

Experiences Giving Research Presentations to Junior High Students
University of California, Santa Barbara

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General guidelines

Speakers

- well rehearsed, dynamic and approachable
- boil research down to its essence, then relate it to students in their terms.
- strive for conversation type dialogue, no jargon, take questions in stride

How to find speakers?

- GK12 fellows can likely identify qualified peers (this is what we did!)
- Graduate student organizations looking for outreach opportunities
- Teaching assistant award winners

Good venue

- Flexible classroom setting (i.e. can take up 45 minutes of class time)
- Captive audience (i.e. classroom setting easier than afterschool club setting)

Format

- Tell speakers to aim for a "15 minute" (knowing it will most likely go 10 minutes longer) interactive slide show + 10 minute "show and tell"
- Ask speakers to talk about themselves in junior high, what they "wanted to be," and how they ended up in science
- Have speakers include pictures of themselves, esp. in their research settings
- Give a descriptive, yet data-free research talk
- Build in questions for the audience

Appropriate time

- ~45 minutes: affords time to bring in personal experience, student reflection (i.e. questionnaire), and addressing student questions

Additional tips

Need an organizer/ speaker screener (selects speakers and previews their talks)

Good working teacher/organizer relationship

- Helps to establish a consistent tone in the classroom and consistent speaker quality.

Monitor Program effectiveness in terms of: student comprehension and any gains in their interest and comfort with science.

LEAPS website: <http://www.leaps.ucsb.edu/pages/projects.html>

Questionnaire forms, our AVID talks, GK12 NSF talk posted on our website