# Oral Presentations 1

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| **Student focused learning outcomes:**  By the end of the session, you will be better able to:   * identify changing stress patterns in word families * pronounce different consonant and similar vowel sounds in word pairs * deliver a short presentation practising the above features * identify strengths and weaknesses in your own presentations and those of your peers |

In your pre-sessional Listening to Speaking assessment you will deliver a brief presentation on a given topic then participate in group discussion. Similar to longer presentations, these mini-presentations involve using skills such as **fluency, pronunciation, and signposting**, but typically do not involve the use of slides or other visual aids.

Task 1

Correct pronunciation is important during a presentation and seminar discussion. Two key features of pronunciation are:

1. consonant and vowel sounds
2. word stress

* What do these terms mean?

Task 2

We will now practise pronunciation features below.

**Consonant Sounds**

1. What is a consonant?
2. How many are there in English? Do you think the number of consonant **sounds** is the same?
3. One consonant sound is different in each of these pairs of words. Say the words and make sure the different sounds are clear. To help you, think about what your tongue and lips are doing to form each of the sounds!

* crime – climb
* with – whizz
* vest – west
* froze – throws
* been – beam
* think – sink
* pound – bound
* text – test

**Vowel Sounds**

3. Discuss:

* How many vowels are there in English?
* How many vowel **sounds** do you think there are?
* How many vowels and vowel sounds are in your first language?

4. Find 5 pairs of words with the same vowel sounds in the box. Remember you are looking for the same sounds, not spelling. The first has been done for you: *shoe – you*

toy head **shoe** missed **you**

bring now choice sound went

**Stress**

Another important feature of pronunciation is **word stress**.

* What is stress (in the context of English pronunciation)?

Stress can change when using different forms of a word such as the ones used in the question below.

5. Where do you think the stress is in the following nouns and adjectives?

* analyse – analysis – analytical
* specify – specification – specific
* economise – economy – economic

6. Now use a learner’s dictionary to check your answers. You can listen to the recording or use the apostrophe (‘), which indicates where the stress is placed in a word, to help you.

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Source: Cambridge Dictionary (2024). *Analyse*. Available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/learner-english/> (Accessed: 30 April 2024).

7. Discuss:

* Do you find it difficult to pronounce any of the sounds found in English?
* Which do you find the most difficult?
* How have you practised these sounds in the past?
* Have you tried something like the interactive sounds chart found [here](https://english-dashboard.pearson.com/CDN/ProdStore/GOLDXP/A2/resources/07_Expanded_Wordlist/Phonetic_Chart/index.html)? If not, do you think it might be useful and how would you use it?

Task 3

**In this session**, you will prepare and deliver an individual mini-presentation.

* You do not need to do any research or refer to sources for this, but remember you *will* have to in your final assessment.
* You will not need to create any slides.
* The focus is on organisation and delivery, including pronunciation and fluency.

Before preparing, consider the question below:

* What factors make a presentation easy to follow (for the audience)?

Task 4

An academic presentation is usually divided into three clear parts: introduction, main body, and conclusion. What should each of these consist of? Remember, you will only have a short time to deliver your mini-presentations!

Task 5

You may have heard your tutor use the term ‘signposting’ before on the course or come across it in your previous studies.

1. What is ‘signposting’?
2. What expressions can be used to signpost each of the following functions commonly found in presentations? Some examples have been given to help.

* Introducing the presentation topic

*‘Today, we’ll be looking at/focusing on …’.*

* Giving the order of points

*‘Firstly I will discuss…’*

* Transitioning to a new point

*‘This leads/brings me to my next point, which is...’*

* Concluding

*‘To summarise...’*

*‘It’s important to remember/consider…’*

1. Compare your suggestions with expressions listed in the Reference Section at the end of this session material.

**STUDY SKILLS**

For more signposting expressions, see the University of Manchester’s Academic Phrasebank:

[www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk)

Though many of the examples given are aimed at written work, some sections contain expressions that can be used in or adapted for oral presentations, e.g. ‘Signalling Transition’.

Task 6

Consider the following situations. What positive or negative effects might they have on the audience?

1. The presenter reads from a pre-written script.
2. The presenter uses phrases to signal when they are introducing a topic or moving on to another point.
3. The presenter uses some incorrect word stress.
4. The presenter often pauses for long periods of time.
5. The presenter pauses at the end of sentences, and to emphasise their points.
6. The presenter seems nervous.

Task 7

You will now prepare a 3-minute mini-presentation.

Choose ONE of the following topics:

1. *The importance of your degree subject*
2. *The benefits and challenges of studying in a foreign language*
3. *Features of your hometown that are interesting to an international audience*

You should plan to:

* present and support approximately TWO key points
* include a brief introduction and conclusion
* use signposting

**Do NOT write a script**; use bullet points and notes. Your tutor will give you a planning time limit.

Task 8

Now that you have finished planning, you should rehearse what you will say. The tutor will give you a few minutes for this.

Pay attention to your:

* fluency – try to keep going and speak for the full 3 minutes.
* pronunciation and stress – use a learner’s dictionary to help you prepare.
* intonation – try to sound interested in your topic.
* volume and pace– remember that the audience needs to be able to hear and understand you.
* body language – think about making eye contact with the audience or camera.

Task 9

You will now deliver your presentation to other students in a small group.

1. Listen to each other and ask questions after each presentation (this is good practice for the seminar portion of your Listening to Speaking assessment).
2. During the presentations make notes on your group members’ performance using the table at the end of the materials. You will need to provide helpful feedback on their strengths and weaknesses. Focus on the list in Task 8, and any other areas you think might be helpful – e.g. timing, confidence, etc.

Task 10

Use your notes to give feedback to the other members of your group.

1. Remember to comment on a mix of strengths and areas in need of improvement.
2. Brainstorm ways to help improve the weaknesses discussed.

Task 11

You are going to reflect on your own mini-presentation. Use the Self Reflection table at the end of the materials to help you answer the questions:

1. What do you feel went well in your mini-presentation preparation and delivery?
2. From your classmates’ and tutor’s feedback, is there anything you will do differently next time you plan and deliver a presentation?
3. What steps will you take to help improve any areas of weakness? Try to think of realistic actions you can take – you may need to break this down into stages.

For example:

‘*I need improve where I put the stress in key words. First, I will identify what words I think will be relevant to the topic and then I will use a learner’s dictionary to help me identify where the stress of these words is. Next, I will record myself saying the word and listen back to see if it matches the recording in the learner’s dictionary.‘*

Reference Section

**Signposting in academic presentations: Example expressions**

Introducing the presentation topic

* Today I’m going to talk about …
* Welcome to my presentation, which is about …
* The topic of this presentation is …
* I’m going to discuss (the subject of) …

Giving the order of points

* First, (I’ll discuss / I’d like to talk about) …
* Firstly, / secondly, / thirdly, / then …
* My / the next point is …
* Next, (we’ll consider) …
* Finally, / the final point is …

Transitioning to a new point

* Moving on to consider …
* Moving on, (it’s important to consider) …
* Let’s move on to …
* Let’s now turn our attention to …
* Having considered …, I’d now like to talk about / discuss …

Concluding

* To sum up, …
* To summarise, …
* In conclusion, …
* That brings me to the end of my presentation. To recap, (I have discussed / we considered)…

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Peer Feedback

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| Student Name | Fluency | Pronunciation and stress | Intonation | Volume and pace | Body language | Other |
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Self Reflection

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Feedback from my peers | How I feel it went | What I will do differently / Steps I can take to improve |
| Fluency |  |  |  |
| Pronunciation and stress |  |  |  |
| Intonation |  |  |  |
| Volume and pace |  |  |  |
| Body language |  |  |  |
| Other |  |  |  |