

the HUB

THINK. WRITE. SPEAK.

Presentations: Planning as Storyboarding

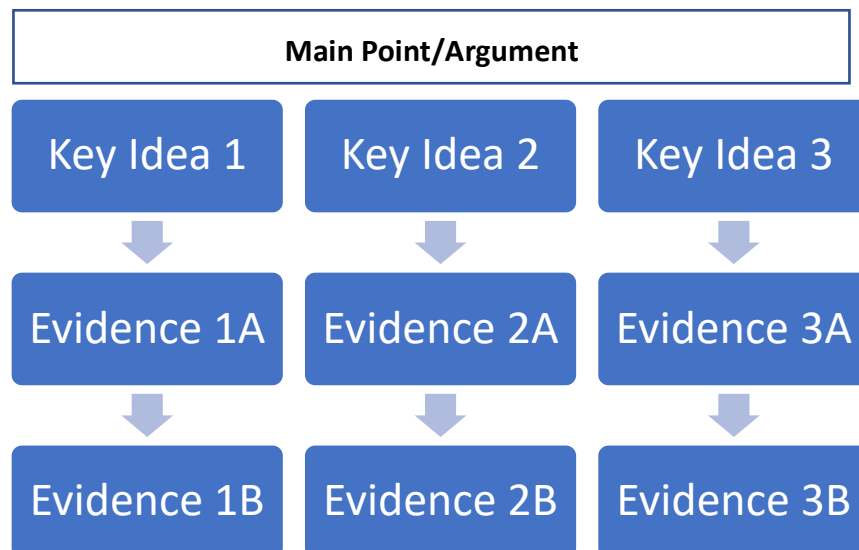
What you'll need:

- A piece of paper – at least 8.5" x 11" or larger
- Sticky notes
- Pen or pencil

Steps:

1. At the top of the large piece of paper, note the main argument you plan to make, your goal for the research/presentation, or the thesis you want to emphasize. This will help you to frame your talk and give it focus.
2. Write each key idea (you'll probably have 2 to 5) on a separate sticky.
3. Place these key ideas at the top of the large piece of paper – widthwise – but underneath the main point/argument.
4. Under each key idea, place additional stickies that list different data points or supporting evidence related to the key ideas.
5. Keep all the information simple and clear! Think 1 sticky = 1 slide.

The storyboard will look a bit like this:



Keep each key idea and its data points/evidence distinct—possibly through different colored sticky notes or writing. Each sticky needs to add something new and relevant to the talk, so if it doesn't, omit it.

Be very selective about content. Streamline the information on the sticky notes so you're emphasizing only the most essential details. You'll say more during the actual talk, but concise slides will help to complement your presentation most effectively.

You might just have one or two points of evidence under each key idea. It all depends on how much time you have to present, how detailed the presentation is supposed to be, and what your audience already knows. If you're talking to a room full of experts and have lots of time, your lines of evidence might be longer than if you're talk is short or the audience is very novice.

Once you've placed your sticky notes, write out the transition phrases and signposts/signal phrases you want to use when shifting from point to point, when introducing or defining key concepts, etc.

Also write down places where repetition will be effective so you can remind the audience of the main point/argument and how everything in your talk connects to that.

Slides: General Tips

Avoid text-heavy slides

- Slides are **not** meant to stand in for you—the speaker; keep them simple and concise
- Emphasize concepts and data visually (e.g., graphs, charts, percentages, images)
- Remove any irrelevant information from every slide (even if it's interesting!)
- Use Sans Serif fonts – these tend to be sharper when projected on a screen

Use color strategically

- If the room will not be fully lit, use a darker, cooler background color (e.g., blue) and light text – which can be easier on the eyes
- If the room will be fully lit, use a light background color (e.g., white or cream) and darker text
- Make sure the text and background have good contrast (but avoid colors that cannot be differentiated by some with color vision deficiencies)