

Lesson 9

Pitch It Perfect: Bringing Your Idea to Life

 **Instructional Time:**
50–90 minutes

Objectives

Students will:

- Identify key components of a compelling pitch, including purpose, audience relevance, problem-solution framing, and a strong call to action.
- Create a clear and engaging presentation plan (e.g., slide deck, visual walkthrough, or live demo).
- Practice verbal delivery and refine presentation content through structured peer feedback.
- Prepare supporting materials (e.g., cue cards, visual aids, speaker notes) for presentation day.
- Reflect on how their prototype evolved and why their solution matters.

Skills for the Future

- Leadership
- Self-Regulation

Project Word Wall

- Prototype
- Iteration
- Test
- Refine

Resources

General

- [Teacher Resource Guide](#)
- [Peer Feedback Checklist](#)
- [Storytelling for Impact Graphic Organizer](#)
- [Lesson 9 teacher presentation](#)
- [Student portfolio](#)
- Whiteboard
- Poster board or digital board (Padlet, Mentimeter)

Videos

- [How to Pitch Like a Pro with Scott Wiser](#) (8:24)

- Optional: Examples of youth or professional campaign pitches (video or slide)
- Slide deck or digital presentation tools (e.g., Google Slides, Canva, Adobe Express)
- Timer
- Index cards (optional for notes or speaker prompts)
- Optional: Printed sentence starters for Glow/Grow/Clarify or TAG protocols
- Optional: Sticky notes or index cards for a gallery wall of “project pride”

Lesson Plan Summary: The Five Es

Engage: What Makes a Great Pitch? [\(Go to section\)](#)

1. Video
 - [How to Pitch Like a Pro with Scott Wiser](#) (8:24)
 - Have students respond to prompts in their student portfolio.
2. Wrap-up Discussion

Explore: Crafting a Compelling Narrative: The Heart of a Strong Pitch [\(Go to section\)](#)

1. Introduce the Five Elements Framework
 - Explain the five elements of storytelling: hook, problem, journey, solution, and call to action (CTA).
2. Student Planning in Teams
 - Have students reference their original problem statement.
 - Encourage students to pull language and insights from their storyboard, prototype, and feedback sessions.

Explain: Build the Presentation – Collaborate, Create, and Refine [\(Go to section\)](#)

1. Students Decide on the Presentation Format
 - Allow teams to choose the best way to present their solution.
2. Divide and Conquer: Assign Team Roles

- Have teams assign roles based on strengths and interests: lead writer, visual designer, editor, and speaker(s).
3. Build the Narrative: Slide-By-Slide Breakdown
 - Have teams use their Storytelling for Impact Organizer and turn each storytelling element (hook, problem, journey, etc.) into 1–2 slides.
 4. Write and Rehearse Talking Points
 - Instruct teams to draft speaker notes or presentation scripts.

Elaborate: Peer Share and Feedback [\(Go to section\)](#)

1. Partner Up
 - Have each team pair up with another team for practice presentations.
2. Present
 - Ask teams to share their presentations if it were the real thing. Encourage them to use visuals, explain their message, and walk through the five elements of storytelling (hook, problem, journey, solution, call to action).
3. Feedback Protocol — Choose One
 - Option 1 — Glow/Grow/Clarify
 - Option 2 — TAG Protocol
4. Debrief and Reflection
 - Conduct a debrief and have students reflect in their student portfolio.

Evaluate: Final Prep and Confidence Launch [\(Go to section\)](#)

5. Exit Ticket
 - Project Pride: What are you most proud of about your project or your team’s journey?
 - Pitch Goal: What’s one specific goal you have for your final presentation?
 - Self-Regulation: What strategies will help you manage nerves and show up with confidence?
 - Final Touch: What’s one thing you still want to fine-tune before presentation day?
6. Class “Project Pride”
 - Have students write their Project Pride statements on a sticky note or index card and post them on a wall, bulletin board, or digital board as a celebratory send-off. This gives students a visual reminder of how far they’ve come and inspires them for presentation day!

Introduction

In this lesson, students prepare to share their final solution with an authentic audience. They reflect on their journey, clarify the purpose of their prototype, and practice communicating their message clearly and persuasively. The focus is on presentation planning, storytelling, and verbal delivery—not on perfect polish, but on building confidence and clarity. Teachers may choose to extend this lesson across multiple periods to allow for team rehearsals and peer feedback.

Standards and Practices

Common Core Standards: Grades 9–10

- **W.9–10.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.9–10.6:** Use technology to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
- **W.9–10.10:** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- **SL.9–10.1:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners.
- **SL.9–10.4:** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically.
- **SL.9–10.5:** Make strategic use of digital media in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

Common Core Standards: Grades 11–12

- **W.11–12.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **W.11–12.6:** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback.
- **W.11–12.10:** Write routinely over extended and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- **SL.11–12.1:** Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- **SL.11–12.4:** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective.
- **SL.11–12.5:** Make strategic use of digital media in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

Next Generation Science Standards

- **HS-ETS1-2:** Design a solution to a complex real-world problem by breaking it down into smaller, more manageable problems.
- **HS-ETS1-3:** Evaluate a solution to a complex real-world problem based on prioritized criteria and trade-offs.

- **Science and Engineering Practice:** Engaging in Argument from Evidence – Students construct arguments and refine ideas based on feedback and peer input.
- **Science and Engineering Practice:** Obtaining, Evaluating, and Communicating Information – Students synthesize, communicate, and present findings effectively.

International Society for Technology in Education

- **1.1 Empowered Learner:** Students articulate personal learning goals, develop strategies, and leverage technology to achieve them.
- **1.4 Innovative Designer:** Students develop, test, and refine prototypes as part of a creative process.
- **1.6 Creative Communicator:** Students communicate clearly and express themselves creatively using digital tools for various purposes and audiences.
- **1.7 Global Collaborator:** Students use collaborative technologies to work with others and contribute constructively to project teams.

Teacher Preparation

Preparation

Differentiation Strategies for Grades 9–12

High school students bring diverse levels of experience with digital tools, iterative design, and peer feedback. Use the strategies at the end of this lesson plan to manage cognitive load, scaffold learning, and increase engagement during prototyping.

Building on the Word Wall

Before each lesson, review existing terms and challenge students to use them in class discussions.

- Encourage students to add relevant key terms from their research and discussions. See Project Word Wall terms at the end of the lesson for suggestions.
- Skills for the Future: Add new terms that are integrated into the lesson to the word wall.

Essential Question: How do we clearly and confidently share our ideas in a way that inspires others to take action?

Engage [\(Back to summary\)](#)

What Makes a Great Pitch?

Teacher Script: *You've done the hard work—researching, brainstorming, building, and revising your prototype based on feedback. Now it's time to bring it all together in a final presentation that communicates your idea clearly and powerfully.*

Before we start building your pitch, let's explore what makes a presentation truly effective. Whether you're sharing your idea with a class, a company, or a community, how you tell your story matters.

We'll watch a short video from a professional who shares how to create pitches that grab attention, connect with emotions, and inspire action.

- [How to Pitch Like a Pro with Scott Wiser](#) (8:24)

Have students respond to the following prompts in their student portfolio:

- What key strategies does the speaker use to make a pitch powerful?
- What emotional or persuasive techniques stood out to you?
- How might you apply one of these strategies to your own presentation?

Wrap-up Discussion:

Briefly share student responses. Anchor their takeaways to today's goal: preparing an informative and impactful pitch.

Explore [\(Back to summary\)](#)

Crafting a Compelling Narrative: The Heart of a Strong Pitch

Teacher Script: *Every great presentation tells a story, and yours is no different. Whether you're trying to inspire action, raise awareness, or spark curiosity, your pitch should leave your audience both informed and moved. That's why today we're going to break down your story into five powerful elements that all strong communicators use: a hook, a clear problem, a journey, a solution, and a call to action.*

Storytelling for Impact Graphic Organizer (2–3 minutes)

1. Further explain the five elements of impactful storytelling.
2. Encourage teams to think about how each of these elements translates visually and verbally for their final presentation.
 - **Hook:** A compelling opening that captures your audience's attention and draws them into your story.
 - **Problem:** A clear explanation of the real-world challenge or need your project is addressing.
 - **Journey:** A behind-the-scenes look at your process—what you explored, learned, tested, and how your idea evolved.
 - **Solution:** A presentation of your final product or idea and how it effectively responds to the problem.
 - **Call to Action:** A clear next step or message that tells your audience what you want them to think, feel, or do after hearing your pitch.

Student Planning in Teams (20–25 minutes)

1. Have students open the **Storytelling for Impact Graphic Organizer** in their student portfolio.
2. Ask teams to work collaboratively to brainstorm and record their ideas for each element as it applies to their project.
3. Encourage students to:
 - Reference their original problem statement.

- Pull language and insights from their storyboard, prototype, and feedback sessions.

Explain [\(Back to summary\)](#)

Build the Presentation – Collaborate, Create, and Refine

Teacher Setup: Help students focus on turning their planning into action. This step supports collaboration and systems thinking by having students break down the pitch into parts, decide how to share the delivery, and align their visuals to their narrative. Remind them that strong presentations are the result of thoughtful structure and team coordination—not just great visuals.

Teacher Script: *Now it's time to bring your pitch to life. You've planned your story—now you'll work as a team to shape your presentation, so your audience clearly understands your journey and the impact of your solution. Think of this step like editing a short film or preparing for a launch—you need clear visuals, confident delivery, and a sense of shared voice. Let's get building!*

Decide on the Presentation Format

1. Ask teams to choose the best way to present their solutions:
 - Slide deck (e.g., Google Slides, Canva, PowerPoint)
 - Live walkthrough/demo
 - Pre-recorded video or animation
 - A mix (e.g., part video, part live talk)
2. Ask students, “Which format best showcases your prototype and helps your audience understand your impact?”

Assign Team Roles

1. Have teams split the work based on strengths and interests:
 - Lead Writer: drafts talking points or speaker notes
 - Visual Designer: builds the slides or presentation visuals
 - Editor: checks alignment between visuals and narrative
 - Speaker(s): prepares to present live (or records voiceovers for a video)
2. Have students consider, “Who is comfortable speaking? Who's great at visuals or organizing content? Who enjoys verifying the details?”

Teacher Note – Skill Spotlight: Leadership

1. As students assign roles, encourage them to recognize that leadership isn't just about being the speaker or team lead—it's about guiding the process, supporting collaboration, and helping the group stay focused on the final goal. Ask, “Who's stepping up to keep the team organized?” or “How are you helping others do their best work?”
2. You might also add this guiding prompt: “Leadership in a team setting means listening, coordinating, and encouraging others. As you work today, how are you modeling leadership to help your team succeed?”

Build the Narrative Arc: Slide-by-Slide Breakdown

Instruct students to use their Storytelling for Impact Organizer and turn each element (hook, problem, journey, solution, and CTA) into 1–2 slides or sections of their presentation. Ask students to:

- Include clear visuals (images, mockups, data, screenshots) that support their message.
- Use minimal text and let their voice tell the story.

Write and Rehearse Talking Points

Have teams draft speaker notes or presentation scripts to ensure consistency and flow. Instruct students to:

- Keep it conversational.
- Assign different parts to different team members if doing a live presentation.
- Practice clearly explaining their journey with confidence.
- Use teacher or peer feedback to refine their tone, pace, and clarity.

Teacher Note: Circulate as teams are drafting their talking points and rehearsing their presentation. Provide guidance and support in the following areas:

- Clarity of message: “Is your CTA clear? Are visuals enhancing or distracting from your message?”
- Timing: “Can you cover each section in 1–2 minutes?”
- Flow and collaboration: “Does the presentation feel like one story with one voice, even with multiple speakers?”

Elaborate [\(Back to summary\)](#)

Peer Rehearsal and Feedback

Timing May Vary: Students who choose more complex formats for their presentation, such as a video or animation, may need extended build time or follow-up sessions. Encourage flexible pacing, prioritizing creative momentum.

Teacher Script: *Now that your team has built your presentation, it's time to test it out in front of a live audience—your peers! Just like in the beta testing phase, this rehearsal is a chance to see how your story lands and identify where it could be clearer, stronger, or more impactful before final presentation day.*

1. **Partner Up:** Have each team pair with another team for a round of practice presentations. One team presents while the other observes and gives feedback. Then they will switch.
2. **Present:** Have students share their presentation as if it were the real thing. They should use visuals, explain their message, and walk through the five elements of storytelling (hook, problem, journey, solution, call to action).
3. **Peer Feedback Protocol:** Have students use one of the following feedback protocols to guide their comments:

Option 1: Glow/Grow/Clarify

- **Glow:** What was clear, compelling, or creative?
“Your visuals were bold and easy to follow!”
- **Grow:** What could be stronger, clearer, or more refined?
“The call to action was a little rushed—maybe slow down or emphasize it more.”
- **Clarify:** What’s one question you still have after seeing the presentation?
“Who exactly is your intended audience—students or teachers?”

Option 2: TAG Protocol

- **Tell:** Something you liked
“I liked how you explained your prototype’s evolution clearly.”
- **Ask:** A question you had
“How do you plan to measure your impact?”
- **Give:** A suggestion for improvement
“You might consider showing a quick clip of your solution in action to make it more engaging.”

Debrief and Reflection

Have teams review their notes together and answer these questions in their student portfolio:

- What’s one thing that worked well in our presentation?
- What’s one piece of feedback we’ll act on immediately?
- Is there anything we want to revise before the final pitch?

Evaluate [\(Back to summary\)](#)

Final Prep and Confidence Launch

Teacher Script: *You’ve made it through the heavy lifting—your research, your solution, your prototype, and, now, your presentation. Before we wrap up, take a moment to reflect on everything you’ve built and how far you’ve come. This is your moment to take pride in your progress and prepare to shine during your final pitch! Preparing for a presentation takes more than just visuals and slides—it takes mindset and motivation. Self-regulation is about managing your time, energy, and nerves so you can show up at your best. Before you present, take a moment to reflect: What helps you stay focused and calm when the pressure is on?*

Exit Ticket:

In your student portfolio, complete the exit ticket reflection. Use this time to center your thinking, boost your confidence, and identify any last steps you want to take before presentation day.

Project Pride:

What are you most proud of about your project or your team’s journey?

Example: “I’m proud of how we stayed true to our message and made something people care about.”

Pitch Goal:

What’s one specific goal you have for your final presentation?

Example: “I want to clearly communicate our call to action and keep good eye contact.”

Self-Regulation:

What strategies will help you manage nerves and show up with confidence?

Example: *“I’ll take a few deep breaths before presenting and use my speaker notes as a backup to stay on track.”*

Final Touch:

What’s one thing you still want to fine-tune before presentation day?

Example: *“Add a better transition slide between our Problem and Solution sections.”*

Optional: Class “Project Pride” Wall

Have students write their Project Pride statements on a sticky note or index card and post them on a wall, bulletin board, or digital board as a celebratory send-off. This gives students a visual reminder of how far they’ve come and inspires them for presentation day!

Project Word Wall

Introduce key vocabulary to establish a strong foundation for discussion and research. Have students define and discuss the following:

- **Narrative Arc:** A structured path that a story follows from beginning to end.
- **Audience Impact:** The emotional, cognitive, or behavioral effect your message has on those who receive it.
- **Delivery:** The way you communicate your ideas during a presentation, including voice, pacing, eye contact, and gestures.

Integrate Skills for the Future

Before each lesson, add the durable skills students will develop and encourage reflection on how they apply these skills in their project work.

- **Leadership:** Process involved in directing others’ efforts toward achieving individual, group, and/or organizational goals
- **Self-regulation:** Regulating one’s cognition and affect across different situations to maintain high motivation and energy through pursuing one’s goals and restorative activities.

Differentiation Strategies for Grades 9–12 [\(Back to top\)](#)

Students across high school grades have varying levels of experience with research, data analysis, and user-centered inquiry. Use the following strategies to adjust cognitive load, scaffold learning, and encourage deeper engagement.

Grade 9: Building Confidence Through Presentation Planning

Cognitive Focus: Developing communication confidence and presentation structure

Objective: Help students craft and rehearse their presentation in manageable steps while building comfort with speaking in front of others.

- **Storyboard the Pitch:** Provide a simple slide template or printable storyboard for students to plan each part of their pitch.
- **Script Starters:** Offer sentence stems or fill-in-the-blank slides to help students draft their first round of speaker notes.
- **Low-Stakes Practice:** Allow students to record themselves on their device or present to just one peer to reduce anxiety.
- **Celebration Focus:** Encourage a supportive tone by having classmates write “cheer notes” to each presenter after practice.

Grade 10: Strengthening Structure and Delivery

Cognitive Focus: Building logical structure and audience connection

Objective: Guide students in strengthening their message clarity and adapting their tone for audience impact.

- **Slide-by-Slide Coaching:** Provide prompts for each slide or section (e.g., “This slide should answer: Why should your audience care?”).
- **Peer Pitch Pairing:** Pair students with a classmate to rehearse and offer targeted feedback using the Glow/Grow/Clarify protocol.
- **CTA Clinics:** Offer a mini-workshop on crafting strong calls to action using examples from real campaigns or advocacy videos.
- **Delivery Checklists:** Share a self-assessment checklist focused on tone, pacing, body language, and transitions.

Grade 11: Enhancing Persuasion and Visual Strategy

Cognitive Focus: Elevating message sophistication and visual storytelling

Objective: Encourage students to think strategically about how visuals, tone, and narrative work together to persuade their audience.

- **Visual Impact Analysis:** Examine effective slide decks or videos and analyze how visuals enhance the message. Examples: Nancy Duarte, [The Secret Structure of Great Talks](#), TED Talk and Chris Anderson, [Ted's Secret to Great Public Speaking](#), TED Talk
- **Persuasion Prompt Cards:** Use prompts such as, “How does this idea connect emotionally?” or “What makes your audience trust you?”
- **Team Time Management:** Provide a pacing guide to help teams delegate and manage rehearsal and build time efficiently.
- **Optional Peer Panel:** Have students present in small groups and receive feedback from a mock audience with assigned roles (e.g., “curious viewer,” “skeptic,” or “supporter”).

Grade 12: Refining Presence and Purpose

Cognitive Focus: Sharpening personal voice and presenting with poise and purpose

Objective: Push students to polish their delivery, align tone with message, and own the impact of their work.

- **Authentic Voice Challenge:** Encourage students to rewrite one section of their pitch in their authentic voice (e.g., as if speaking to peers or a community board).
- **Mock Panel Feedback:** Invite students to present to adults or mentors (virtually or in person) and gather feedback.
- **Leadership in Action:** Assign one team member the role of presentation lead to manage flow and timing during rehearsal.
- **Self-Regulation Strategy Share:** Facilitate a class brainstorm of public speaking strategies (deep breaths, note cards, visualization) and have students write their personal “confidence game plan.”