TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT DRESDEN

Fakultät Sprach-, Literatur-, und Kulturwissenschaften Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik

Short Presentations

1. General Hints

Short presentations should be an integral part of our seminars, though we do not aim for classes where one presentation just follows the other. Ideally, a presentation should serve as a **basis for discussion**, demonstrate your ability to **work both with primary texts and critical texts,** and allow you to formulate theses on a given topic.

Present the structure and main theses of your proposed talk to your course tutor before you deliver your paper in class. Arrange for an **appointment** with your tutor **at least two weeks before your presentation is due**.

You should not exceed 15-20 minutes of speaking-time. It is not important share everything that you have found out – give a sensible selection and leave room for questions.

2. Content

Naturally, what you talk about very much depends on the general topic of the seminar. There are, however, some basics that you should keep in mind:

1) Avoid focussing too much on the author and her/his biographical background. Remember that you are not interpreting the author's life but her/his work!
2) Make sure you know your **precise topic.** You must **consult the teacher at least two weeks before your presentation**, in order to agree on the exact topic.
3) Do not give synopses of the primary text.
4) **Work with quotations:** as there are lots of different editions of classic texts, it will make sense to refer to <u>chapters</u> (when discussing a novel) or <u>acts/scenes</u> (when discussing a play) instead of pages. If you want to make sure everyone has the quote, you should provide them on PowerPoint or via OHP.
5) You should end with a **conclusion** stressing your main arguments (the clearer you have been focussing on a key question, the easier you will find this part).

3. Sources

The **minimal requirement** for sources is to be of academic background and up-to-date.

- For presentations, consult <u>at least</u> **two books/monographs** and **three articles** of criticism. Your <u>web sources should not outnumber your other sources</u>.
- Please consult our general sheet on [bibliographies and citation](#) to familiarise yourself with the formal requirements.

Web Sources:

Naturally, sources found on the web are not taboo, and indeed, there are a number of very helpful pages dedicated to literary criticism (especially by universities). However, <u>they should not be your first choice</u>. Aim for printed sources (from the library) whenever possible!

When working with web sources, make sure that you consult **reliable ones:**

- Is an author name given to the article? Avoid anonymous publications!
- Is the website dedicated to research, or is it a purely commercial one?
- Check the URL for "uni", "ac", "edu", etc. If it contains these abbreviations, you can be sure the articles have been written by members of research faculties.
- Make sure you quote websites like textual sources. **Just providing the URL is not sufficient** – see the hints on [bibliographies/citation](#).

4. Visual Support & Info Sheet

A PowerPoint presentation can be a sensible bonus, but it is **no must**. What kind of media you involve says nothing about the quality of your presentation. If you prepare a **PowerPoint** presentation, keep the following points in mind:

- The presentation **must not just duplicate** what is already on the info sheet.
- Only include **quotes and statements** in your slides **if you also read them out** – the audience cannot listen to you and process something else simultaneously!

An **info sheet for everyone is essential**! Make sure you have prepared enough copies. The sheet **must be in A4 paper format** and should contain the following information:

- name of the seminar and the teacher; date, your name,
- a **bibliography** (in alphabetical order), referring to all the sources you have used,
- mainly: your **theses** (in the correct order), i.e. the **visualisation of your outline.**

Give your theses, some of the arguments, and (if necessary) some supporting quotes.
It should be **two pages (one sheet) at the most**.

The typical head might look like this (recommendation):

TU Dresden	
Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik	WS 2017/18
PS/Ü *The Novels of Graham Greene*	30 November, 2017
Prof. Dr. A. Anglicus	Presenters: Erika Mustermann, John Doe

5. The Actual Presentation

It is absolutely necessary to **rehearse** beforehand. Make sure you **stick to the time-frame**.

- **Address your audience throughout your talk** (eye contact!), try to speak freely (and loud enough!), use your own words.
- **Do not rush!** Make sure your listeners are still with you. Clear statements and correct use of terminology will help the audience to follow.
- Explain unknown vocabulary.
- Your talk must reflect the outline used on your sheet and in your PowerPoint slides.

Very often, it will make sense to finish on a question mark rather than an exclamation point, so as to generate some discussion.

Try to initiate a **discussions**:
- This can be achieved via some provocative thesis or a clear statement that sums up your findings.
- Just asking, "What's your opinion on that?," is not a sufficient basis for a discussion!