



Discuss and Prepare for Forum



Objectives

Students will

- become better acquainted with the concept of Forum.
- appreciate the significance of this culminating event and be inspired to prepare for it.
- confront nervousness and uncertainty around the Forum experience by discussing the event and practicing presentation skills.
- foresee and plan for potential challenges of presenting at Forum.



Materials

- pens and pencils
- journals
- chart paper
- markers
- completed CLP worksheets
- completed CLP proposals



Time

- 2-3 hours

FYI

The Civic Leadership Project (CLP) is the experiential learning capstone of the program, and Forum is meant to be a challenging and empowering experience that kicks off its implementation.

Forum is the students' long-anticipated

opportunity to:

- showcase the CLPs they have envisioned and planned.
- receive feedback on their plans.
- have their CLPs cleared for launch by a panel of community leaders.

Procedure

- Describe the Forum process to students by explaining that Civic Leadership Project (CLP) teams will present to a panel of community leaders. Explain that the entrepreneurs/panelists will:
 - review their proposals.
 - hear their presentations.
 - ask questions about their plans.
 - decide whether each CLP is ready to launch.
- Invite students' brief thoughts on approaching this milestone. Ask:

• *What's on your mind when you think about Forum?*

• *What questions or concerns do you have?*

- Tell students that during this session, each team will have an opportunity to create and practice making their presentations.

Write Presentations

- Invite students to gather as CLP teams.
- Explain that just as they created their proposals using their worksheets, they will create their presentations using their proposals.
- As each team works, have them think about and address the following questions:



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- *What should the sequence of sections be in our presentation? What makes the most sense?*
- *Should the presentation follow the format of the proposal? Why or why not?*
- *Are there additional elements we want to add to the presentation beyond the sections we've included in the proposal? If so, what are they?*

- Once the teams have determined additional elements to add, encourage them to decide which members will be responsible for writing specific sections of the presentation.
- Once students have their assignments, invite each person to select the most crucial information from that section and craft clear, engaging, and persuasive text.

Practice Presentations

- Invite students to work in pairs and take turns presenting the sections they are responsible for. After one person presents, invite the other person to offer constructive feedback. When necessary, model how to give feedback. For example: *Your ideas are terrific, but I had difficulty hearing everything you said. Next time, why don't you try speaking a bit more loudly and slowly? Or: Great job! Your points are very clear, but I think you might need to end with a sentence or two that sums up your main points.*
- Gather the whole group together. Ask students to describe what worked and what didn't as they made their presentations. Record their responses on chart paper and post the chart in the room so students can refer to it.
- Based on the feedback, encourage students to modify their notes and text. Circulate around the room to support them as they make revisions.
- If necessary, have student pairs practice their presentations again, then have the group come together to discuss what worked, what didn't work, and what changes are needed. Have students revise their presentation drafts as needed.

Conduct a Dress Rehearsal

- Have students regroup into CLP teams to practice their presentation, moving from section to section, and noting the areas that need improvement or changes.
- When students are ready, invite each team to present to the entire cohort as if it were Forum.
- Following each presentation, ask presenting students questions and encourage non-presenting students to do the same. Ask tough questions about specific aspects of their presentation related to their CLPs. For example:

- *Why were you moved to do this project?*
- *Can you be more specific about your plans to sustain your CLP?*
- *Is your plan realistic?*
- *Can you say more about how you will know if your project is successful?*
- *I've heard of efforts similar to this one. What's unique about your project?*



Discuss and Prepare for Forum continued

- After every team has made a presentation, ask students questions about the process of presenting in order to make final improvements. For example:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>What will you change in your presentation after hearing and responding to these questions?</i>• <i>What did you learn about responding to questions on the spot?</i>• <i>What did it feel like to be asked these questions?</i>• <i>Did you discover any effective strategies for responding to questions?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Where could presenters have done a better job with answering the group's questions?</i>• <i>Could you hear everything each presenter said?</i>• <i>Did the presenters seem engaged and passionate about their project?</i>• <i>What are your final thoughts about changes that could improve the presentations?</i>
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Preparing for the Big Day

- Once every team has had the opportunity to present, answer questions, and discuss how it went, briefly discuss the following questions:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>How will you greet Forum panelists when you first meet them?</i>• <i>What clothes will you wear to Forum?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>What are the top three pieces of feedback from today that you need to work on before Forum?</i>
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- Conclude the session by reminding students of the areas they can continue to work on. Encourage them to practice their sections of the presentation at home and to get together on their own time to practice as a team.