

WHAT IS A POSTER SESSION?

In public schools, students are often required to present an oral report to the class summarizing research that they have completed. Sometimes the presenter shows a computer-created slide show, or uses a poster to illustrate while speaking about his or her results.

A Poster Session is a similar but more informal type of presentation. According to the Writing Studio at Colorado State University, "Unlike the fast pace of a slide show or verbal presentation, a Poster Session allows viewers to study and restudy your information and discuss it with you one-on-one. You may also be required to give short presentations on your research every ten or fifteen minutes."

WHERE, WHEN AND TO WHOM ARE POSTER SESSIONS PRESENTED?

Poster Sessions are usually seen in an informal setting such as a science or history fair. The display can be shown "in a large room, several smaller rooms, or even on a balcony. Then as viewers walk by your poster session should quickly and efficiently communicate your research." (CSU) They may be scheduled anytime throughout the event. You will be presenting to friends, associates, and colleagues and may be scheduled anytime during the event but usually during open sessions.

WHY WOULD I WANT TO PRESENT A POSTER SESSION?

As a teacher-librarian you want to model for students your willingness to do as you expect of others. In other words, you expect your students to make presentations so you should be willing to do the same. Professionally you want to contribute to the library and education communities. As the saying goes, *What goes around, comes around*. If you are willing to share a poster session at conferences you attend, colleagues will likely do the same, making you will benefit from their expertise. Note, that it isn't necessary that you actually enjoy presenting, but just be willing to do the job. You will ultimately become a better school librarian for your efforts. Now, go out and present; it will be worth the effort.

WHAT RESOURCES CAN I USE?

The Writing Studio at Colorado State University

<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/speaking/poster/>

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WHAT TYPES OF INFORMATION CAN I PRESENT?

In academic and business circles posters sessions present information gained during a research project. Poster sessions presented by school librarians to other librarians or educators can be on a variety of topics. You can share a technique, a strategy, a product, a lesson, a philosophy, a list of resources. Whatever you share should be the result of work on your part to develop a tool or understand better an idea. Your research need not be extensive, but it does need to be something about which you feel at least enthusiastic or maybe even passionate.

HOW DO I ORGANIZE AND PREPARE A POSTER SESSION?

1. When you attend UELMA, ULA, UCET, UEA, UCIRA, AASL or other conferences, observe the types and topics of presentations and displays.
2. As organizations announce their call for conference proposals, visit the web site to see if Poster Sessions are part of the agenda.
3. Review the best practices you use or new knowledge that you have gained. Decide what you would be able to present. Contact a co-presenter if appropriate.
4. Respond to the listed conference chair or other contact with your willingness to participate. Get information about the Poster Session format, including size and time limitations.
5. Create a document explaining your topic and have this document printed poster-size. Kinkos, your district, or other print center will be able to do the printing. Send a copy of the document to the conference contact.
6. Review your presentation information just prior to the scheduled conference date.

WHAT MATERIALS DO I NEED?

Purchase cardboard, foam-core board or other backing material for the poster.

Find out details from the conference contact as to the availability and size of easel or table for display.

While not technically material to be gathered, a smile will be most helpful.

For an encouraging word contact Fawn Morgan by e-mail at fmorgan@dsmail.net or call 801-402-4996.