

Connecting to the audience in different situations in presentations

Choose one of the situations below and try to think of a good connecting with the audience phrase for that situation (showing that you have noticed the audience, that you have things in common, etc). Try to use a different phrase each time. Your partner will listen, tell you how connected they would feel if they heard that, then try to improve on your phrase. Then take turns doing the same for different situations below.

1. At least one person has seen you present on this topic before
2. Few people came
3. It's a busy time of the year/ week (or just after one)
4. It's cold
5. It's early in the morning/ near the beginning of the day
6. It's just before lunch
7. It's not a busy time of the year/ week
8. Many people came
9. Most people have already given their presentations
10. People have food or drink/ There has just been a coffee break
11. Some people there have seen you present before (on a different topic)
12. Something big is happening on the next day
13. The previous person's presentation had a similar topic
14. The previous person's presentation had a very different topic
15. The previous person's presentation was great
16. There are people in the audience who you haven't seen for a while/ for a long time
17. There have been transport problems
18. There was a big news story the previous night or the same morning
19. You are first
20. You are first, and most of the people in the audience will give presentations later
21. You are last and there are only 7 minutes before the end
22. You asked questions in other people's presentations
23. You chatted to some people who are in the audience before your presentation
24. You know most people in the audience

Ask about any situations which you don't understand, can't think of a good connecting personally with the audience phrase for, etc, working together to think of suitable phrases each time.

Suggested connecting with the audience phrases

Match these phrases to the situations above.

- For those of you who have already heard me talk about this, I have put in some interesting statistics that add quite a lot to my arguments./ I've polished up this presentation since last time I gave it, so I hope it will be worthwhile even to those who sat through it last week./ I hope the visuals will make it stimulating even for people who heard me talk about this at the last conference.
- At least all the important people are here!/ There aren't many people here, so it should be easy to answer all the questions you may have./ I appreciate the effort it took to come here today when many others didn't!/ I'm a bit worried there might be an echo!

- I hope my presentation will be an escape from all the things you have to do elsewhere./ I know things are hectic around now for most people, so I hope this rather light topic that I have chosen will mean you can just sit back and enjoy.
- Please raise your hands to ask questions at any time, it will help keep you warm!/ I hope my choice of Hawaii as a topic will warm you up rather than make you feel worse about the lack of heating!/ I arranged for the heating to shut down so that you couldn't get sleepy.
- I think most of you haven't been up for long, so we'll start with a quick quiz to wake up your brains./ I hope the topic of coffee will have the same effect as drinking some would.
- I think I can hear some stomachs rumbling, so I won't take too long./ I chose the topic of food, which I know is something you are all thinking about now anyway./ I hope the topic of rubbish doesn't ruin your appetites.
- You all look nice and relaxed, as one would expect right now, but not too relaxed I hope.
- It's good to see so many people here today./ It's a bit cramped, but hopefully there's still room to raise your arms if you have questions.
- Most of you look much more relaxed than at the beginning of the class, but you might feel a different way after seeing some of the statistics I have for you.
- I don't think you'll need sandwiches, because I promise this presentation will be short!/ I'll rush through my presentation before all that coffee wears off./ With all that water you'll be needing toilet breaks soon, so I'll get through my presentation as quickly as I can.
- It's nice to see that some people have come back for more!/ I promise this will be more interesting than last year's.
- My topic isn't quite as exciting as... tomorrow, but...
- You probably think you now know everything you need to about..., but...
- You now know absolutely everything about..., so I'm going to completely change the topic and speak about...
- It's impossible for me to live up to that last presentation, but.../ I'm glad you are all really warmed up by the last topic, because this one is a bit of a heavy one.
- It's nice to see some familiar faces./ I recognise some people from last year.
- I'm so glad you all made it. I hope to make it worth your while.
- I'm sure you're all still in shock about...
- You probably haven't switched on your English brains yet, but my topic is quite easy to understand.
- I know you are all thinking about your own presentations but.../ I know there are some great presentations coming up, so I'm quite glad to go first./ If you watch my presentation closely I might be able to give you some hints on what not to do in yours!
- I see some people packing up their bags already, but I think you'll find my presentation worth five minutes of your time.
- I'm sure the people who I asked difficult questions to won't be shy about doing the same to me./ As you have seen, I'm not shy about saying when I don't understand, so I hope you will all do the same.
- One of you told me earlier that.../ I now know that several of you...
- Thanks to all the people who know me and have come to my presentation anyway!

Suggested answers

Many other connecting to the audience phrases are possible, so please check if you suggested something different.

At least one person has seen you present on this topic before – For those of you who have already heard me talk about this, I have put in some interesting statistics that add quite a lot to my arguments./ I've polished up this presentation since last time I gave it, so I hope it will be worthwhile even to those who sat through it last week./ I hope the visuals will make it stimulating even for people who heard me talk about this at the last conference.

Few people came – At least all the important people are here!/ There aren't many people here, so it should be easy to answer all the questions you may have./ I appreciate the effort it took to come here today when many others didn't!/ I'm a bit worried there might be an echo!

It's a busy time of the year/ week (or just after one) – I hope my presentation will be an escape from all the things you have to do elsewhere./ I know things are hectic around now for most people, so I hope this rather light topic that I have chosen will mean you can just sit back and enjoy.

It's cold – Please raise your hands to ask questions at any time, it will help keep you warm!/ I hope my choice of Hawaii as a topic will warm you up rather than make you feel worse about the lack of heating!/ I arranged for the heating to shut down so that you couldn't get sleepy.

It's early in the morning/ near the beginning of the day – I think most of you haven't been up for long, so we'll start with a quick quiz to wake up your brains./ I hope the topic of coffee will have the same effect as drinking some would.

It's just before lunch – I think I can hear some stomachs rumbling, so I won't take too long./ I chose the topic of food, which I know is something you are all thinking about now anyway./ I hope the topic of rubbish doesn't ruin your appetites.

It's not a busy time of the year/ week – You all look nice and relaxed, as one would expect right now, but not too relaxed I hope.

Many people came – It's good to see so many people here today./ It's a bit cramped, but hopefully there's still room to raise your arms if you have questions.

Most people have already given their presentations – Most of you look much more relaxed than at the beginning of the class, but you might feel a different way after seeing some of the statistics I have for you.

People have food or drink/ There has just been a coffee break – I don't think you'll need sandwiches, because I promise this presentation will be short!/ I'll rush through my presentation before all that coffee wears off./ With all that water you'll be needing toilet breaks soon, so I'll get through my presentation as quickly as I can.

Some people there have seen you present before (on a different topic) – It's nice to see that some people have come back for more!/ I promise this will be more interesting than last year's.

Something big is happening on the next day – My topic isn't quite as exciting as... tomorrow, but...

The previous person's presentation had a similar topic – You probably think you now know everything you need to about..., but...

The previous person's presentation had a very different topic – You now know absolutely everything about..., so I'm going to completely change the topic and speak about...

The previous person's presentation was great – It's impossible for me to live up to that last presentation, but.../ I'm glad you are all really warmed up by the last topic, because this one is a bit of a heavy one.

There are people in the audience who you haven't seen for a while/ for a long time – It's nice to see some familiar faces./ I recognise some people from last year.

There have been transport problems – I'm so glad you all made it. I hope to make it worth your while.

There was a big news story the previous night or the same morning – I'm sure you're all still in shock about...

You are first – You probably haven't switched on your English brains yet, but my topic is quite easy to understand.

You are first, and most of the people in the audience will give presentations later – I know you are all thinking about your own presentations but.../ I know there are some great presentations coming up, so I'm quite glad to go first./ If you watch my presentation closely I might be able to give you some hints on what not to do in yours!

You are last and there are only 7 minutes before the end – I see some people packing up their bags already, but I think you'll find my presentation worth five minutes of your time.

You asked questions in other people's presentations – I'm sure the people who I asked difficult questions to won't be shy about doing the same to me./ As you have seen, I'm not shy about saying when I don't understand, so I hope you will all do the same.

You chatted to some people who are in the audience before your presentation – One of you told me earlier that.../ I now know that several of you...

You know most people in the audience – Thanks to all the people who know me and have come to my presentation anyway!

As a class, choose the best phrases above and/ or suggest other good phrases.