

How to Give Your Oral Presentation

For your oral presentation I want you choose one, or possibly two, arguments in the reading. Then you are to **present, explain, and evaluate** that argument.

To **Present** the argument, write the argument on the board, in list form, with numbered premises and conclusion. In some cases, the argument may already exist in this form in the text. In other cases, it may not, and you will have to do some work putting it in this form.

After you have presented the argument, you will **explain** it. There are two parts to explaining an argument.

First, you will define or otherwise explain the meaning of any technical terms that appear in the argument.

Second, you will provide rationales for each of the argument's premises. A rationale for a premise is a reason to believe that the premise is true. Ideally, you will present the rationale that the author gives. (In some cases, it may be difficult to figure out just what the author's rationale is; do your best.) If the author does not offer any rationale, then you may need to provide your own.

Finally, you will **evaluate** the argument. You will say whether you think the argument is any good. There are two parts to evaluating an argument.

First, determine whether the argument is **valid**. This part is relatively easy.

Second, comment on whether the argument has **true premises**. If the argument is valid and has true premises, it is sound. If, when you evaluate your argument, you say the argument is sound, this means that you think the conclusion is true.

If you say that one of the premises of the argument is false, then you need to say which premise you think is false, and provide a reason for thinking it is false.

The class will then have an opportunity to discuss whether they think you accurately presented and explained the argument, and whether they agree with your evaluation of the argument.