

English 521 Symposium Mid-Term

A symposium is a group oral presentation of prepared speeches and question and answer sessions. Think of a major essay divided equally among panelists and presented orally to an audience who will be asking many relevant questions. Such academic conferences have two different approaches:

- ▶ groups research a specific topic and present its sub-topics to their classmates (*like an essay, each student responsible for one section*)
- ▶ groups decide on a broad topic and each symposium panelist presents his/her individual (*and unrelated*) evidence (*each presenter is responsible for a separate, distinct speech, not necessarily related to the others*)

In both cases, symposium presentations are events where several people gather before an audience to share information and present their views on particular topics. Symposium presentations are both relaxed and lively, with the panelists freely challenging, interrupting, and joking with one another. This is what we'll present here in English 521.

Terms and Techniques

Panelist The expert on the discussion topic. Experts prepare with evidence gained by personal experiences and research. Experts are open to viewpoints and evidence presented by other speakers and can answer relevant questions based on their speech. Panelist's duties include:

- ▶ researching and exploring all relevant parts of his/her topic
- ▶ presenting the information in an engaging and interesting manner
- ▶ preparing a representative multimedia presentation to support your speech
- ▶ offering intelligent and thoughtful responses to questions from the audience

Leader In addition to presenting as an expert, the leader guides the symposium as a host of sorts. His/her duties:

- ▶ opens discussion by providing brief background information on the topic (this will have been co-authored by all symposium members)
- ▶ introduces experts & keeps them on topic and on time; ensures each member has equal opportunity to respond during Q and A
- ▶ gives a summary statement at the end (again, co-authored by all members) and leads the Q and A session which follows the discussion

Successful Symposiums

- ▶ Avoid just reading prepared notes when it is your turn. You are the 'expert' on this topic and shouldn't need to be constantly referring to notes.
- ▶ Points are deducted from speakers who do not address the audience during speeches (which means they refuse to look up from their notes).
- ▶ There shouldn't be repetition in the research of members. Each person's topic is distinct; it shouldn't overlap with topics of other presenters.
- ▶ Observe your audience. Facial expressions and body language will tell you whether they are interested.
- ▶ While in the audience, jot down questions that you'd like to ask panelists or comments you'd like to make when the presentation concludes.

Our English 521 Symposium

- ▶ We will have seven symposium presentations (three people per group).
- ▶ After groups are decided, we'll choose topics together and members will assume symposium roles (symposium leaders should be chosen early).
- ▶ Each student must also submit a good copy of his/her speech and a formal References page immediately following his/her symposium.
- ▶ Symposium presentations are worth 10% of the total grade in English 521.

Multimedia Portion

- ▶ Each presenter must prepare a 10 to 15 slide multimedia presentation to accompany his/her speech. What appears on each slide must match what is being said at that moment.
- ▶ Multimedia shows should include photos, statistics, facts, quotes, etc. that provide the audience a visual to match the speech. There should be a minimum of text on each slide.

Symposium Research

- ▶ Major research is required for this activity; it is critical to a symposium's success. Research to support your topic makes the speech stronger.
- ▶ All research must be copied on index cards - no printing of Internet pages. Each student must have 8-10 index cards showing his/her research.
- ▶ Students are required to submit properly-formatted MLA index cards on the symposium due date after the speeches conclude.
- ▶ Teams must decide on individual topics very early in the process. Ensure there is no overlap in each person's topic choice.
- ▶ A minimum of three sources (Internet, magazine, book, film, etc) must be used and listed on the References page.
- ▶ Students will be given three to five days to research in the library, which isn't enough time. Time must also be spent outside of class time.

Symposium Guidelines

- ▶ Once teams have been set, they shall not change.
- ▶ Symposium presenters sit at a table together at the front of the room in order to address their audience.
- ▶ Each student prepares a four to five minute speech. The speech should be well-planned, well-edited, and well-rehearsed before it is presented.
- ▶ Each symposium shall stick to a twenty-minute time frame, including time for questions.
- ▶ Each student must run his/her own multimedia presentation. When speeches conclude, the wireless presenter is passed to a teammate.
- ▶ Multimedia presentations must be submitted to Coffin the day before the symposium takes place.
- ▶ Team members may interject during each others' speeches to emphasize or clarify a point or inject a little humor; just be polite about doing so.
- ▶ Experts must take audience questions after their symposium. The symposium leader directs this Q and A session.
- ▶ It is required that all students ask at least three intelligent, interesting, and appropriate questions during the symposium presentations.
- ▶ Experts are strongly encouraged to speak without the use of notes and should also be able to pronounce all terms clearly without difficulty.

English 521 Symposium - Individual Assessment

The rubric below shows the areas which shall be assessed during the symposium presentations. Before preparing your symposium speeches, please refer to this rubric to ensure you focus your energies properly.

English 521 Symposium Assessment	
Each category shall be assessed on a sliding scale. Categories are listed below. Level 4 → High degree of understanding, effectiveness, clarity, assessment. Level 3 → Considerable degree of understanding, effectiveness, clarity, assessment. Level 2 → Adequate degree of understanding, effectiveness, clarity, assessment. Level 1 → Limited degree of understanding, effectiveness, clarity, assessment.	
Assessment Criteria	Score:
<u>Content</u> Stating key points and explaining supporting details, examples, or illustrations with clarity and effectiveness. Organizing and expressing ideas clearly. (Double-Weighted)	/8
<u>Purpose & Attention</u> Understanding symposium's purpose. Listening attentively, speaking in turn and on topic with consistency and effectiveness.	/4
<u>Language/Style and Speaking Techniques</u> Using appropriate language, grammar/mechanics effectively. Using volume, tone, pace, emphasis, and clarity to enhance presentation; without constant need of prepared text.	/4
<u>Multimedia Portion</u> Slide show contains photos, statistics, and charts to support the presentation of the group without supercilious information. Presentation is appropriate length and complexity.	/4
<u>Questions and Answers</u> Answering with a effectiveness. Asking questions of others which are relevant, insightful, and showing evidence of intent listening.	/4
<u>Index Cards</u> Should be 8 to 10 of these, assessed for quality of information, credibility of sources, and outright plagiarism. Notes should be organized so that they follow the order of the speech.	/4
<u>Good Copies of Speech and References (Works Cited)</u> Each student must provide a MLA-style good copy of his/her speech and References which lists all research sources (each student must use at least three sources).	/4
<u>Guidelines</u> Following guidelines (length, speaking order, taking turns in questioning, being courteous, reaching deadlines). None awarded, but deducted if students do not follow the guidelines.	-
<u>Self-Assessment Score</u> This score shall be awarded after the student completes an honest self-assessment (see checklist to the right) of his/her performance in all aspects of the symposium.	/4
Individual Assessment Subtotal →	
/36	
<u>Peer Assessment Score</u> Each team member shall also assess his/her co-presenters at the conclusion of the symposium presentations. This grade will be added to the individual assessment.	/4
<u>Background Information and Summary Statement</u> Each team must co-author a group statement at the beginning of the symposium which provides background; the summary statement at the end is also co-authored.	/4
Final Symposium Grade →	
/44	

English 521 Symposium - Self and Peer Assessment

After each symposium, group members complete Self and Peer Assessments as part of the final grade. Respond thoughtfully and without bias in assessing yours and your teammates' performances. If students are unfairly optimistic/pessimistic, Coffin will alter or omit these scores.

English 521 Symposium Self-Assessment			
Using the scale, rate your performance in each of the criteria-based statements below.			
4 - Strongly Agree	3 - Agree	2 - Slightly Agree	1 - Don't Agree
1.	I had all relevant information fully prepared prior to this symposium.		
2.	I completely understood all concepts related to my topic for this symposium.		
3.	I expressed my ideas logically and in a convincing manner.		
4.	I provided input into the organization of the speech and multimedia show.		
5.	I made effective use of speaking techniques: eye contact, gestures, expressions.		
6.	I listened attentively while others were speaking.		
7.	I actively participated in the planning of our opening and closing remarks.		
8.	I was open and available for planning and practicing my team's symposium		
9.	I provided appropriate and informative responses to all questions posed to me.		
10.	I did my best during this entire process and am proud of my efforts.		
Score will be reduced from 40 points to a grade out of 4 points.			

English 521 Symposium Peer-Assessment			
Using the scale, rate your performance in each of the criteria-based statements below.			
4 - Strongly Agree	3 - Agree	2 - Slightly Agree	1 - Don't Agree
1.	He/she had all relevant information fully prepared prior to the symposium.		
2.	He/she made efforts to completely understand all concepts related to topic.		
3.	He/she was open and willing to discuss alternate points of view on our topic.		
4.	He/she paid close attention to all speeches to answer questions effectively.		
5.	He/she was on task and focused throughout the research and planning process.		
6.	He/she was always respectful to all group members.		
Score will be reduced from 24 points to a grade out of 4 points.			

Remember, during the Symposium process, each student must submit the following:

- Multimedia presentations must be submitted the day before the symposium due date.
- After your symposium concludes, you must submit:
 - a good copy of your symposium speech
 - a properly-formatted (MLA style) References page.
 - 8 to 10 index cards used during the research process
- You must have used three valid sources during your research phase.