technical organization, and communication skills used in student-created PowerPoint projects, try <http://www2.uwstout.edu/content/profdev/rubrics/pptrubric.html>

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What accommodations will you make for students identified as **gifted and have an **EP (educational plan)**?**


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