

Preparing a Poster Using Microsoft PowerPoint Busse Library & Computer Center

Presentations at professional meetings include 'Poster Presentations' where the presenter provides information on a display board, has handouts and other materials on a table in front of the poster, and is present to discuss the information with interested people. Poster size can vary with participants sent instructions. This technique also works well for college classroom and public presentations.

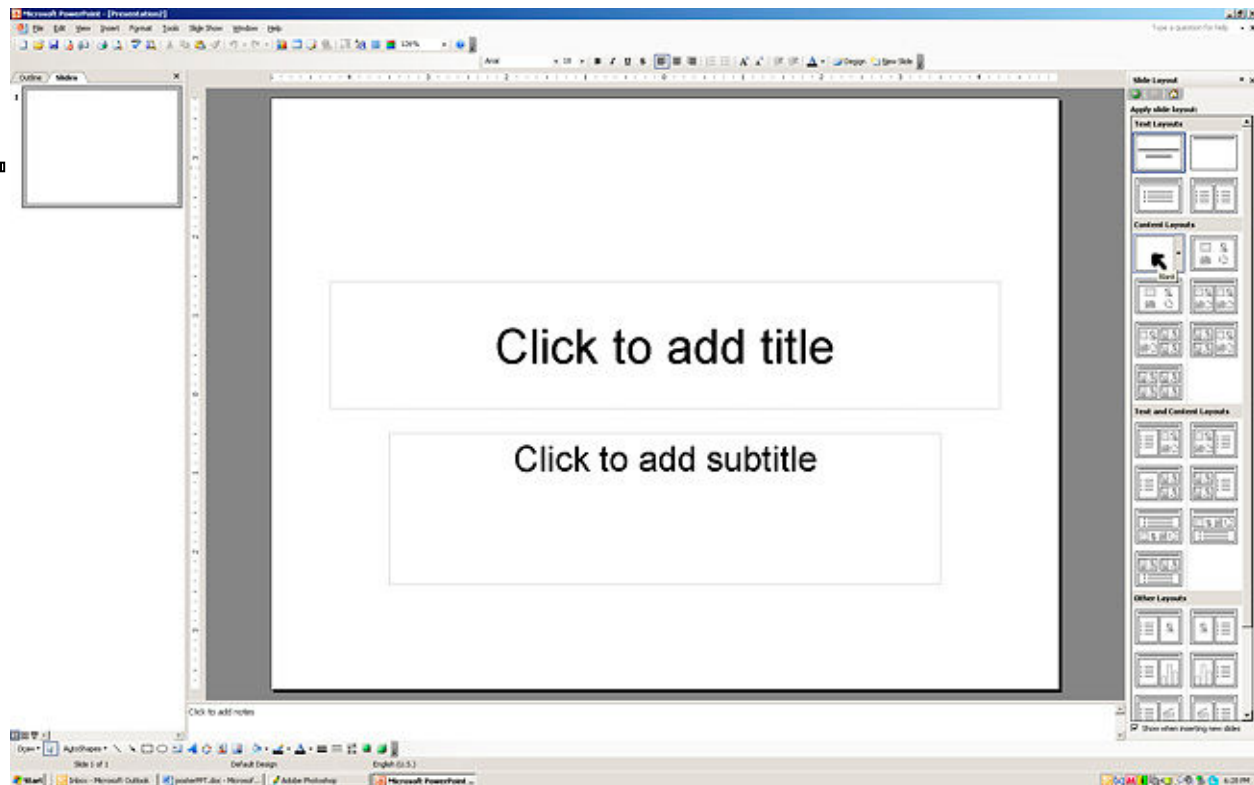
This handout has the steps needed to make a poster 40 inches wide and 24 inches tall using Microsoft PowerPoint 2003 and the wide HP printer in the campus copy shop (first floor Warde). The paper is 42 inches wide and your poster will be 42 X 26 inches. Large posters can be made and are priced accordingly.

NOTE: Check with Copy Center staff as to pricing.

Step 1. Prepare a miniature mock-up of a poster that is 40 by 24 or 22 inches in size. Draw and write on a piece of paper the sections you intend – title, various bits of text, photos, art work, etc. Have the graphics sized and ready to insert on your poster. A plan minimizes time at the computer.

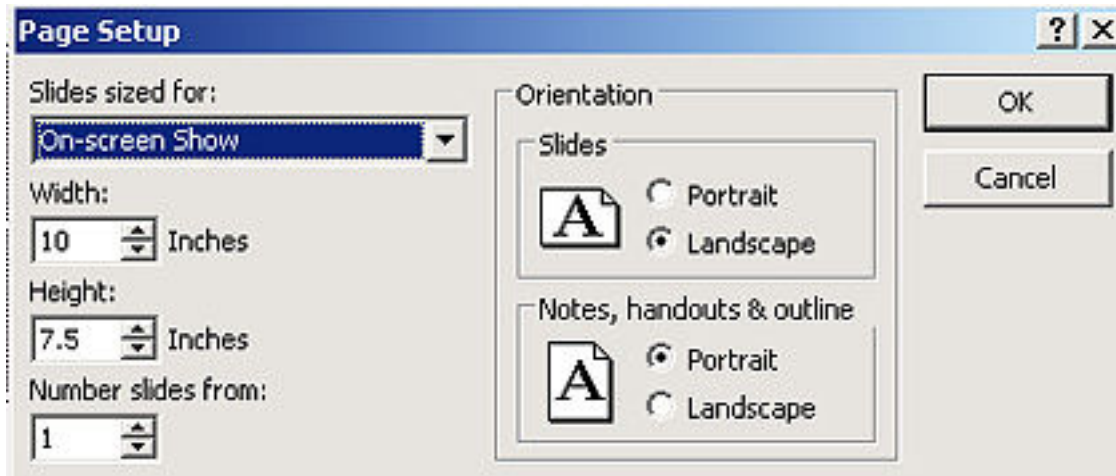
Step 2. Open PowerPoint from Microsoft Office 2003. [The ► symbol indicates a click.]

Click on the ► blank slide from the Content Layouts panel on the right. This changes the contents of your slide. It will no longer have the two text boxes. If it does not appear when you open, click on new slide on the toolbar to get the slide layout panel. After clicking of the blank slide, delete the first one so you have only one.

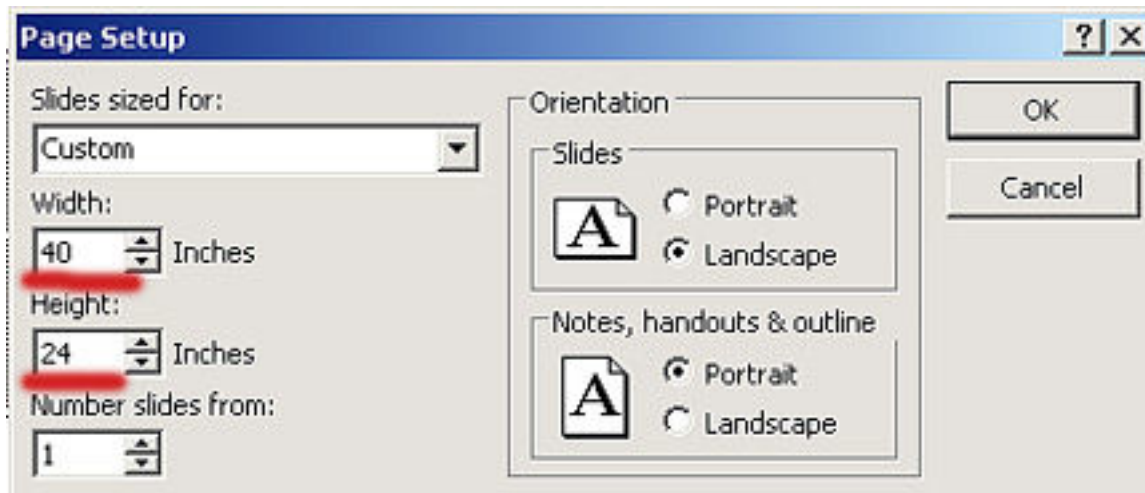


After you change the slide to a blank one, you no longer need the Slide Layout panel on the right of the screen, so click on the ►X on the upper right of the layout column.

Click on ►File on the menu bar and then on ►Page Setup. This box will appear.

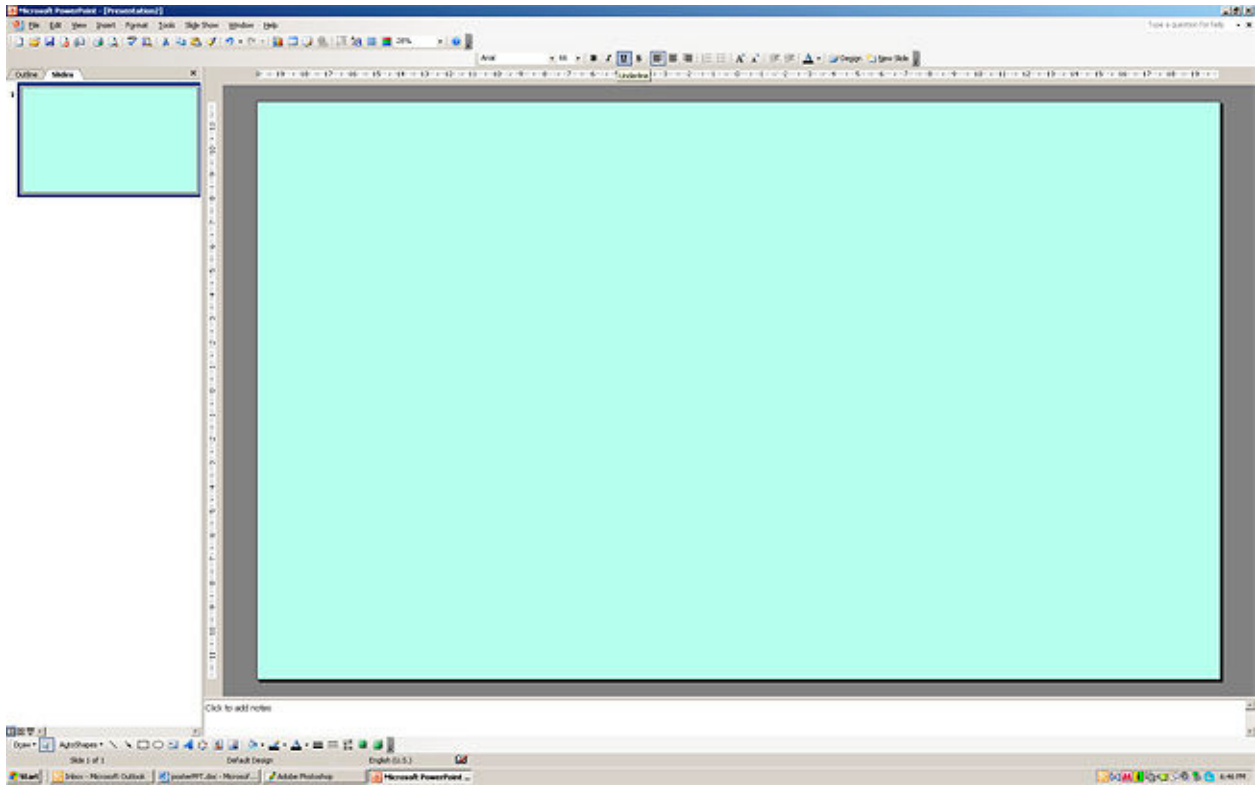


Change the Width to 40 inches and the Height to either 22 or 24 inches. Then click ►OK.



You now have a single slide that is 40 X 24 or 40 X 22 inches in size, on which you can put text boxes, images, charts, tables, etc.

If you want a colored background onto which you will put text boxes, graphics, photos, charts, etc., Click on ►Format on the menu bar and then ►Background and then the ►dropdown menu and ►More Colors. Now click on the ►Custom tab. Click on the ►colors window for a general color of your choice. The column to the right allows you to pick a tint of the general color. Click on ► it at a desired point to pick a light tint. On the next screen, click on ►apply. You now have your background color which you can change, if desired. Light backgrounds with dark text work well. Your poster will print more legibly with a light background and dark text rather than dark background with light text and be easier to read from a distance. After you have chosen a tint, click on ►OK.



There are many Slide Designs in PowerPoint. Most are not useful for a poster because of the embedded lines and graphics. There are several which may be used. A list Slide Design names that do work is at the end of this handout.



Step 3. At this point click on ► File, then ► Save As and in the next box give it: a location (your USB drive); a file name (short with no spaces or punctuation); and if necessary a format (Save as type.) The college uses both PowerPoint 2003 and 2007. If you have PowerPoint 2007 on a Vista operating system or use Works Presentation software, you will need to choose a compatible file type, usually 'PowerPoint 97-2003 & 95 Presentation'. Click ► Save. This will allow you to open your file in the Busse Computer Center and print your poster to the HP printer.

Save early and save often as you work. You can always delete and replace text boxes and graphics as you work. It is hard to recreate something that got lost because it was not saved often.



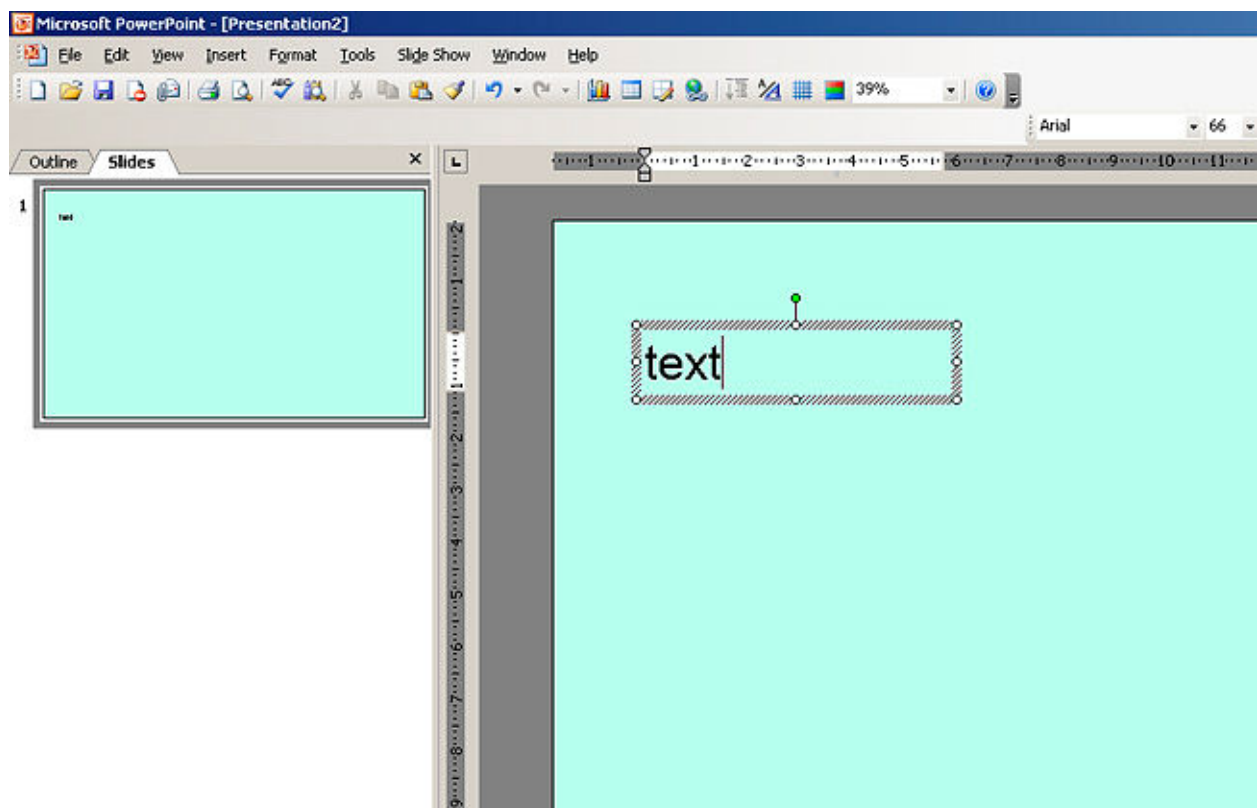
Step 4. Now you are ready to build the poster from documents and graphics you have prepared as you planned your poster content and general layout. Follow any instructions provided by your instructor or by the place where the poster will be presented. A poster will usually includes:

- title
- author
- brief abstract and/or introduction

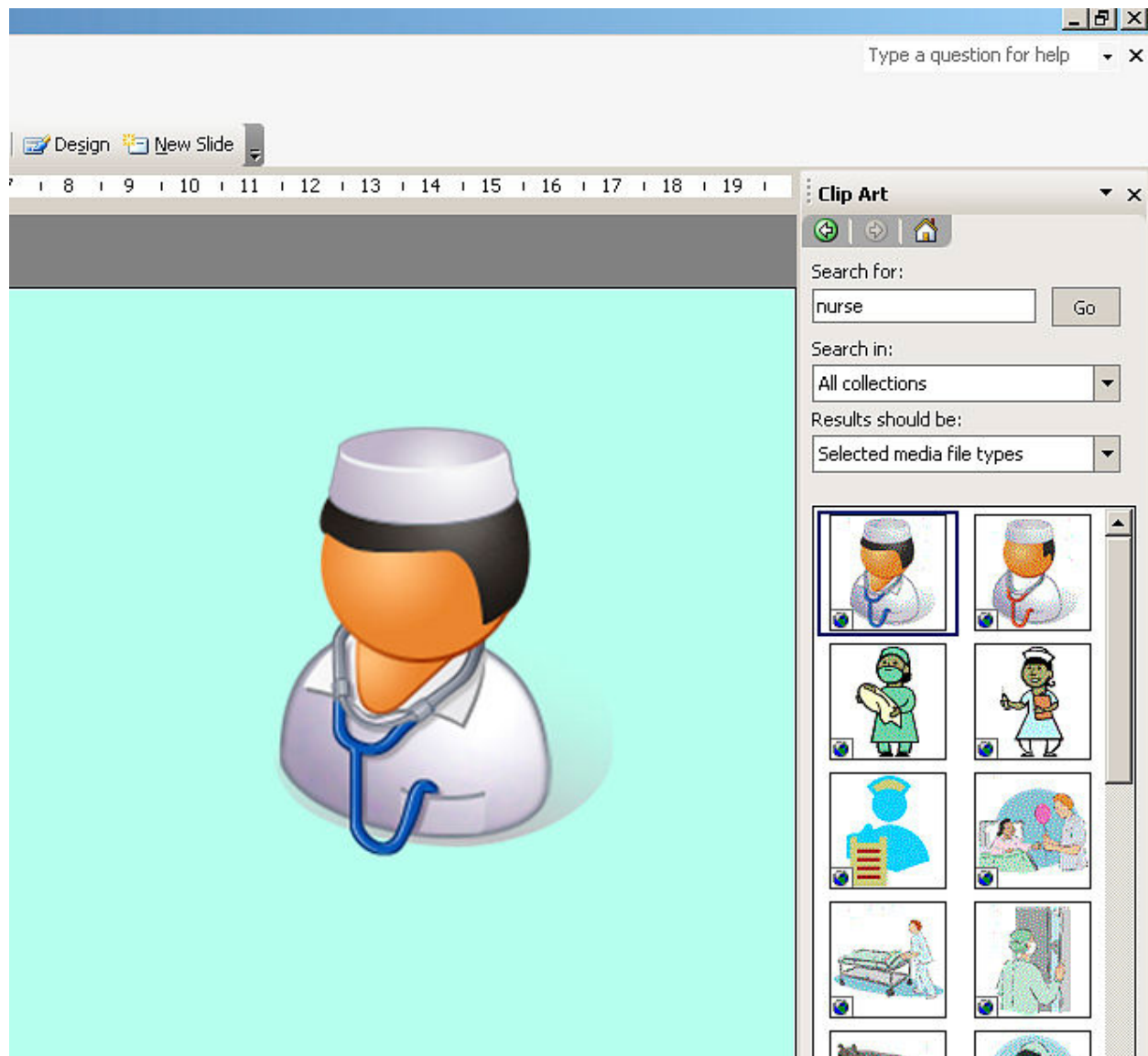
Information objects may include:

- text boxes of relevant information
- images (photos, clipart, illustrations)
- tables, graphs, chart
- acknowledgements
- contact information

To insert a text box, click on ► Insert and ► Text Box. Now place your mouse pointer where you want to place a text box and holding down the left mouse button drag it slightly down and to the right to make an elastic text box. The height of the box will grow as you add text. Add the desired text before inserting another box or graphic. Then adjust the size and shape of the box by holding down your mouse on an edge and dragging in the desired direction. From the Format drop down menu, click on ► Font to select the font style and size for each box. You will use different sizes for different types of information.



To insert clip art, click on ► Insert on the menu bar and ► Picture and ► Clip Art. A search box appears on the right of the screen and you follow instructions to find and insert the clip art. These files are small (few KB or kilobytes) so may be resized by dragging a corner with a mouse. Photos and illustrations should not be sized by dragging. Search for clip art with transparent backgrounds if you use a colored slide background.



To insert a photo, chart or other illustration, click on ► Insert, ► Picture, ► from File and locate the file on your USB drive and click on it to insert.

These files should be sized in an appropriate software before inserting them. Do not drag corners to resize them after they are inserted. They should have the dimensions in inches that you planned for their placement on your poster. For a printed poster they should be jpg files of 300 dpi or a bit less, saved at a medium quality jpps. The file sizes of the graphics you insert into the file can greatly influence the size of the poster file and its ability to be printed easily. Get help with your graphics if you need assistance in sizing them. Click on ► the file to insert it and then move it to the desired location on the poster while holding down your left mouse button.

Text boxes and the other objects are moveable to get the desired layout. Click on the box or object and keep holding the mouse button down as you move the box or object. This is called Drag and Drop.

Here is a sample 40 X 24 inch poster. It uses a Slide Design available from Microsoft that works for a poster. You can make a very attractive poster with a single colored background.

SamplePoster Presentation Title

Student, A., Student, B. & Student, C.

Abstract

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Introduction

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Methods & Materials

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Results

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Group	pills	potions
juice	12	12
tea	12	12
coffee	12	12



Conclusions

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References

A. LastName, FirstInitial Year, Title of publication, City, State, Publisher.
 B. LastName, FirstInitial Year, Title of publication, City, State, Publisher.
 C. LastName, FirstInitial Year, Title of publication, City, State, Publisher.

Contact Information

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Some of the same principles apply as for a projected PowerPoint presentation. The fonts should be large and you should use the least amount of text as possible to impart your information.

The text sizes for the sample above are:

title – 96 (about 1 inches tall)

author – 40 (about 3/8 inch tall)

headings – 54 (about 9/16 inch tall)

text – 32 (about 5/16 inch tall - the smallest you might want to use. If the text sections are too long, edit them down.)

The actual font size varies among font faces so you should do a test font sizes in Microsoft Word and measure them to meet the assignment requirements.

Professional Poster Tips

- make it simple and neat appearing
- use a catchy title – two lines maximum length
- if you have an abstract it should be no more than 50 words
- introduction no more than 200 words
- use charts and graphics to explain methods and materials
- results start with main finding and no more than 200 words in length
- conclusions refer back to main hypothesis or problem no longer 300 words
- references should be style of discipline

- avoid colons in titles and use sentence case, not all caps
- keep text blocks to no more than 10 sentences
- keep text blocks to about 40 characters per line
- do not use the tab key to indent
- remember color blindness is common – avoid red and green together
- use sans serif fonts for titles and headings and consider a serif font for the text blocks
- resize images in an image editing software to minimize file size (cropping and corner dragging do not work)

Using Slide Designs

You may choose a slide design from those templates available in PowerPoint. Here are some that are available and depending on how many elements you need to insert, may work for you. Click on ► Format, then ► Slide Design, and choose a template and click on ► it. There are more PowerPoint Slide Design templates on the Microsoft web site.

Light backgrounds with dark text work well. They print more legibly than dark backgrounds with light text and are easier to read from a distance. You may change the background color of your chosen template by clicking on Format, then Background and make selections there. Some of the templates with dark backgrounds and only edge decorations can be modified to a lighter color. The font color will also need to be changed to be visible.

Template names:

- Blank
- Blue Mosaic
- BLUEPRNT
- Cloud Skipper
- Crayons (might be useful for a teacher education poster)
- Edge
- Elegant
- PSTMDRN
- Tablet