

# Inquiry Mini-Lessons

## Presenting a Text Orally

Students should have opportunities to speak in front of their classmates and other small groups on a regular basis during the inquiry process. This lesson shows students how to orally present a piece of their writing, but can be adapted for other formats.

Charts that address what speakers should do and what listeners should do can be developed with students and posted for their reference.

It's very important that students have opportunities to rehearse before presenting in front of others. The students who are listening to the speaker should be able to recap what they hear and give compliments.

**Time:** two 25-minute lessons

**Materials:**

- four chairs labelled "Author's Chair"
- piece of teacher created writing
- "What a Speaker Should Do/What a Listener Should Do" chart
- one piece of writing per student

**Grouping:** whole class and small groups

### Procedure:

**Teaching Tip:** Students may sometimes choose to select a portion of their writing to read to the class or a small group. For example, it could be an interesting beginning, a good conclusion, the climax of story, or a section of a report.

1. Discuss with students what good speakers do when they are presenting their writing and what good listeners do as they listen. Create a chart with students.

What a Speaker Should Do	What a Listener Should Do
Practise reading before taking the "Author's Chair."	Look at the speaker.
Stand or sit up tall.	Sit quietly.
Be still.	Think about what the speaker is saying.
Look at the audience.	Ask questions when something is not clear.
Speak clearly.	
Speak loudly.	
Speak not too slowly and not too quickly.	

2. Tell students that they are going to learn how to present their writing orally.

*We are going to use our "Author's Chair" when we want to share our writing with our group or the class.*

3. Model presenting a text orally by playing the role of a person reading his or her writing in front of an audience. Select a student to play the role of the audience. Choose carefully as you want this demonstration to show the class what is expected from both the speaker and the audience.

*I'm going to present my writing and Kyle will be the audience. Kyle is going to listen carefully in order to retell the information that I've shared. Listen and watch us carefully so that you can note what a good speaker does and what a good listener does.*

4. Model how to present the text orally by thinking aloud. Use a special signal to indicate you are thinking aloud rather than reading your writing (e.g., looking up, using a different voice). Use a stage whisper to give instructions or prompts to the "audience." You might glance upward and say, "I'm so excited. I'm going to sit in the "Author's Chair" and share my writing. I've worked very hard on this, and I'm very proud of my writing." Point to the "What a Speaker Should Do" list and say, "It says on the list that I have to sit still and speak loudly. I have to speak not too fast and not too slowly. Okay, I'm ready." Glance down briefly at your writing, then look at the audience and begin reading.

With a stage whisper, remind the "audience" to clap to show appreciation. The "audience" then recaps what he or she has heard and gives a compliment.

5. Review with students how to present a text orally by asking such questions as:
  - When does someone get to sit in the "Author's Chair?"
  - What does the speaker do first?
  - What are the things that the speaker has to do?
  - What are the jobs of an audience?
6. Have students practise presenting a piece of their writing orally in pairs. For additional practise, separate the class into four groups. Place an "Author's Chair" in each corner of the room, and have one or two students in each group share their writing.
7. In another lesson, you can have a student sit in the "Author's Chair" and share his or her writing with the class. Position the teacher's chair beside and a little behind. Assure the presenters that you are there to help if needed.

**Teaching Tip:** You might wish to have only a small group of students as the audience when someone is sharing in the "Author's Chair." Give students who are very shy the option of sharing their writing with one or two friends. Keep track of students who have been in the "Author's Chair," and record relevant observations.