3 Minute Thesis (3MT)
Presentation Rules and Preparation

Rules of 3MT competition

- A maximum of 3 static PowerPoint slides is permitted. No animations or 'movement' of any description are allowed. The slides are to be presented from the beginning of the oration.
- No additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted.
- No additional props (e.g. costumes, musical instruments, laboratory equipment) are permitted.
- Presentations are limited to 3 minutes maximum and competitors exceeding 3 minutes are disqualified.
- Presentations are to be spoken word (e.g. no poems, raps or songs).
- Presentations are to commence from the stage.
- Presentations are considered to have commenced when a presenter starts their presentation through either movement or speech.
- The decision of the adjudicating panel is final.

Preparing your 3MT presentation

To assist you with your preparations, please find a few suggestions below that will help you in writing your presentation, creating your slide and practising your verbal presentation.

1. Write for your audience

The judges will look for evidence that you can explain your research to a non-specialist audience. To do this you may like to:

- avoid jargon and academic language;
- explain concepts and people important to your research - you may know all about Professor Smith’s theories but your audience may not;
- imagine that you are explaining your research to a close friend or fellow student from another field; and
- do not dumb down or devalue your research, what you are doing is exciting and you should convey enthusiasm for your subject.

2. Have a clear outcome in mind

Know what you want your audience to take away from your presentation. Ideally, you would like the audience to leave with an understanding of what you’re doing and why you’re doing it.
3. Tell a story

You may like to present your 3MT like a story, with a beginning, middle and an end. It’s not easy to condense your research into three minutes, so you may find it easier to break your presentation down into smaller sections. Try writing an opener to catch their attention, then highlight your different points, and finally have a summary to restate the importance of your work.

4. What not to do

- Do not write your presentation like an academic paper. Try to use shorter words, shorter sentences and shorter paragraphs.
- You can use humour, however be careful not to dumb down your presentation.

Creating your 3MT slide

Before you start work on your slide, you should take the following rules into account:

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- no additional electronic media (e.g. sound and video files) are permitted

Practising your 3MT presentation

1. Practice, practice, practice

Feeling nervous before you present is natural, and sometimes a little nervousness can even be beneficial to your overall speech. Nonetheless, it is important to practice so you can present with confidence and clarity.

2. Vocal range

- Speak clearly and use variety in your voice (fast/slow, loud/soft).
- Do not rush - find your rhythm.
- Remember to pause at key points as it gives the audience time to think about what you are saying.

3. Body language

- Stand straight and confidently.
- Hold your head up and make eye contact.
- Never turn your back to the audience.
- Practise how you will use your hands and move around the stage. It is okay to move around energetically if that is your personality, however it is also appropriate for a presentation to be delivered from a single spot on stage.
- Do not make the common mistakes of rolling back and forth on your heels, pacing for no reason or playing with your hair as these habits are distracting for the audience.