

RESOURCE LIBRARY | ACTIVITY : 1 HR 40 MINS

# Present Like a Pro

Students consider the characteristics of a strong presentation by demonstrating one with many errors and brainstorming a list of shared criteria for a compelling presentation. They take time to prepare their own short pitches for the grant proposal they have developed.

## GRADES

6, 7, 8

## SUBJECTS

*Biology, Conservation, Storytelling*

## CONTENTS

2 PDFs

## OVERVIEW

Students consider the characteristics of a strong presentation by demonstrating one with many errors and brainstorming a list of shared criteria for a compelling presentation. They take time to prepare their own short pitches for the grant proposal they have developed.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/present-pro/>

## In collaboration with



## DIRECTIONS

This activity is part of the Extinction Stinks! unit.

## 1. Model weak presentation skills and lead a debrief discussion to identify the characteristics of a strong presentation.

- Ask: *Why is presenting your pitch with a broader audience in mind important?* Possible responses include:
  - Evoking audience emotions to encourage them to act
  - Providing clear evidence to support the strength of a solution to secure funding
- Remind students of the presentation aspect of their proposal: Groups will be giving a two to three minute pitch of their proposed solution to help their target species, using the content they outlined in their grant proposals.
- Model weak presentation skills by giving a pitch that is low energy, has no story line, and does not provide adequate detail to be complete.
- After the weak presentation, ask students for ideas about what would have made the presentation more engaging or complete. Document their ideas in a visible place. Some aspects to highlight include:
  - Making eye contact
  - Speaking with a strong voice
  - Starting with a story that draws in the audience
  - Having summarized notes, such as note cards, to avoid reading from a script
  - Using images or words (when possible) to help guide the audience
- In addition to student-generated guidelines for a complete presentation, ensure that students understand your expectations for the following criteria:
  - Time limit (between two to three minutes)
  - Divide speaking time equally among group members
  - Including visual cues, if any (e.g., slide deck, pictures, poster)

## 2. Direct students to collaborate in their project groups to prepare and practice their proposal pitch.

- Provide students with time to prepare a pitch for their grant proposal as a group.
  - Ensure students use their group's Grant Proposal handout (provided during the Helping the Sumatran Rhino activity), so that all parts of the proposed solution are

included in their pitch.

- Students should divide speaking time equally and practice their presentation several times during class, if possible.
  - Let students know if you are inviting an outside audience on the final presentation day, and encourage them to be well prepared.
- Circulate and provide support in creating an energetic and informational pitch to present the information in their grant proposals.
    - Remind students that to secure funding they will need to include all essential information from the *Proposal and Pitch Rubric*.
  - If some groups finish early, they can use each other as an audience to present to and provide one another with feedback.

## Tip

**Step 1:** Consider referring back to the *Saving the Sumatran Rhino* video used in *The Roots of Extinction* activity as an example of a strong fundraising pitch. You can also use the TED Talks listed in “Extending the Learning” to provide examples of valuable skills to leverage in students’ final presentations.

## Tip

**Step 1:** Student(s) could also model examples of weak presentation skills, using one of the grant proposals from the *Helping the Sumatran Rhino* activity or an entirely unrelated topic, to facilitate engagement.

## Tip

**Step 2:** Some students may need help moving from reading a list of the requirements to giving a compelling, well-organized pitch. Having students write parts of their presentation on note cards or sticky notes and rearranging them into a logical order may help, as can encouraging students to lead with a “hook” that draws in the audience.

## Informal Assessment

Listen to student groups as they practice, making sure to visit each group during the class period. If there is sufficient time, you could also have students do a run-through of their presentation, allowing you to offer positive and constructive feedback.

## Extending the Learning

Have students watch TED Talks related to wildlife conservation and protecting endangered species. Several strong examples include [Richard Turere](#), [Moreangels Mbizah](#), and [John Kasaona](#).

## OBJECTIVES

## Subjects & Disciplines

### **Biology**

- Conservation

### **Storytelling**

## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- List characteristics of strong and weak presentations.
- Plan a presentation based on their grant proposal detailing their solution for supporting their target species.

## Teaching Approach

- Project-based learning

## Teaching Methods

- Cooperative learning
- Role playing
- Writing

## Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- 21st Century Themes
  - Environmental Literacy
  - Global Awareness
- Critical Thinking Skills
  - Analyzing
  - Applying
  - Creating
  - Evaluating
  - Remembering
  - Understanding
- Science and Engineering Practices
  - Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering)
  - Engaging in argument from evidence
  - Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

# National Standards, Principles, and Practices

## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERACY

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.4:**

Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.&nbsp;

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.5:**

Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.6:**

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 7 Language standards 1 and 3 here for specific expectations.)&nbsp;

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1:**

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

# NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS

- **Crosscutting Concept 2:**

Cause and Effect&nbsp;

- **ETS1.B: Developing Possible Solutions:**

There are systematic processes for evaluating solutions with respect to how well they meet the criteria and constraints of a problem.

- **MS. Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystems:**

MS-LS2-5. Evaluate competing design solutions for maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services.

- **Science and Engineering Practice 7:**

Engaging in argument from evidence

- **Science and Engineering Practice 8:**

Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information

## Preparation

## What You'll Need

## REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Internet Access: Required
- Tech Setup: 1 computer per classroom, 1 computer per pair

## PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom

## RESOURCES PROVIDED: HANDOUTS & WORKSHEETS

- [Grant Proposal](#)
- [Proposal and Pitch Rubric](#)

## BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

# Background Information

Communicating effectively is an essential skill in successful conservation efforts. Using visuals, telling a clear story, making eye contact, and speaking clearly are just a few of the skills experts practice when preparing to deliver their pitches to funders.

## Prior Knowledge

### []

## Recommended Prior Activities

- None

## Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
conservation	<i>noun</i>	management of a natural resource to prevent exploitation, destruction, or neglect.
endangered species	<i>noun</i>	organism threatened with extinction.
extinction	<i>noun</i>	process of complete disappearance of a species from Earth.
grant	<i>noun</i>	money given to a person or group of people to carry out a specific project or program.
grant writing	<i>noun</i>	process of applying to a person, business, or other organization for money or other funding.
pitch	<i>verb</i>	present an idea or information in such a way as to gain support from one's audience, usually in the form of a short speech or presentation, which is referred to by the same word ( <i>pitch</i> , noun).

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### For Further Exploration

#### Articles & Profiles

- [Edutopia: Honing Students' Speaking Skills](#)
- [TED: How to make a great presentation](#)

## Images

- [TED: How to tell a great story, visualized](#)



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