

**The Impact of *PowerPoint* on Oral Book
Reports by Eighth Grade Students**

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Dayton, in partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Science in Education

by

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Purpose for the Study

In many subject areas offered in schools today, the art of oral presentation is being used more and more. Many curriculums include objectives for oral presentations at numerous grade levels. Furthermore, teachers are having their students present information they learned in a variety of ways instead of the teacher just lecturing about the material. However, many students experience difficulty in delivering effective presentations.

There is little doubt that individuals need certain communication and technology skills to help them meet the future challenges of the new millennium when presenting information in the workplace and other settings. Writing and speaking skills are important for individuals to master. This will enable them to communicate with others in the business world. However, with our society in the midst of the computer age, individuals also need to be able to incorporate computer applications into their school work. This will give the students practice for their future careers. What better way to develop effective oral presentations than to incorporate presentation software that businesses use? Presentation software and correct presentation skills will better prepare the students for their future.

Presentation software is used to help an individual enhance a presentation. The three most popular types of software in the business world are: Corel *Presentation 7*, Lotus *Freelance Graphics*, and Microsoft *PowerPoint*. Each of these presentations has features that distinguishes it from the others (Kawamoto, 1997; Tripp, 1997).

Companies today are using various types of software to catch the attention of clients and consumers. Businesses are using *PowerPoint* to help them organize their thoughts, develop powerful illustrations, and deliver their ideas in a professional manner. Companies also like the presentation software because it allows them to develop presentations quickly. It is mentioned in the manual for Microsoft *PowerPoint* that the software program provides templates for the background, and it has a step-by-step “Wizard” which assists in generating the presentation. *PowerPoint* allows individuals to develop charts and graphs while using sounds, movies, and pictures to enhance the presentation (Microsoft, 1997). If businesses are using *PowerPoint* to improve their oral presentations to clients, then why can’t students use *PowerPoint* to enhance their oral book reports?

Some companies use *Freelance Graphics* for their presentational software. This software comes loaded with the next-generation of SmartMaster technology. With *Freelance Graphics*, individuals can receive suggestions from experts within the program for the slide layout, sales presentations, and marketing ideas. This program allows teams to work together, even if some individuals are at remote locations (Tripp, 1997).

Corel *Presentation 7* allows individuals to design simple presentations using slide templates, layouts, and backgrounds with data added to each. This program has forty screen transitions. A program developed on Corel *Presentation 7* can be placed on the World Wide Web through Wizard-like interface. However, Wayne Kawamoto stated in the PC Magazine that he likes the Microsoft *PowerPoint* and the Lotus *Freelance Graphics* more than others because they are both easier to use (1997).

Presentation software can help students generate slides, overheads, screen shows, handouts, and speaker notes (See, Appendix A). By using this technology, students play an active role in their own learning. Educators are now beginning to incorporate technology into the school systems through the use of presentational software. Students can develop course activities and projects which will give them an opportunity to develop technical skills. This presentation software first used in businesses should also allow students to develop better book reports. Therefore, the students take ownership of their projects, and the projects are of higher quality as a result of presentation software (Schenone-Steven, 1996).

Problem Statement

Although middle school students often know the information in a book they have read, they are often unable to present the report in an organized and professional way. The purpose of this research is to examine the impact of eighth graders using *PowerPoint* in creating and presenting oral book reports.

Hypothesis

Research Hypothesis- Student presentation skills will be enhanced as a result of giving an oral book report with technological visual aids compared to those giving reports with non-technological visual aids.

Null Hypothesis-There will be no difference in the presentation skills between students who give oral book reports using technological visual aids and those who give book reports using non-technological visual aids.

Assumptions

This researcher assumed that the students learned how to effectively use the *PowerPoint* presentation software in class used in their oral presentations. It is also assumed that all students know how to prepare a visual aid for their oral presentation.

Limitations

A major limitation in this study was that all the eighth grade students may not be at the 8.0 grade reading level. There was one teacher instructing both of the two eighth grade reading classes. Since all of the students were not in the same class, the instructor may have been slightly different in the two sections. This is because the teacher may have inadvertently added or deleted some material which seemed to be important to educate each class. The two classes had students who learn in different ways, so the teacher may have altered the teaching method somewhat so that the students in each class could understand the required material. Another important limitation is that the students were not randomly selected. Although the choice of which class received the technology training was random, the assignment of students into each class was made prior to the start of the school year. Class assignment was not under the researcher's control. Factors including enrollment in other classes such as band and computer programming might have had an impact on student class assignment. Since the classes were already preassigned, the researcher chose not to give a pretest.

Definitions/Terms

Presentational Software -Software that is used to help an individual enhance his/her presentation. The piece of software used in this study is *PowerPoint*.

Presentation Skills- These are the skills that an individual needs to possess in order for an oral presentation to be successful. These skills include: being organized, memorizing most of the speech, making the presentation interesting, following the time limit, announcing the objective, using good transitions, using eye contact, and speaking clearly.

Chapter 2

Introduction

The goal of this research was to determine if eighth graders' presentational skills improved when giving an oral book report using technological visual aids compared to their classmates using non-technological visual aids. There is limited research supporting how *PowerPoint* can impact a student's oral presentation in school. In this chapter, the review of the literature will be discussed. Information about the following components will be addressed: 1) elements of a good oral presentation, 2) problems individuals may encounter when giving an oral presentation, 3) reasons for using visual aids when giving oral presentations, 4) how to develop a good visual aid, 5) rationale for using technology in oral presentations, 6) technology in the schools, 7) multimedia, 8) research about hypermedia, 9) use of *PowerPoint*, and 10) ways other schools are using *PowerPoint*.

Review of the Literature

After reviewing the literature, the researcher was able to find the recommended elements for a good oral presentation. In 1997, Hager and Scheiber stated that there are seven elements that must be met when preparing an oral presentation. First, the presenter identifies the aim or purpose and presentational objectives of the presentation. Second, the presenter defines the audience. Third, the presenter selects a format and outlines the presentation. Fourth, the presenter will collect and organize data. Fifth, the presenter drafts the presentation script. Sixth, the presenter designs and integrates effective visuals. Finally, the presenter practices the presentation. These experts state that all of these steps are necessary to make a good oral presentation.

There are several problems that an individual may encounter with oral presentations. Presenters have problems with giving the oral presentations when any of the following occur: a) there is a lack of organization, b) there is a reliance on memory or manuscript, c) the speaker does not physically move throughout the presentation, d) the presentation is not interesting or exciting for the audience, and e) the time limit is not met. Other problems can occur when the speaker misuses visual aids in the following ways: a) aids are not used when necessary, b) the speaker overuses aids, c) charts are too small to read, d) writing is illegible (Howell & Bormann, 1988). A speaker must be aware of these problems in order to deliver a successful presentation.

E. Bailey stated in his 1992 book, A Practical Guide for Business Speaking, that there are five major advantages for using visual aids when giving a presentation. First, visuals help keep the presenter focused on what is occurring next in the presentation. Second, the audience is focused on what is occurring in the presentation. Third, the visual aids allow the audience to both see and hear the ideas. Fourth, the visual aids give the presenter cues to look at so he/she does not have as much stage fright. Finally, the visual aids emphasize important ideas in the presentation. These are reasons why a speaker would want to use visual aids.

There are also some advantages for using the computers when giving presentations. One advantage is that computers show color well. It is easy to create and modify ideas on the computer while looking professional. The presenter can add graphics and change values. Updating slides can be done with a few easy changes on the computer (Bailey, 1992).

Bailey recommended several suggestions that individuals need to keep in mind when designing a successful visual aid. The most important suggestion is to place a title on the visual aid. This allows the audience to know what idea is being presented. When placing words on the visual aid, they should be placed near the top. This allows individuals in the back of the room to be able to see the entire visual aid. The visual aid should not have too many words for each idea. Each of the ideas should be placed on a different poster or slide. The presenter needs to use large upper and lower case letters on the visual aid. There should also be color on the visual aid to make it more attractive (1992).

There are several reasons why technology should be used in oral presentations according to Pedras (1996). First, educational technology enhances student motivation. Second, this allows new and innovative ways to increase learning. Third, it is visually stimulating and entertaining. Fourth, technology enables student creativity to be expanded. These are valid reasons why schools should use technology when doing oral presentations.

When a student needs to present a book report orally to the whole class, will he/she become overwhelmed with the idea of having to incorporate several different elements? These elements include being able to summarize the story, present the information in a clear and understanding way, and have a logical introduction and conclusion. An individual may wait until the last minute to develop a visual aide for the report. A student may not feel artistically talented to draw an illustration. Therefore, the individual resorts to copying pictures or does not add any illustrations. A student may not take the time to design bold and clear letters. This results in work that looks sloppy with little effort to develop a prop. The visual aids end up not complementing a presentation.

Experts believe these problems could be eliminated by the use of presentational software (Schenone-Steven, 1996).

Some literature provides information about how schools are using technology and if technology can help make oral book reports more interesting, organized, and professional. According to H. Mechlinger, there is a revolution occurring today that is different than any other revolution (1996). This revolution is to get technology into the schools. The teachers and local administrators are leading the revolution. The revolution is apparent because every week schools are approving the purchases of 10 to 20 new computers. Some individuals believe that with technology students will be less bored. This new revolution results in computers in schools being used for drill-and-practice, word processing, spreadsheets, and interactive video from one school to another. With this revolution, students are eager to use technology, and parents want their children to have access to technology at school (Mechlinger, 1996).

In 1995, the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) released a new report called "Teachers and Technology: Making the Connection." The topic was a study of the presence and impact of technology in U.S. schools. OTA is estimating that the schools in 1996 had about 5.8 million computers for instruction. This is about one computer for every nine students. The numbers show an increase of 700,000 computers per year for the last three years. In 1995, thirty-five percent of the schools had access to the World Wide Web and that percentage is growing daily. (O'Neil).

On the other hand, John O'Neil (1995b) stated that technology will have little impact in schools where traditional models of teaching and learning are dominant. The computer revolution will more strongly affect schools that are using technology to develop

new models of teaching and learning. The computers allow teachers and students to expand beyond the walls of the school to their community, work place, and families.

O'Neil (1995b) stated several ways computers are used in schools. One way is having access to the World Wide Web. This allows individuals to find one place of interest which is linked to other places that can be explored. Schools can use virtual communication to communicate with individuals who are not even physically present. This occurs when two people can communicate with each other face-to-face over the computer. An example of this is the See-U-C-Me technology device. Computers also allow students to master the ability to make decisions when given incomplete information, inconsistent objectives, and uncertain consequences. Computer use can accomplish this by promoting collaborative learning, constructive learning, and apprenticeships (O'Neil, 1995b).

One interesting study has been completed concerning a computer based integrated learning system (ILS). This software provides instruction and practice problems in subjects such as math, language arts, computer skills, science, writing, social studies, foreign language, and English as a Second Language. Student lessons are sent to each individual computer from the system's central server. They are available when the students log on to the computer. Each lesson is individualized by the ILS's assessment of the student's prior performance and current learning needs in the curriculum (Van Dusen & Worthen, 1995).

This study conducted by Lani M. Van Dusen and Blaine R. Worthen (1995) on the ILS in the classroom showed that if the system is used properly, student achievement improved. The method of obtaining information was through interviews, observations,

surveys, and attitude data. The results revealed several conclusions. First, this program allowed students to work at their own pace. They remained engaged in the task as a result of receiving immediate feedback. Students' performance increased because they stayed engaged in their learning for each objective. Second, the program allowed the students to obtain information and use other programs such as database, word processors, spelling, and grammar checker. Third, the program stated learning objectives covered and the time it took a student to complete a task. Fourth, it guaranteed the student individualized instruction.

The following background information is about multimedia and how it developed into the technology we use today. "Multimedia refers to communication from more than one media source that uses text, audio, graphics, animated graphics, and full-motion video" (Sharp, 1996). Examples of multimedia before the computer era are slides, movies, cassette players, and overhead projectors which enhance a teacher's lessons (Sharp, 1996). But, how did recent multimedia improve technology?

In 1965, a man by the name of Ted Nelson made a major step in multimedia. He was able to take written electronic documents and interconnect them with other written information. Later, individuals were able to connect text, images, sound, and actions into a nonsequential grouping called Hypertext. This allowed the user to skim through the information in any order wanted. An example of this is an electronic library or the World Wide Web (Sharp, 1996).

Next Hypermedia was developed. Hypermedia uses the "computer to input, manipulate, and output graphics, sound, text, and video in the presentation of ideas and information". Today there is a vast selection of Hypermedia products and software

programs. Some examples of Hypermedia are *PowerPoint*, *HyperCard*, *HyperStudio*, *LinkWay Level*, *Digital Chisel*, and *Kid's Studio* (Sharp, 1996). Technology equipment that is considered to be Hypermedia include QuickTake Cameras, scanners, digital sound recorders, laser disks, CD-ROM players, and video cameras (Sharp, 1996).

There has been research on the use of Hypermedia. One example is the Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow (ACOT). R. Tierney in 1989 wrote an article for ACOT entitled "The Influence of HyperCards on Students' Thinking." This article was about a research study where 10th graders in an ACOT program choose a chapter from a biology textbook and developed a study guide using Hypertext in the form of HyperCard.

The following are the results of using the HyperCards as study guides: 1) The students went beyond facts and explored ideas and issues of interest. The students paused to consider alternative explanations, or they checked for understanding when reading off the slides. 2) Students referred to visual representations to clarify or check the understanding of concepts. 3) Hypertext appeared to make ideas more accessible. 4) Hypertext appeared to motivate students more than a regular textbook. (Tierney, 1989; Kommers, Grabinger, & Dunlap, 1996). These are reasons why HyperCards would be a good study guide source.

PowerPoint is a presentational software program. It was used in this study because of its quality and the school has the Microsoft Office program which includes *PowerPoint*. An individual can add clip art, pictures, and sound to a slide. In the newer models of the software program, movies are now being added to the presentation. A presenter can manually or automatically run the slide show. They can also draw or write on each slide as it appears on the screen. Many businesses are now using *PowerPoint* to

develop a presentation then display it on the World Wide Web. This program also allows a person to make handouts of the presentation so the viewers can make comments on the space provided on the paper. The presenter is able to write notes about each slide using the software program. Individuals can state a name, place of the presentation, and the date on each handout which allows the presenter to be recognized (Blanco & Vento, 1996). (See Appendix B for an example of a handout.) Businesses are even using *PowerPoint* as their presentation software. In January 1997, PC Computing named "Microsoft Office for Windows 95" (which included Microsoft *PowerPoint*) to be the Most Valuable Product for business application software(148).

PowerPoint is used in the schools in three main ways. First, it is used as a presentation at Open Houses or Parent Teacher Conferences. Second, *PowerPoint* is used as a tutorial. Third, it is used in student-produced projects. These are just the main ways that *PowerPoint* is used in the schools (Stafford, 1997).

It is easy to create a *PowerPoint* presentation. First, the user selects the layout that is needed. The layout can be all text, title and author, charts, graphs, or pictures and text (See Appendix C). Next, the user adds the text that is needed and clipart in the picture box. *PowerPoint* can help an individual to be better organized. It turns an individual's bright ideas into a better presentation. Finally, the program allows the speaker to use handouts, note cards, or outlines of the presentation (Microsoft Corporation, 1997c; Shelly, Cashman, and Vermaat, 1996).

PowerPoint is being used in schools for a variety of purposes. In the Clovis Unified School District in California, individuals stated that "With the use of Microsoft *PowerPoint* presentation graphics, the students have gained confidence and become better

public speakers.” The students found information about the environment from the Internet, then wrote reports using Microsoft Word. They made class presentations with *PowerPoint*. The students used Excel to analyze and graph results from experiments (Microsoft Corporation, 1997a; Microsoft Corporation, 1997b). Teachers in the Clovis Unified School District report greater enthusiasm for learning, better education, and higher self-esteem. Anthony Amato, Superintendent from the Community School District #6, New York City, stated on page 3 from the Microsoft Corporation report, “These fifth graders are coming out with incredible projects, very much the way an adult would. They are thinking of things that have not been thought of because in the past they did not have the tools of an adult, but they have the unfettered creativity of a child. When you put those things together, stand aside because the magic is gonna happen!” (Microsoft Corporation, 1997a, p. 3; Microsoft Corporation, 1997b).

Another school using *PowerPoint* is the Fort Recovery School System. This school system is known to be one of the leaders in technology in Mercer County, Ohio. They receive many grants to incorporate technology into their schools and the extra financial resources have helped make major changes in the curriculum.

Two known Fifth Grade teachers who use *PowerPoint* the most in the Fort Recovery School System had the following comments to contribute. Jeff Brown, a science teacher, stated that the students’ attitudes seem to improve when completing projects using *PowerPoint*. Jeff has seen an improvement in their typing, vocabulary, and proofreading skills (1997). Kathy Heitkamp, a language arts teacher, stated that the students used *PowerPoint* for projects about Japanese authors and a space unit. By using *PowerPoint*, Kathy stated that the students did not seem to be bothered by the audience’s

presence. The students did not seem to be nervous when they had to stand up in front of the class. Kathy uses a great deal of technology in her curriculum, and this teaching method helped to maintain her student's test scores. This allowed students in Kathy's classroom to have a 100% passage in the reading portion of the off year proficiency test (1997).

Indiana University of Pennsylvania used *PowerPoint* in their political science and social science classes. The University chose to use *PowerPoint* for two reasons. First, visual aid tools helped with the study of politics in foreign countries. Second, the ease with which *PowerPoint* can be learned and integrated with existing course material was a factor. Students at the end of the course completed a survey about their attitudes toward using *PowerPoint* to see if using the program was successful. The results revealed that 68% of the students thought that the presentations through *PowerPoint* supported the course content and made lectures organized. Sixty-eight percent said that *PowerPoint* helped them take notes. Forty-nine percent said *PowerPoint* made lectures interesting, while 47% said it helped them take better notes. Thirty-six percent of the students said that *PowerPoint* helped them to understand the material and the graphics were helpful. The study also revealed that there were substantial increases in student satisfaction, and there was an increase in enrollment for the comparative politics courses. The surveys given to gauge student reaction to the PowerPoint presentation revealed that students perceive increased retention, grasp of material, organization, and enjoyment (Jackson, 1997).

Teachers can use professional journals to find uses for *PowerPoint* in the classroom. Instructor Magazine stated how teachers could find research about an

Olympic Gymnast in their April 1996 issue. They gave examples of how students in grades one through five could obtain information then present their information using *PowerPoint* (D'ignazio, 1996). An article written by Debrah J. Stafford (1997) in Technology Connection included information on how teachers can use the Internet to gather ideas for implementing *PowerPoint* into their classroom. She states how *PowerPoint* can be used to teach students several lessons in reading, science, and social studies.

When a student presents an oral book report, the following elements mentioned by Hager and Scheiber need to be included: 1) the presenter identifies the aim or purpose and presentational objectives of the presentation, 2) the presenter defines the audience, 3) the presenter selects a format and outlines the presentation, 4) the presenter will collect and organize data, 5) the presenter drafts the presentation script, 6) the presenter designs and integrates effective visuals, and 7) the presenter practices the presentation (1997). The use of a visual aid increases the effectiveness of an oral report. With schools in the midst of a new revolution, computers are being used to enhance the curriculum. *PowerPoint* is a presentation software program which allows a student to develop a successful presentation.

Chapter 3

Procedure

Introduction

The goal of this researcher was to find out if a student's presentation skills improve when giving an oral report using technological visual aids compared to students using non-technological visual aids. There is limited research supporting how *PowerPoint* can impact a student presentation in school. The following components will be discussed in this chapter: setting, sample, hypothesis, design, instruments, materials, and procedure.

Setting

In 1994, Governor George Voinovich introduced SchoolNet. It is a five year plan to invest \$95 million dollars in Ohio Schools. Fifty million dollars of this money was used to wire every public classroom in the state. It also supported voice, video, and data technology. SchoolNet is important because it allows schools to access information and use new technology such as Hypermedia. It is also used to improve professional development by collaborating and sharing resources which increases the productivity of the teachers (Ohio SchoolNet, 1995).

In 1995, a rural county school district obtained a grant to begin the technology planning process. The goal was to incorporate technology into the lives of their students, teachers, administrators, and community members. The schools in this county have developed a county-wide technology plan as well as individual school district technology plans. This early planning allowed the school districts to have a head start on the Ohio SchoolNet process (Ohio SchoolNet, 1995).

This study took place in a rural school district. It is in a small farming community in southwestern Ohio. The school district consists of one elementary building, grades K-8, and one high school building.

Subjects

The subjects in the study were thirty-seven students from two eighth grade reading classes in a rural white middle class elementary school with 700 students. Most of the residents' average economic status is in the middle with 100% of the students being Caucasian. These students range in ability level from high to special education.

Design

The design was to study the effect of *PowerPoint* on oral presentations. There were thirty-seven students participating in this study from two eighth grade classes. These students were heterogeneously grouped. Class A had eighteen students (n=18) and gave oral presentations with visual aids that they developed. Class B had nineteen students (n=19) and gave oral presentations using the *PowerPoint* software program as their visual aid. All students were evaluated on their presentation skills by three professionals. These skills are listed in the evaluation survey (See Appendix D).

Research Hypothesis- The student's presentation skills will be enhanced as a result of giving oral book reports with technological visual aids compared to students using non-technological visual aids.

Null Hypothesis-There will be no difference in the presentation skills between students who give oral book reports using technological visual aids and those who give book reports using non-technological visual aids.

The variables in this study are listed below:

Dependent Variable-presentation skills

Independent Variable- technology

Instruments

The researcher developed an evaluation scale to assess the presentation skills when visual aids are used with and without technology. The survey was constructed using information gathered by reviewing related literature and an oral book report grading sheet. The oral book report grading sheet has been used at the school where the study took place. This scale has been used by sixth and eighth grade language arts teachers for several years. Content validity was established by adapting the predesigned oral book report grading sheet to literature information from Hager & Scheiber (1997), Howell & Borman (1988), and E. Bailey (1992). From the literature information collected, the researcher developed objectives for the steps needed to make a good oral presentation and visual aid. These became objectives number 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12 on the evaluation sheet. From the original oral book report grading sheet, the researcher developed objectives for numbers 3, 4, 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, & 16 on the evaluation sheet. The new evaluation survey is provided in Appendix D. The original oral book report grading sheet is provided in Appendix E.

Materials

This study focused on the use of *PowerPoint*. This presentation software was used because it was part of the "Microsoft Office" package that the school purchased, and it was of high quality. *PowerPoint* is a presentational graphics software program that

allows individuals to create and save presentations. These presentations are a collection of slides relating to the same topic. This program also allows a presenter to make handouts of the presentation to give to the audience, so they can make comments in the side margin. The presenter is able to write notes about each slide using the speaker note function in the program. The presenter can design tables, graphs, and charts to be used in the presentation. An individual can also use *PowerPoint* to add clip art, pictures, and sound to a slide (Blanco & Vento, 1996).

Procedure

Before the study was conducted, the researcher gave two classes a pretest in reading by The Economy Company. From the results, fourteen of the students in class A could read at or above the eighth grade reading level with four students reading below the eighth grade reading level. Fifteen students in Class B scored at the eighth grade reading level. There were four students who read just below the eighth grade reading level.

One teacher taught both eighth grade classes. The teacher of the eighth grade reading classes discussed what was expected in the oral presentations. This was done by reviewing items and topics on the evaluation survey. After the students were informed about the evaluation survey, they were allowed to select a book from the library. Each student read a book with a minimum of two hundred pages at the seventh/eighth grade reading level. The books were from one of the following book categories: fiction, nonfiction, fantasy, biography, or mystery. Each student selected a book; however, all the books were then approved by the teacher for the correct reading level, length, and type.

The two eighth grade reading classes had one month to complete the book and develop an oral presentation. The students read the books in class and at home. During

this time, the students could ask the teacher any questions about the book or what was needed for an oral presentation.

The students in class A worked on their book reports and developed oral presentations. This was done during class and on their own time. Each made a non-technological visual aid for the oral presentation. Each student was required to use at least one poster as a visual aid. The students could use other visual aids along with the poster if desired as long as they were not of a technological nature. Some visual aids the students could use included props or costumes.

The teacher instructed the students in class B on how to use the *PowerPoint* software program before the class went to the computer lab to develop their *PowerPoint* presentation. Each student was shown how to add pictures, sound, an outline, graphs, and handouts. The students could design their presentations in whatever way they desired as long as they met the criteria on the evaluation survey. These students used the computer lab to complete the book reports using the software program. Each class had the same amount of time to work on their book report at home and at school. They also had the same amount of time to ask the teacher for assistance.

The subjects in classes A and B gave oral presentations in front of their respective class. These students were video taped so that their presentations could be viewed later. The teacher of the two eighth grade reading classes filled out the evaluation survey while the students delivered the presentations. The researcher was assisted with establishing higher validity in the study by two other teachers who later viewed the tapes and completed an evaluation survey. The teachers were selected because they have been teaching and using the original oral book report grading sheet for five or more years.

Thus, three evaluation sheets were completed by experienced teachers for each student. As a result, Class A had 54 evaluation sheets for the 18 students and Class B had 57 evaluation sheets for the 19 students.

Scoring

The three educators scored the evaluation sheets in the following ways. The teachers had to score each of the objectives from a one to a five point grading system. If an objective was completely met (100%), the student would receive a five on the evaluation sheet. If the objective was 75% met, the student would receive a four on the evaluation sheet. A score of three would be received if 50% of the objective was met. A student who met 25% of the objective would receive a score of two. An objective that was not met would receive a score of one.

For example, if a student had eye contact only a few times during the presentation, a "2" would be scored since he/she read off the note cards. However, if the students began reading off of the note cards a great deal half way through the presentation, a "3" would be scored. Another example is if a student read off of the note cards just a little during the presentation, a "5" would be scored for not reading off of the note cards.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed by reviewing the evaluation surveys of the three teachers. The mean score for each item was calculated for both groups. The researcher also compared the teachers' responses to the survey for both types of oral presentations. These were used to determine the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation scores for each question. The researcher compared the data from both types of oral presentations.

The researcher also asked the professionals to make comments about the students' oral reports. The students who performed their oral presentation by using *PowerPoint* were also given a survey. The survey asked the students to compare the oral report that they did with *PowerPoint* to a report that they did in another class where they had to use a poster. The survey is in Appendix F.

Chapter 4

Summary

Introduction

The goal of this research was to find out if eighth graders' presentation skills were enhanced as a result of giving oral book reports with *PowerPoint* visual aids compared to using non-technological visual aids. This chapter will summarize the results from the research study. The following components will be discussed in this chapter: Findings, Non Technological Visual Aid-Poster, Technological Visual Aid-*PowerPoint*, t-Test Statistics, and Survey questionnaire results.

Findings

At the beginning of the study, the students reviewed each objective on the evaluation survey which would be used to determine how well they did on their presentations. After the students were informed about the evaluation survey, they were allowed to select a book from the library. Each student read a book with a minimum of two hundred pages at the seventh/eighth grade reading level.

The students in class A worked on their book reports and had to make a non-technological visual aid (poster). The teacher instructed the students in class B on how to use the *PowerPoint* software program before the class went to the computer lab to develop their *PowerPoint* presentation. Both class A and B had the same amount of time to work on their book report at home and at school. The students could also ask the teacher questions about the book report or evaluation survey during the month that they were working on their book reports.

After each student presented his or her oral book report to the class and was video taped, the video taped presentations were viewed by three teachers. These professionals had five or more years of teaching and grading book reports using the oral book report grading sheet. These educators completed an evaluation sheet for each student. (A copy of the evaluation sheet is on page Appendix D.) These teachers are consistent in their grading because each individual agreed on what percent a student had to completely meet the objective before scoring a 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1. The teachers have taught in both sixth and eighth grade. Some of the educators have team taught or shared their classroom. All three of the teachers have required their students to do book reports in the past and they have used the oral book report grading sheet. There was a consensus with the meaning of each item on the sheet and the way in which the presentation skill would be scored.

The researcher then took the data from the evaluations and computed the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation scores. The researcher also took into account written comments from the three professionals about how the students did on the oral presentations. Students who used *PowerPoint* completed a survey with questions pertaining to the effectiveness of using *PowerPoint* over posters when giving an oral presentation. The first group of data addressed will be the oral presentations with a non-technological visual aid. The visual aid was a poster.

Scoring the Evaluation Sheets

Three teachers scored the students who used a poster or *PowerPoint* when doing an oral book report in the following way. If an objective was completely met (100%), the student would receive a five on the evaluation sheet. If the objective was 75% met, the student would receive a four on the evaluation sheet. A score of three would be received

if 50% of the objective was met. A student who met 25% of the objective would receive a score of two. An objective that was not met would receive a score of one.

The researcher decided to use a point system of one through five because the researcher anticipated that most of the objectives would not be completely met (100%) or not met at all (0%). However after reviewing the data collected, the researcher realized that several of the objectives received a score of one or five. If further research is conducted, the researcher would recommend a point system on some of the objectives. However, for the objectives that received a score of one or five, the researcher would recommend these objectives be evaluated as a yes or no response.

Non-Technological Visual Aid

Poster

The researcher took the data collected from the evaluation sheets and put the raw numbers into a chart describing each of the objectives. This information is in Table 1.

The researcher then found the mean, medium, mode, and standard deviation score for each of the objectives. The information was placed in Table 2. The researcher obtained the results of the study by examining the data in both of the tables.

The results from the data showed that there were fifty-four evaluation sheets completed regarding the students who used posters as their visual aid. On the evaluation sheet, Appendix D, fifty-four students completely met each of these objectives: 1) The student announced the objective or stated what book he/she has read, 4) The student named and described the characters, 8) The visual aid had a title, and 15) The student spoke loudly and clearly. Each of these objectives received a five on the evaluation sheet. These objectives were easily met, as a result of all students writing this information on their posters. However, the students did not completely meet the other twelve objectives.

In objectives two and three, most of the students did completely meet the objective. Some of the problems that the evaluators noticed were that the students forgot to state what the report was going to cover. If the students wrote the information down on note cards, they usually stated what the report would cover. Most of the students completed objective three, which was to state the author and the setting. For this objective, some students just did not state the setting of the story. It was easy for the students to remember the author because it was usually placed after the title on the poster.

Results

Table 1

**Total of all the evaluators' responses to the objectives in non-technological presentations
Poster
(N=54)**

Questions	Completely meets the the objective	Above average in meeting objective	Average in meeting the objective	Below Average in meeting objective	Does not meet obj.
1) The student announced the objective or stated what book he/she has read.	54	0	0	0	0
2) The student stated what he/she was going to cover in the report.	35	1	3	2	13
3) The student stated the author and the setting of the story.	45	0	9	0	0
4) The student named and described the characters.	54	0	0	0	0
5) The student used good transitions when going to a new topic.	16	3	12	3	20
6) The student summarized the book by discussing the beginning, middle, and end.	36	11	2	4	1
7) The student presented the summary of the story in an organized way.	38	9	2	5	0
8) The visual aid had a title.	54	0	0	0	0
9) The visual aid was limited to one or two topics.	36	2	12	2	2
10) The visual aid had large upper and lower case letters that are legible.	17	10	20	2	5
11) The visual aid had color.	50	0	0	4	0

12) It appears that the student rehearsed his/her presentation.	30	10	9	5	0
13) The student did not read off of the manuscript or note cards.	27	7	15	4	1
14) The student had eye contact with the audience.	14	25	13	2	0
15) The student spoke loudly and clearly.	54	0	0	0	0

Table 2
Total of all the evaluators' responses to the objectives in non-technological presentations

Questions	Poster (N=54)			
	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
1) The student announced the objective or stated what book he/she has read.	5	5	5	0
2) The student stated what he/she was going to cover in the report.	4	5	5	1.7
3) The student stated the author and the setting of the story.	5	5	5	.80
4) The student named and described the characters.	5	5	5	0
5) The student used good transitions when going to a new topic.	3	3	5	1.6
6) The student summarized the book by discussing the beginning, middle, and end.	5	5	5	1.12
7) The student presented the summary of the story in an organized way.	4	5	5	1.03
8) The visual aid had a title.	5	5	5	0
9) The visual aid was limited to one or two topics.	4	5	5	1.14
10) The visual aid had large upper and lower case letters that are legible.	4	3.5	3	1.26
11) The visual aid had color.	5	5	5	.80
12) It appears that the student rehearsed his/her presentation.	4	5	5	1.02
13) The student did not read off of the manuscript or note cards.	4	4.5	5	1.08

14) The student had eye contact with the audience.	4	4	4	78
15) The student spoke loudly and clearly.	5	5	5	0

The students using a poster for their visual aid had the most difficulty completely meeting objectives five through seven. They did not use transitions so the evaluators did not know what information was coming next in their speech. As a result, the presentation was unorganized. The students also struggled with summarizing the beginning, middle, and end of the story.

On the visual aid for objective eight through eleven, the students tried to cram all of their information onto one side of a poster. This resulted in the poster being crowded with too many topics. The poster did not help the students to organize their ideas. The words were difficult to read and often slanted. The only color on the visual aid was the printed words. There were only four posters that contained a picture, and two of the pictures were just sketches.

Note: These posters were completed in color

The Hardy Boys
The
Sign Post
by: Franklin Dixon

▸ Pet Cemetery
by: R.L. Stine

In objectives twelve through fifteen, presenting the oral report, a student scored anywhere from completely meeting the objective (score of 5) to not meeting the objective at all (score of 1). Evaluators commented that if a student practiced the oral presentation he/she would have scored higher on the evaluation sheet. However, there were several students who did not prepare for their oral presentation by writing out note cards or practicing. They presented whatever information that they remembered from the book that was read. Therefore, these students scored lower on the objectives. Overall, if a student read from the note cards, eye contact was not made with the audience.

Technological Visual Aid

PowerPoint

The data collected from the evaluation sheets, describing each of the objectives, can be found in Table 3. The mean, medium, mode, and standard deviation score for each of the objectives can be found in Table 4.

The following are the results of using *PowerPoint* for the visual aid in an oral presentation. There were fifty-seven evaluation sheets completed in this study for *PowerPoint*. The students were able to completely meet the following objectives: 1) The student announced the objective or stated what book he/she read, 4) The student named and described the characters, 8) The visual aid had a title, 9) The visual aid was limited to one or two topics, and 11) The visual aid had color.

For objectives two through seven, the majority of the students scored average or above average in meeting the objective. A lower score was noted in objective two and three. These objectives are: Objective 2) student stated what he/she was going to cover in the report, and Objective 3) the student stated the author and the setting of the story. The lower score was because they did not state part or all of the objective in their report. Most of the students scored high in stating the transitions because each of the slides had a title of what would be covered next. The slides also allowed the evaluators to know when the student was discussing the beginning, middle, and end of the story. These slides allowed the presentation to be organized by only adding important details.

Table 3

**Total of all the evaluators' responses to the objectives in *PowerPoint* presentations
(N=57)**

Questions	Completely meets the objective	Above average in meeting objective	Average in meeting the objective	Below Average in meeting objective	Does not meet obj.
1) The student announced the objective or stated what book he/she has read.	57	0	0	0	0
2) The student stated what he/she was going to cover in the report.	37	0	21	0	20
3) The student stated the author and the setting of the story.	42	0	15	0	0
4) The student named and described the characters.	53	0	4	0	0
5) The student used good transitions when going to a new topic.	53	2	2	0	0
6) The student summarized the book by discussing the beginning, middle, and end.	51	3	2	1	0
7) The student presented the summary of the story in an organized way.	52	3	3	0	0
8) The visual aid had a title.	57	0	0	0	0
9) The visual aid was limited to one or two topics.	57	0	0	0	0
10) The visual aid had large upper and lower case letters that are legible.	52	5	0	0	0
11) The visual aid had color.	57	0	0	0	0
12) It appears that the student rehearsed his/her presentation.	21	10	23	3	0

13) The student did not read off of the manuscript or note cards.	10	19	25	3	0
14) The student had eye contact with the audience.	16	18	19	4	0
15) The student spoke loudly and clearly.	54	3	0	0	0

Table 4

**Total of all the evaluators' responses to the objectives in *PowerPoint* presentations
(N=57)**

Questions	Mean	Median	Mode	SD
1) The student announced the objective or stated what book he/she has read.	5	5	5	0
2) The student stated what he/she was going to cover in the report.	4	5	5	1.98
3) The student stated the author and the setting of the story.	5	5	5	1.3
4) The student named and described the characters.	5	5	5	.53
5) The student used good transitions when going to a new topic.	5	5	5	.46
6) The student summarized the book by discussing the beginning, middle, and end.	5	5	5	.60
7) The student presented the summary of the story in an organized way.	5	5	5	.61
8) The visual aid had a title.	5	5	5	0
9) The visual aid was limited to one or two topics.	5	5	5	0
10) The visual aid had large upper and lower case letters that are legible.	5	5	5	.30
11) The visual aid had color.	5	5	5	0
12) It appears that the student rehearsed his/her presentation.	4	4	3	.99
13) The student did not read off of the manuscript or note cards.	4	4	3	.91

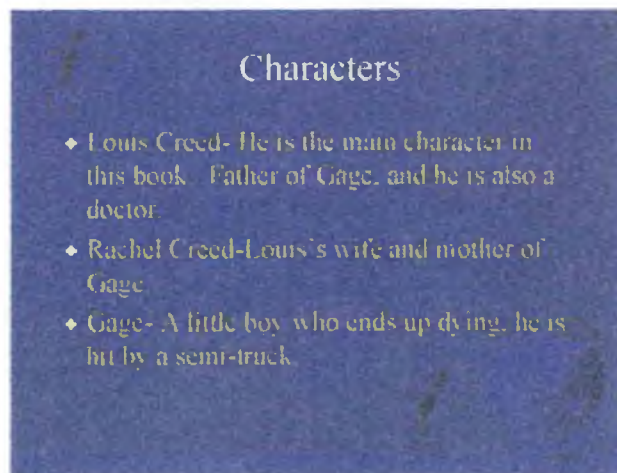
14) The student had eye contact with the audience.	4	4	3	.94
15) The student spoke loudly and clearly.	5	5	5	.23

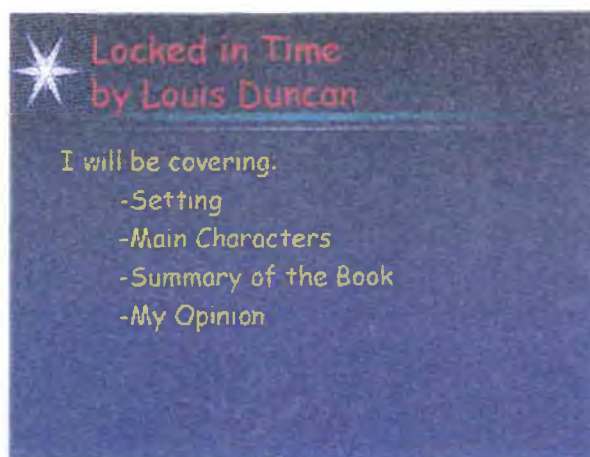
In the section of the evaluation sheet describing the performance of the presentation, most of the students scored average in meeting the objective (Score of 3). This was because several of the students read their speech off of the computer screen. The evaluators stated that if a student read off the screen that most likely the student did not rehearse the presentation. This caused objectives twelve, thirteen, and fourteen to receive a mode of three on the evaluation sheet. If the student read off the screen, then he/she most likely did not have eye contact with the audience.

As the researcher looked at the data collected in Table 3, the researcher noticed that most of the students did not score in the section entitled “below average in meeting the objective.” Only a few below average scores can be seen in objectives 6, 12, 13, and 14. This is a result of the student only meeting the objective during a brief period of time while presenting the oral book report.

After reviewing the data, the researcher noticed that the *PowerPoint* presentations appeared more professional through a multitude of color, font, graphics, and sound on each slide.

Examples of a student’s slide.





The visual aid was usually easy to read because there were only one or two topics on each slide. A few of the slides were a little hard to read when the student used a small font. The presentations were shared by connecting the computer to the television by an AveryKey. An AveryKey allowed the slides on the computer to be presented on the television screen. The only problem with the AveryKey is that if the font is tiny or at the bottom of the screen the audience can not see the words clearly.

The slides were also more attractive because they had a great deal of color. The words were in color as well as the background. The students changed the color or the design of each of the slides which made the presentation more attractive for the audience. Several students also added sound to each slide from the Word Wide Web. Most of the presentations had several pictures. Some students even scanned in pictures from the books they were reading.

Comparison of Poster and PowerPoint Oral Book Report

Presentations

After looking at the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation of the oral presentations completed through the use of a poster or *PowerPoint*, the researcher decided to conduct a t-Test. Below are the results of the t-Test which shows the t-score, degree of freedom, and probability for the items where there was a significant difference between the objectives when using a poster or *PowerPoint* when presenting an oral book report.

Table 5

t -TEST STATISTICS

	<u>t</u>	<u>DF</u>	<u>Probability</u>	<u>Significance</u>
5) Used good transitions when going to a new topic.	8.65	112	< .01	Yes
7) Present summary of the story in an organized way.	6.09	112	< .01	Yes
9) Visual aid is limited to one or two topics.	6.41	112	< .01	Yes
10) Visual aid had letters that were legible.	5.68	112	< .01	Yes

Table 5 shows that there was a significant difference at the .01 level between using a poster and *PowerPoint* for several objectives on the evaluation survey. These objectives were five, seven, nine, and ten. There was no significant difference for the other objectives. The degrees of freedom was calculated by adding the number of evaluation surveys completed by the professionals, who examined the students oral presentations,

through the use of *PowerPoint* or a poster. This number was 111. The researcher then added one to this number to get a degrees of freedom of 112. These data showed that there is a probability $<.01$ that there is a significant difference in objectives five, seven, nine, and ten when comparing the groups of students who used a technological visual aid to students who used a non-technological visual aid.

For objective five, the students who used *PowerPoint* had better transitions. This is a result of having a title at the top of each slide. The students just had to read the title of the slide which became a transition for a new topic. Most of the students who used *PowerPoint* also did better on summarizing the story, objective 7. Summarizing information to fit onto each slide enabled the students to keep the book report short and to the point. Using *PowerPoint* also helped the students have a better visual aid. The slide format and options helped students to limit the topic to only one or two items (Objective 9). It also allowed the words to be legible and easier to read (Objective 10). This is the result of the words in *PowerPoint* being typed instead of trying to read an individual's handwriting on a poster. The words in *PowerPoint* were also usually large enough to be seen by the entire audience. The slides had a wide variety of color, graphics, sound, font, and entry transitions which greatly improved the presentational layout. This is why there was such a significant difference in objectives five, seven, nine, and ten when a t-Test was conducted.

There was no significant difference in objectives one through four, six, eight, and eleven through fifteen after the t-Test was completed.

Objective 1 (student stated what book he/she read).

There was no difference in the t-Test because each student completely met the objectives. The students understand that this objective is required for any language arts class. This objective allows the teacher to know what book the students have read for their book report.

Objective 2 (student stated what he/she was going to cover in the report).

This objective did not show a significant difference because there was a large number of students who used a poster and *PowerPoint* when presenting the oral book report who missed this objective. Neither the poster or *PowerPoint* helped the students to remember to state what their report would cover. Those individuals who looked at the evaluation survey before giving their presentation met this objective; the other students did not meet the objective.

Objective 3 (student stated the author and setting of the story)

There was no significant difference because the author and setting were placed on either the poster or *PowerPoint* slide. Those individuals who did not completely meet the objective forgot to place the setting on the visual aid.

Objective 4 (student named the characters)

There was no difference in the t-Test because each student completely met the objective. From doing reports in other language arts classes, the students know to state this objective so that the audience understands the characters that will be discussed throughout the book report.

Objective 6 (student summarized the book by discussing the beginning, middle, and the end).

This objective showed no significant difference because the students have done book reports in past grades. They are familiar with the requirements for completely summarizing the beginning, middle, and end of the story. The individuals who did not completely summarize the story may not have read the entire book or outlined the entire story.

Objective 8 (the visual aid had a title).

This objective showed that there was no significant difference in the t-Test. All students placed the book title at the top of the poster or first *PowerPoint* slide.

Objective 11 (visual aid has color)

There was not a significant difference in the t-Test because most posters and all the slides had color added to them by using markers or colored font by the computer.

Objective 12 (student rehearsed presentation) and objective 13 (students did not read off the manuscript or note cards)

There was no significant difference because some students in both groups practiced their presentation. This can be assumed because they seldom read off of note cards or the computer screen. The other students in both groups read the entire report off of the note cards or computer screen.

Objective 14 (student had eye contact with the audience).

This objective revealed no significant difference between the two groups of students. The students who were more sure of their report and understood their book had

more eye contact. Students who just read their report made little eye contact with the audience. This did not matter if they were using a poster or *PowerPoint*.

Objective 15 (the students spoke loudly and clearly).

This objective revealed no difference in the t-Test. All students have learned from various class presentations that a loud clear voice gets the topic across. Both groups performed at the highest levels for this item.

The researcher believes that there was no difference in these objectives because students include them in most presentations they do for various classes. These objectives were easily met in the development of the presentation due to the importance of involving the audience with the topic.

Survey

Introduction

The researcher had class B students who completed an oral presentation with *PowerPoint* answer a survey questionnaire. This survey asked questions about giving an oral presentation using *PowerPoint* or a poster as the visual aid. Each student compared the oral book report presentation to other oral presentations that he/she gave using a poster for other classes. This survey included questions about which presentation was easier to do, which presentation was more exciting, and which presentation helped the student learned more. These and other questions are listed in Appendix F.

Results

Table 6

Results of students' responses to a survey if PowerPoint or posters should be used in an oral presentation.

(n=24)

<u>Questions</u>	<u>PowerPoint</u>	<u>Both</u>	<u>Poster</u>	<u>None</u>
1) Which presentation is easier to organize your ideas?	22	0	1	1
2) Which presentation was the visual aid easier to use?	18	2	4	0
3) Which presentation was easier to read the visual aid?	16	5	3	0
4) Which presentation was more enjoyable to do?	19	3	1	1
5) Which presentation did you learn more from?	17	2	1	4
6) Which presentation helped with the transitions?	20	3	0	1
7) Which presentation was easier to use to summarize your book?	21	1	1	1
8) Which presentation was easier to present?	18	4	2	0
9) Which of the presentations were easier to make eye contact?	10	2	9	3

Findings

On the survey questionnaire that the researcher gave the students who used *PowerPoint*, most of the students preferred to use *PowerPoint* when doing an oral presentation compared to a poster. Twenty-four students participated in the survey. The students who completed a survey were those who used *PowerPoint* for the book report, or students who have used *PowerPoint* for oral presentations in the past. These students were the ones who participated in the original *PowerPoint*. The results revealed that the students preferred using *PowerPoint* rather than a poster when giving an oral presentation. The results revealed the following: 22 students stated *PowerPoint* made it easier to organize ideas, 21 students stated *PowerPoint* made it easier to summarize a book, 20 students stated *PowerPoint* helped with transitions, 19 students stated *PowerPoint* was more enjoyable to use, 18 students stated a visual aid was easier to use with *PowerPoint*, and *PowerPoint* was easier to present, 17 students stated they learned from using *PowerPoint*, and 16 students said the visual aid was easier to read. Below is a list of comments from students and evaluators regarding using *PowerPoint* or a poster in an oral presentation.

Survey Comments

Student comments on using *PowerPoint* compared to a poster when doing a presentation

Advantages

- 1) It was better than doing a written report.
- 2) A lot more things to make your presentation better.
- 3) You are a lot less nervous when you go up in front of the class.
- 4) It is more fun.
- 5) It is fun, easy, and a good way of presenting a book.
- 6) *PowerPoint* is more fun than making a poster.
- 7) *PowerPoint* is more educational.

- 8) *PowerPoint* because it is an easier way to do a long report and the visual aid is easier to make.
- 9) *PowerPoint* is easier to do and more fun.
- 10) *PowerPoint* is easier to use on organization, and you also learn more about the computer.
- 11) *PowerPoint* has a lot of neat graphics and sounds that make the report more interesting.
- 12) *PowerPoint* because it is easier and better to learn from.
- 13) I really enjoy doing the *PowerPoint*.
- 14) *PowerPoint* is more fun than a poster.
- 15) *PowerPoint* helped to summarize the book from the beginning, middle, and the end. It also helped me learn to use a computer easier. I also was more confident using *PowerPoint*.
- 16) I think that you can learn a lot from it if you don't know how to do it and even if you did know how to do it.
- 17) I had more fun doing *PowerPoint*. There was a lot more things to do.
- 18) I like *PowerPoint* because it was more interesting with all the special effects> car horn, pictures, etc.
- 19) Students seemed to enjoy doing their book report more than the students whose visual aide was a poster.
- 20) The presentation was more enjoyable to watch because the visual aid changed then the student would move to the next slide.
- 21) The visual aids were more colorful.

Disadvantages

- 1) I did not like having to make note cards before I could even start to make a slide in *PowerPoint*.
- 2) On *PowerPoint* you tend to want to read off the screen, because it was right there and had everything written down.
- 3) The students did not have as much eye contact because they were reading from the screen instead of having the book report partly memorized.
- 4) It was hard to read a slide if the words were at the bottom of the screen. This was because the AveryKey that allowed the picture to be presented from the computer to the television cut off the bottom row of words if information was placed on the entire slide.
- 5) Not everyone has a computer or *PowerPoint* to use at home.
- 6) More prep time was needed to complete the *PowerPoint* project.

Student comments on using a poster compared to using *PowerPoint* when doing a presentation

Advantages

- 1) You can do a poster at home, and the *PowerPoint* not everyone has it on their computer at home. The poster you will get more time to work on because you can do it at home and at school. The *PowerPoint* would only be used at school so you would get less time to work on it.

- 2) You do not have to have a computer beside you to work on it. You can do everything at your own pace.
- 3) On a poster, you only had topics listed so you can't read off it.
- 4) It is fun, easy, and a good way of presenting a book report.
- 5) The students memorized their book report

Disadvantages

- 1) The poster had very little color if any at all.
- 2) The words on the poster were hard to read because they were too small, slanted, or written illegible.
- 3) Most of the students did not place illustrations on the poster.
- 4) The poster contains too much information.
- 5) More posters should be used instead of cramming all of the information onto one poster.
- 6) Posters are not as interesting to look at because there are no sounds, flying words, or transitions that an individual can incorporate into a *PowerPoint* presentation.

Chapter 5

Introduction, Comparison, Conclusion, Implications

Introduction

Throughout this study the researcher has discussed why this topic should be investigated, reviewed the literature, explained the procedure of the study, and analyzed and discussed the results of the study. The researcher collected data to see if the student's presentational skills improved as a result of giving an oral presentation with a technological visual aid compared to non-technological visual aid. The technological visual aid was *PowerPoint*, and the non-technological visual aid was a poster. In this chapter, the researcher compares using *PowerPoint* to a poster when giving an oral presentation. Also discussed will be the conclusion and implications of the study.

Comparing Technological Visual Aids to

Non-Technological Visual Aids

The advantages of using the technological visual aid of *PowerPoint* compared to a non-technological visual aid of a poster will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

One significant advantage of using *PowerPoint* is that the students used good transitions when going to a new topic. This was done as a result of always having a title at the top of each slide. The audience knew what would be discussed next by both hearing and seeing the title. The transitions also allowed the presentation to be given in an organized way.

The summary of the story was also significantly better using *PowerPoint* instead of a poster. The students limited themselves to summarizing the story by using just a few

slides which stated the beginning, middle, and end of the book. The students who used a poster sometimes added too little or too much information to summarize the story.

The final advantages of using *PowerPoint* instead of a poster is the visual aid itself. In *PowerPoint*, the slides were limited to one topic. This helps the audience and presenter focus on the topic. Also words were easier to read due to the words being legible. The slides were more attractive as a result of using color, pictures, sounds, different fonts, and entry transitions, these factors all contributed to a legible visual aid.

Conclusion

From the data collected in this study, the researcher can conclude that using *PowerPoint* can help students to present a better oral presentation. Most of the students who participated in this study used *PowerPoint* for the first time. The t-Test revealed that there was a significant difference in objectives: 5) using transitions, 7) summarizing the story, 9) limiting topics on the visual aid, & 10) legible words. The visual aid in *PowerPoint* was easier to read because the letters were large and legible. *PowerPoint* also limited the student from putting too many topics on each slide. The other students tried to cram everything that they wanted to discuss onto a poster. This made the poster look crowded and hard to read. Overall, the significant difference was a result of *PowerPoint* enabling the students to meet these four objectives. In reviewing all of the information collected, the researcher noticed that four out of the fifteen objectives represent 27% of the total skills reviewed for the oral report evaluation. *PowerPoint* may not have shown a major difference in all of the objectives; however, it helped the students to organize their ideas which improved the quality of the book report.

The evaluation results from the three professionals also yielded some interesting comments. The t-Test showed that there was not a significant difference in the objectives 2, 11, 13, and 14. However, the three professionals commented that these objectives may be significant in future studies.

For objective 2 (stating what would be covered in the report), the professionals reported it appeared that more students who used *PowerPoint* stated what would be covered in the report as a result of more room to write because they could use an unlimited number of slides. The students who used a poster only used one to write the information that they needed. However, they were not limited to just using one poster.

In objective 11 (the visual aid had color), the individuals who used *PowerPoint* had more color in the presentation as a result of a multitude of color schemes that the computer provided. Individuals with a poster tended to stick with writing all the information using a black or brown marker.

For objective 13 (students did not read off of a manuscript), the professionals stated that the students who used a poster for their oral presentation did not read off their note cards as much as the individuals who used *PowerPoint*. This is the result of the individuals who used a poster read only summarized information from the note cards; however, the individuals who used *PowerPoint* could read the entire report off each slide. Since some of the students used *PowerPoint* for the first time, it might have been more tempting to read off the screen since it was right in front of them. The professionals stated that those presentations which were read word for word lacked human emotion due to poor eye contact, monotone voice, and few facial expressions. The professionals stated that it is more interesting to hear a presentation than have it read to them.

In objective 14 (eye contact was made with the audience), there was also some difference between the technological and non-technological oral presentation groups. Several students who used a poster for the oral presentation scored a “5” as a result of only using note cards as a guideline for their presentation. This was because most students who used *PowerPoint* would continue reading off of the screen since it was right in front of them. This then resulted in not making eye contact with the audience. This was surprising because the students who used *PowerPoint* wrote out their book report using multiple slides to make a complete outline summarizing their book. However, these students did not take the time to go over the slides that they wrote out. They just read the report off of the computer screen. Students may have also read off the computer screen because it was their first time using *PowerPoint* for an oral book report. The student who used a poster knew what he/she wanted to discuss. Their report was only briefly outlined using note cards which allowed the students to have more eye contact with the audience. The eye contact allowed the student to show more emotion during the presentation through facial expression and body language.

As stated above, the professionals may have found some interesting trends. When further research is conducted using *PowerPoint*, it might reveal that there is a significant difference in the above items; however, it may also reveal that there is no statistical difference.

In examining the student survey comments, several of the students enjoyed using *PowerPoint* over a poster. Some students found *PowerPoint* to be easier to use, easier to summarize the story, more educational, and more exciting to do than a poster because graphics and sounds could be added. Other students preferred to use a poster when giving

an oral presentation. A poster allowed the student to complete the assignment at home without a computer. A poster also allowed the student to have better eye contact with the audience.

Overall when looking at the evaluation sheets, survey results, and t-Test, this first use of *PowerPoint* was helpful for most of the students in some ways. However, the poster also has a few advantages that *PowerPoint* did not provide.

Implications

After reviewing the data collected and placed in Tables 1-6, the researcher was able to develop some general reasons why *PowerPoint* is valuable to students who give oral presentations. First, *PowerPoint* allows the presentations to be more interesting for the audience. This is the result of using a wide variety of color, graphics, sound, and entry transitions for each slide that was developed. The students who used *PowerPoint* showed more pride in their project because they were able to make each slide attractive instead of writing the information on a poster. Most of the students who used a poster in their oral presentation did not add a picture. This may be the result of having to write out all the information on a poster, and they did not want to take the time to draw a picture. Individuals who used *PowerPoint* could take a graphic off the computer or the World Wide Web to add to their report.

Second, *PowerPoint* is valuable to students because it helped the students to organize their ideas. This is the result of having to write out their ideas on each slide. The transitions at the top of the slides helped the students to have smooth transitions from one topic to another. Using approximately three slides to state the beginning, middle, and the

end of the book helped the students summarize their book without stating nonimportant details.

Third, *PowerPoint* helped the students to not cram everything into one area. The students could use an unlimited number of slides when giving their report. This allowed the information to be placed on several slides instead of just one slide. This in turn allowed the presentation to look more professional.

Fourth, *PowerPoint* allowed the students' presentation to be more legible. The information was typed out instead of handwritten. The letters were then legible and large enough to read by the entire audience.

When *PowerPoint* is used in the future by a student to give an oral presentation several requirements on the evaluation form need to be changed which will help the student meet all the objectives. The first requirement that needs to be changed would be to have the student print out speaker notes of the presentation. The speaker notes can contain information of what the student will say about each slide. As a result of having the speaker notes, the student will be able to rehearse the presentation more because the data from each slide will be there to study. This will help the student to meet objective twelve (the presentation is rehearsed) and objective thirteen (not reading off the screen). As a result of not constantly reading off the screen, the student will be able to successfully meet objective fourteen which is having eye contact with the audience.

The second requirement that needs to be addressed is to have the student go over each objective to make sure that all the objectives are in the presentation. Many of the

students could have scored a five on most of the objectives if they took the time to make sure that everything was included in the report.

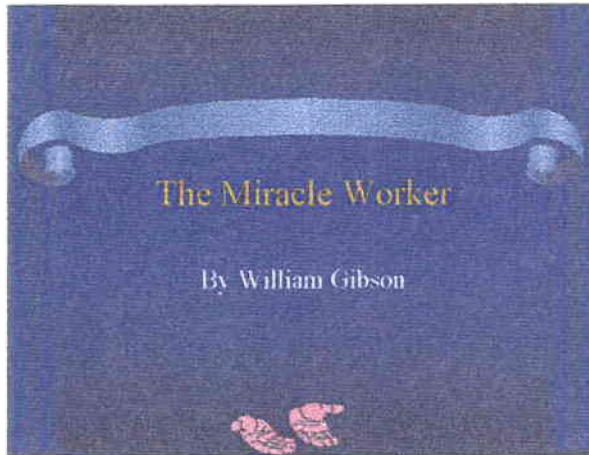
Introducing the students to *PowerPoint* earlier in the year may help them to do better on their presentation. This would give the students a chance to practice using and presenting information through *PowerPoint* before a grade is taken. Several students used *PowerPoint* for the first time which may have resulting in a disadvantage to meeting certain objectives.

Having more access to the computer at home and at school may also change some of the student's attitudes towards using a poster to complete an oral presentation compared to *PowerPoint*. With the educational reform now taking place, more computers are being placed in the schools. The students may find out that other oral reports will benefit by using a presentation software program such as *PowerPoint*.

This study was valuable because it allowed the researcher to find out the best way to present an oral report. By looking at the data collected, a student will do better when presenting an oral report with the use of *PowerPoint*. This is because *PowerPoint* helped the students to organize and summarize their information. It also allows the visual aid to be more attractive with color, sounds, and legible words. However, this study also revealed that it is important to practice for a presentation no matter how a student is planning to present the information. Practicing the information allows the speech to flow smoothly, and this allows the presenter to have eye contact with the audience. The audience is then more interested in the information being presented and is more likely to listen to the presentation. By using the objectives on the evaluation survey, a student can improve their oral presentation as long as they remember to met each of the objectives.

Appendix A

Speaker Notes



I read the book “The Miracle Worker” by William Gibson. I will be telling you about the setting, characters, and the summary of the story.

Outline

The Miracle Worker
By William Gibson

SETTING

- In the 1880’s
- 20 years after the Civil War
- Perkins Institute for the Blind
 - in Boston
- Keller homestead in Tuscumbia, Alabama

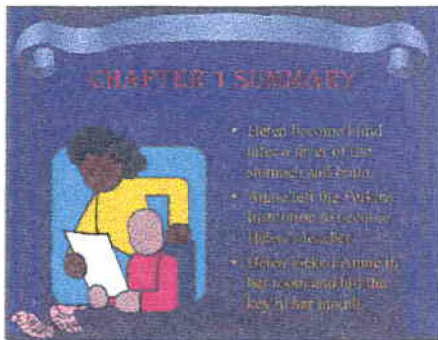
MAIN CHARACTERS

MATCH THE CHARACTERS TO THE DESCRIPTION

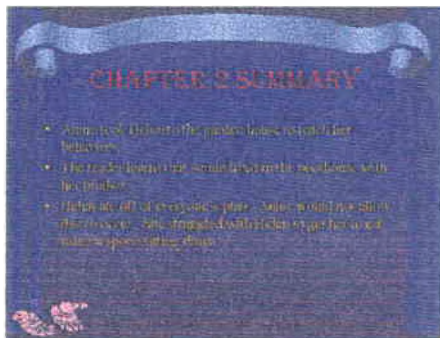
- Annie Sullivan
- Helen
- Kate
- Keller

Appendix B

Slide 2



Slide 3



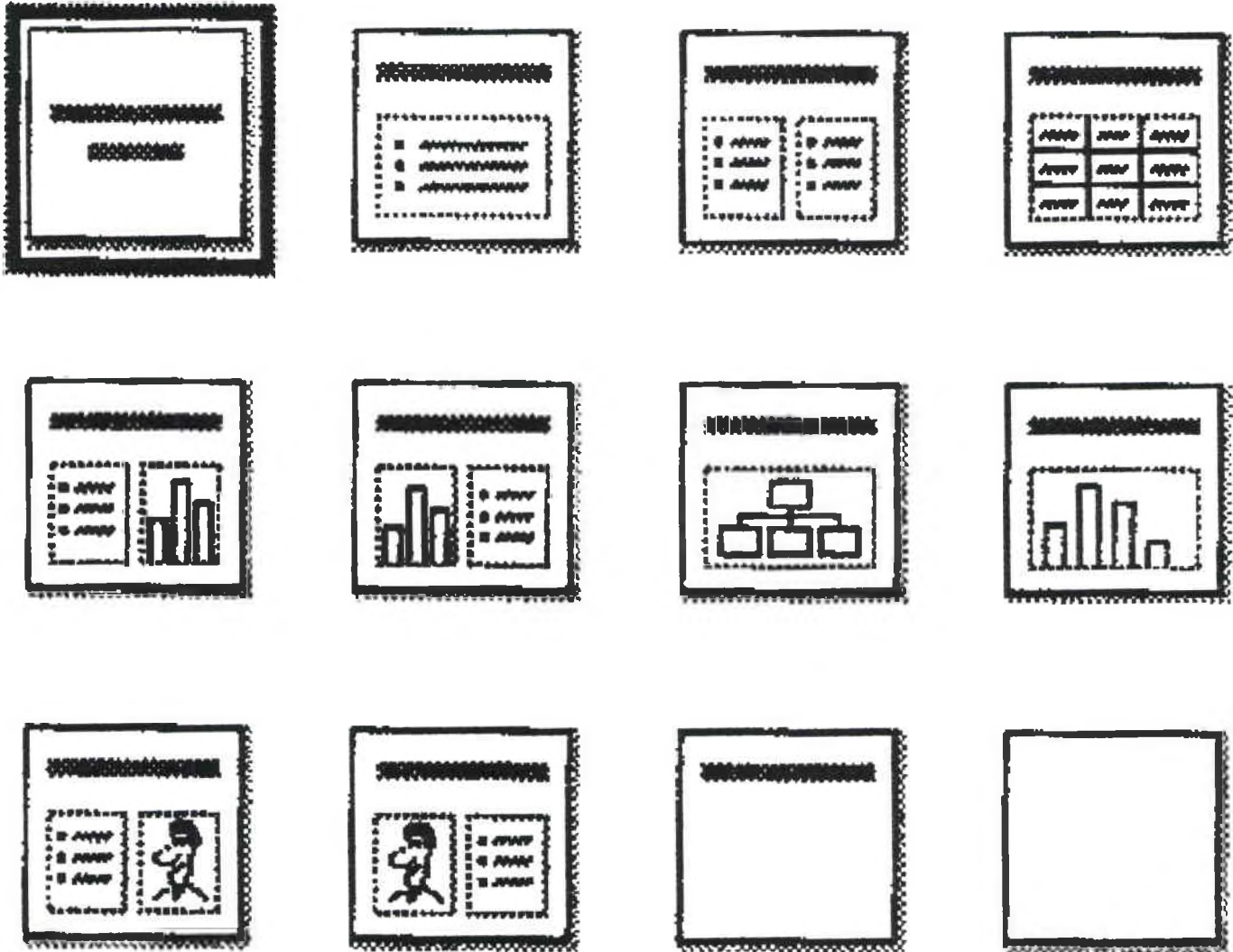
02/20/98

Place of Presentation

Presenters Name

Appendix C

Slide Layout



Slide Layout

Left to Right

Top: title slide, bulleted list, 2 column text, table

Middle: text & graph, graph & text, organization chart, graph

Bottom: text & clip art, clip art & text, title only, blank slide

Appendix D

Oral Presentation of Book Report

Date: _____

Directions: For each item, please circle the response that best describes the oral presentation objectives.

- 5= Completely meets the objective
- 4= Above average in meeting objective
- 3= Average in meeting objective
- 2= Below average in meeting objective
- 1= Does not meet objective.

Objectives

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1) The student announced the objective or stated what book he/she has read. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2) The student stated what he/she was going to cover in the report. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3) The student stated the author and the setting of the story. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4) The student named and described the characters. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5) The student used good transitions when going to a new topic. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6) The student summarized the book by discussing the beginning, middle, and end. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7) The student presented the summary of the story in an organized way. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8) The visual aid had a title | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9) The visual aid was limited too one or two topics. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10) The visual aid had large upper and lower case letters that are legible. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11) The visual aid had color. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12) It appears that the student rehearsed his/her presentation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13) The student did not read off of the manuscript or note cards. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14) The student had eye contact with the audience. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15) The student spoke loudly and clearly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix E

Oral Book Report

Name _____ Date: _____

Content

Part I

Title:	(5)
Author:	(5)
Setting:	
Time:	(2)
Place:	(2)
Main characters:	
Names:	(3)
Description:	(3)

Total: /20

Part II

Summary of the story based:	(30)
Organization of the summary:	(5)
Beginning of the story:	(5)
Middle of the story:	(5)
Ending of the story:	(5)

Total: /50

Presentation

Prop/ visual aids:	(5)
Clear letters:	(3)
Neatness:	(3)
Drawings:	(3)
Volume:	
Speaks loud:	(5)
Speaks clearly:	(3)
Movement:	
No distracting movement	(3)
Eye Contact:	(5)

Total: /30

**** Total: /100

Appendix F

Survey about PowerPoint

Directions: The following questions based on presenting an oral report using PowerPoint or posters. Circle your choice. Write the answers to numbers 10 and 11 on the back on the sheet.

1) Which presentation is easier to organize your idea?

PowerPoint Both Poster None

2) Which presentation was the visual aid easier to use?

PowerPoint Both Poster None

3) Which presentation was easier to read the visual aid?

PowerPoint Both Poster None

4) Which presentation was more enjoyable to do?

PowerPoint Both Poster None

5) Which presentation did you learn more from?

PowerPoint Both Poster None

6) Which presentation helped with the transitions?

PowerPoint Both Poster None

7) Which presentation was easier to use to summarize your book?

PowerPoint Both Poster None

8) Which presentation was easier to present?

PowerPoint Both Poster None

9) Which one of the presentations was easier to have eye contact?

PowerPoint Both Poster None

10) Which presentation do you recommend doing? Why?

11) Comments:

Appendix G

Letter to the parents for permission to video tape their child.

Dear Parents,

For your child's next book report, he/she will be video taped. I will be using the video tapes for a research project that I am doing. Once the information is collected, the video tapes will be erased. The video tapes will only be used to see if each student has completed everything on his/her grade sheet which was handed out at the beginning of December. If you have any questions, please call me at school.

Thanks,
Miss Droesch

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