

Pecha Kucha: Create Presentations that Pop

Can you recall the last time that you sat in the audience of a PowerPoint Presentation? What was that experience like? If the presentation was a typical, it probably included:

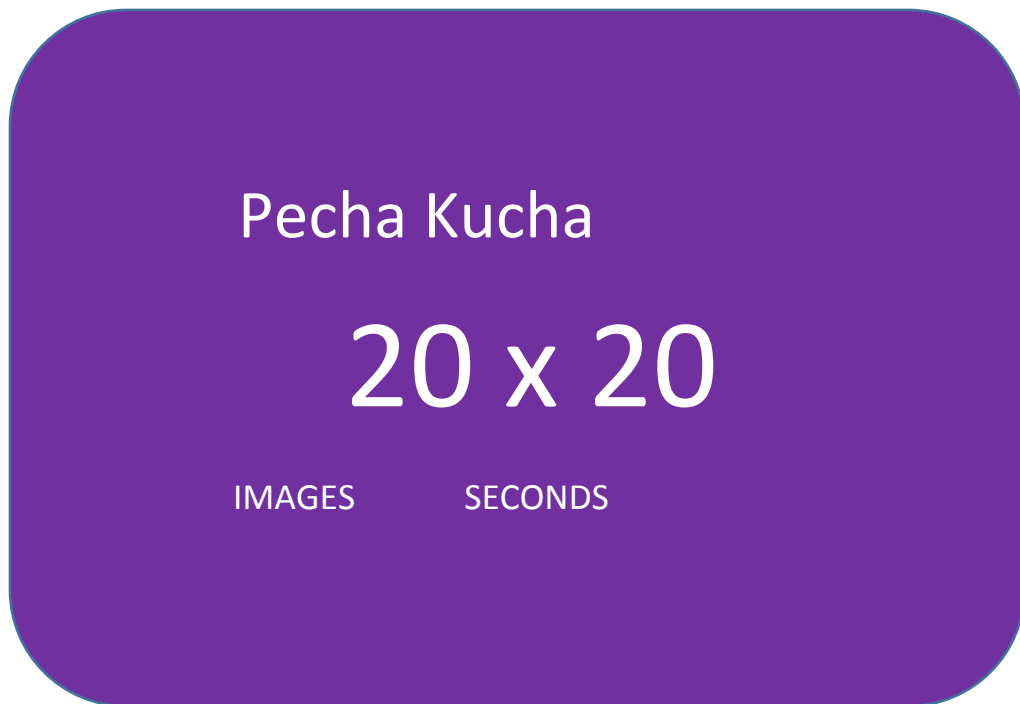
- The presenter reading directly from the screen
- Lots of bullet points
- Distracting animations and transitions

I have been conducting a Pecha Kucha Workshop for MC faculty titled *Pecha Kucha Create Presentations with Pop and style* for three years. I always open our session by asking faculty to think about the last time they had the pleasure (or pain) of sitting through a PowerPoint presentation. I want them to think about what worked and what could have been improved. Invariably, the conversation brings up many-- if not all-- of the points mentioned above. The misuse of presentation technologies can distract from the content and lead to boredom and disengagement.

Why Pecha Kucha?

The Pecha Kucha format can help to remedy many of these common PowerPoint woes. Pecha Kucha was developed by the managers of a Japanese Architectural firm (Klein Dytham Architecture), that was suffering from many of the same presentation issues highlighted above. The Pecha Kucha method consists of 20 slides, and the speaker speaks for 20 seconds about each slide. If you are doing the math, the total length of your presentation time is 6 minutes and 40 seconds. Creating a presentation less than seven minutes long, with only twenty seconds per slide cuts down on the rambling that is often characteristic of PowerPoint delivery. A successful Pecha Kucha is tightly edited and arranged in bite-sized pieces. It requires careful consideration to arrange the slides in a sensible

way. It also incentivizes presenters to rehearse so as not to waste time. The result, typically, is a polished presentation.



Another feature that sets the Pecha Kucha apart from a traditional presentation style is the design of the slides. As the audience only has twenty seconds to absorb each slide, you want to select an impactful image that is worth looking at for twenty seconds. The slide will only be visible to the viewer briefly, so it should not be an image that the audience has to labor over. Pecha Kucha benefits from tight structure while also giving creative latitude to the presenter, turning the act of presenting into storytelling.

As an instructor, you can do a lot with this presentation format to make presentations engaging to your students.



Let's look at some ways you can use Pecha Kucha with your students.

1. Mini-Lectures:

Structure your lessons around two or three Pecha Kuchas that are about seven minutes in length. Each of these mini lectures can cover a major theme for your lesson. Between each mini-lecture, provide students with an activity that reinforces the main concept of your lecture.

2. Introduce a topic to your students

Since the Pecha Kucha is so short, it is an ideal format to introduce a new topic to your students. An introduction to a topic via Pecha Kucha can be used either face to face or online. After using a Pecha Kucha to introduce a concept, you can allow time for questions and answers, or an online discussion board inquiry.

3. Image Rich Review of a Topic:

At the conclusion of your lecture, or online material, use the Pecha Kucha method to provide students with an image-rich review of the concepts that you presented.

4. Final Exam Review

When reviewing for your final exam, create a few Pecha Kuchas with a topical overview of your content. After you present each Pecha Kucha, let your students interview you with any additional questions they might have about preparing for the final exam.

5. Tell a Story

Do you have a relevant story that fits in with the material that you are presenting in your traditional or online classroom? Tell that story in Pecha Kucha Format, using compelling images, in 6 minutes and 40 seconds.

6. Visual Case Scenarios:

Are you already using case studies with your students? If you are not already using case studies, are you interested in using them with your students? Either way the Pecha Kucha format gives you a great way to present a case study with your students and get them practicing skills! After you present your case scenario to your students, consider letting them work through the case in groups.

7. Project Overview:

If you are assigning a project to your students, “pitch” the project to them by using the Pecha Kucha format to outline the project’s requirements. After you present the project to the students using the Pecha Kucha format, students can interview you for clarification. If you are using the Pecha Kucha format to pitch the project online, a bonus is that the students will have a succinct presentation that they can review as needed to gather project requirements.

8. Online Presentations:

When creating presentations for students in an online format, brevity is key, otherwise students will not watch the presentation. The Pecha Kucha method allows you to employ chunking when you post a video, and to deliver the material in bite-sized pieces.

9. Big Picture Concepts:

Most instructors have big picture concepts that are important to their field. You can use Pecha Kucha to deliver these big picture topics to students. Highlight the topic, why it is important to your field, and how it contributes to the history of your field. This gives students a foundation in the thinking that characterizes your discipline.

10. Introduce yourself to your students

Whether you are teaching an online, blended, or face to face course, as a first step, you introduce yourself to your students. Use the Pecha Kucha format to introduce yourself to your students, talk about why you chose your field, your teaching philosophy and other items you feel comfortable to share in a unique, picture format.

11. Vocabulary Pecha Kucha

If students need to recall vocabulary or other concepts, give each student a vocabulary word from your list, and have each student create one twenty second Pecha Kucha slide on the definition of their word. Each student takes turns delivering their word to the class.

Help students make sense of the Pecha Kucha

Since the Pecha Kucha format is a brisk paced format, I recommend faculty develop some exercises to help students “unpack” the Pecha Kucha that was just presented.

One Minute Paper

One tactic you can use is the One Minute Paper. After you deliver the Pecha Kucha, you assign a one-minute paper, where you ask the students about the main point of your lecture. In a face-to-face class you can then call on a few students to read their papers. That will check comprehension and spark discussion.

Muddiest Point paper

If you know that your Pecha Kucha covered a dense topic consider having students complete a muddiest point paper, where you ask them what they found most unclear about the Pecha Kucha.

How students can use Pecha Kucha

The Pecha Kucha format is not just for faculty. Pecha Kucha provides students with a good template for presentation development which moves the focus from reading bullet points to effective presentation, followed by discussion.

1. Group Projects

Pecha Kucha gives students a structure to complete group projects. Since the format is only seven minutes long, this gives you lots of opportunities to assign students a specific portion of a topic. This saves you from needing to listen to several versions of the same presentation. Your students will also be more engaged when they listen to their peers as they will be presenting on a different topic.

2. Personal Reflection Presentation

Student ePortfolios are popular in Higher Education right now because they encourage student self-reflection and introspection on the relationship of their current learning to the world around them and

their careers. Pecha Kucha gives students a great structure to reflect on your course content and how it has affected their lives.

3. Student Introductions

At the beginning of a semester, you have students introduce themselves to each other because it builds community. Get your students to introduce themselves using Pecha Kucha and give them a structure to organize their thoughts and tell a compelling story.

4. Teach a topic

The best way to learn something is to cultivate the ability to teach it to someone else. Give your students a chance to instruct their peers using the Pecha Kucha format. Select a lesson and assign different groups to teach each theme, Pecha Kucha style. After the lesson each group can entertain questions.

General Tips for Pecha Kucha Development

- Since the Pecha Kucha is about storytelling, when designing a Pecha Kucha, you should start with thinking about the story you are going to tell in seven minutes or less.
- Start by developing a storyboard, rather than developing directly in PowerPoint. This will help you focus on the story you are trying to tell instead of designing a PowerPoint and trying to make your presentation “fit” the PowerPoint you develop. Low Tech storyboarding tools include:
 - **Index Cards**
 - **Printing the Notes Pages of a PowerPoint Slide**



- Time each slide to make sure that it is 20 seconds. Remember to add time for pauses and transitioning to the next slide
- Next, intentionally plan the images that will go on your slide. Plan thoughtful images that highlight the theme you are trying to convey. Try to think of the images that will advance your message before you even start looking for images.

Places to find image Pecha Kucha images:

- www.flickr.com/creativecommons
- Do a google search for images that are labeled for reuse, or reuse with modification
- www.photosforclass.com creative commons images with attributions included

Tips for Designing the actual Pecha Kucha in PowerPoint

- Avoid most PowerPoint templates as they are cluttered and difficult to digest when working with twenty seconds per slide.
- Text should be kept to a minimum. If you need text, use brief keywords or phrases, as you only have 20 seconds per slide. When using text, use a Sans-Serif font, such as Helvetica or Arial.
- Avoid using Sound clips or videos.

- Set the slides to automatically advance after 20 seconds.
- Don't use slide transitions. The slides advance so rapidly that the viewer will find transitions distracting. You don't need sounds or video clips. Your voice will carry the presentation.

Rehearse your Delivery of the Pecha Kucha

Practice what you are saying. This *rehearsal is critical to being able to be polished while delivering the Pecha Kucha*. Listen to your delivery. Do you have too much to say? Remember to breathe as you present. If the timing is tight, edit your presentation. You don't want to sound rushed while delivering the Pecha Kucha.

Pecha Kucha Article Published in a National Blog

The above article content is scheduled to be published in a national blog called Noba Psychology in mid-January 2019, around the same time this ELITE article will go to press. The blog developers reached out to me to publish the above article in their Noba Blog Publication (<https://nobaproject.com/>) due to a presentation that I gave during the *Designing Effective Teaching* Lilly Conference in the Spring of 2018. Noba Psychology is an Open Educational Resource blog that is dedicated to psychology students at the undergraduate level. Noba feels that psychology professors will benefit by learning to implement this technique in the OER materials they produce for their courses.

Pecha Kucha Online Course Coming, Spring 2019

Are you inspired and want to learn more about the Pecha Kucha Technique? I am developing an Online Pecha Kucha course which will debut in the Spring of 2019. This course will provide you with information about how to develop a Pecha Kucha, and participants will each contribute to a gallery of ideas on how they plan to use Pecha Kucha in their courses. Course members will also get the opportunity to submit a completed Pecha Kucha design to the Online Course for review and comments. If you've not yet learned about this technique, the online offering will give you the opportunity to learn

how to develop a Pecha Kucha. You'll receive inspiration from colleagues and share your own Pecha Kucha creativity with peers.

See you online!

Additional Resources:

Baker, T. J. (2014). Pecha Kucha & English Language Teaching: Changing The Classroom. Amazon Digital Services LLC.

Shank, Patti (Ed.). (2011). The Online Learning Idea Book, Volume 2: Proven Ways to Enhance Technology-Based and Blended Learning. San Francisco: Pfeiffer.

Official Pecha Kucha Website: <http://www.pechakucha.org/faq>