

This is a pre-print version from David M. Sheridan's webtext *Click to Add Ideas* published in *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, Vol. 19(Issue 2), available at <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/19.2/inventio/sheridan/index.html>/>

## **Descriptive Transcript, *Click to Add Ideas*, by David M. Sheridan**

0:02 Title fades in: click to add ideas appears as white words on a black screen.

0:03 Voiceover: "Last night I had a dream that I was working on a PowerPoint presentation."

0:08 PowerPoint's interface fades in, filling the screen. In the center is a white slide with the words "Click to add ideas" on it. Across the top are the standard toolbars for formatting content. At the left is a panel showing thumbnails of slides contained in the presentation. In this case, they are all blank white slides.

0:10 Voiceover: "I was staring at a blank slide and I couldn't think of any content to add. Click to add ideas, the slide prompted me. "Each word appears in close-up as it is being uttered. Voiceover: "It was mocking me. I had no ideas. I stared at the screen for what seemed like hours. After a while, strange things started to happen."

0:30 The words "Click to add ideas" blur and fade away. Thumbnails of slides in the left pane move across the screen and change from white to black. Jazz inflected music reinforces a feeling of strangeness.

0:36 The color palette for setting the color of type in PowerPoint opens up, revealing a set of square color swatches. Most of the squares leave the palette in a burst and then fade away. One remaining row of color swatches slides down the screen leaving streaks of color across the white slide. The streaks fade.

0:47 Voiceover: "When I tried to open a textbox, what emerged was an actual box. A box full of text." A jewelry box with a dark reddish hue and gold ornamentation appears and opens to show contents: black paper shapes. The shapes spill out onto the white slide.

0:56 Voiceover: "As I looked at the content that spilled from the box, I realized it was not text at all, but meaningless symbols and shapes. And soon it disappeared." The box and shapes disappear.

1:08 A brightly colored pie chart, bar graph, and line graph appear on the slide. Voiceover: "I tried my old tricks, adding bar graphs and pie charts."

1:15 Each of the three graphics morphs into a butterfly. The butterflies fly off in separate directions. "But they just flew away." More jazz inflected music.

1:23 The interface of PowerPoint changes to black and white, and the colors invert, so that the white slide is now black, The toolbars are black, with white lettering. Voiceover: "Then it was night in the land of PowerPoint. A pink moon emerged from the basic shapes palette."

1:30 A pink sphere emerges from the toolbar and moves to the left corner of the screen. The sound track is rhythmic shakers, sounding a little like nocturnal insects. Voiceover: "I had a feeling that I was not just looking at PowerPoint, but was actually inside of it. I could feel the surface of the slide."

1:40 A white hand appears on the slide. Voiceover: "It was not hard as I had thought. But soft like clay."

1:47 The hand closes on the slide, seeming to squeeze out a clay-like material.

1:50 The hand fades away, leaving a blank black slide.

1:51 Voiceover: "I decided that I was going to build a house. I worked through the night, shaping the clay into what I imagined to be a beautiful home." Flashes of a man appear and disappear. Each time, he appears to be in the process of building something. He looks like he's glowing white, as if lit by moonlight. A mellow saxophone line is layered over the shakers. Voiceover: "I pictured smooth organic lines, fluid curves that rose quietly from the surface."

2:08 Voiceover: "But when the sun came up, it revealed that what I had actually made was just a series of colored rectangles. They were hideous. I hated them." The pink moon disappears, and the interface of PowerPoint resumes its regular color scheme, with a white slide that now contains brightly colored rectangles. A photograph of a man appears in the lower-right corner of the screen; he seems to be contemplating the house. The music is a reprise of the earlier music that played when "strange things started to happen."

2:20 Voiceover: "Off in the distance, I could see the formatting brush. I thought, If I could get that brush, I could reformat the house. And maybe it would be tolerable. The journey took much longer than I thought it would. It turns out the brush was far away."

2:32 The man fades in and out several times; each time he is closer to the formatting brush on the toolbar at the top of the screen. He gets smaller each time, as if moving further away. The man seems to lift the brush off the toolbar and then touch a corner of the house with it.

2:40 Voiceover: "When I used the brush, something remarkable happened." When the house is touched by the brush, a transformation moves across it, from the top left to the bottom right. A cymbal roll underscores the transformation. The colored rectangles take on a texture, as made of construction material of some sort, like colored concrete. Simple shadowing creates a rudimentary sense of depth. The white slide becomes a blue sky with fluffy clouds in it. Windows appear, reflecting the sky and clouds. A tree is revealed behind the house. A green lawn appears in

front of the house. The overall effect is of a kind of simple, cartoon version of a rectilinear home. The man stands in the bottom right corner, contemplating it again.

2:43 Voiceover: "My house was completely transformed. I still hated it. I tried to look in the window. But as soon as I approached, the house disappeared." We see the back of the man; he is facing away from us, as if looking through the window. But the house fades away, leaving a blank white slide once again.

2:56 Voiceover: "I stood there staring into the whiteness for a long time. And then I remembered that when I had retrieved the brush, I noticed a beautiful picture." A thought bubble appears above the man's head. Inside the bubble is a picture of him in front of the formatting brush on the toolbar. He turns to look at a nearby button -- the button for inserting graphics into a PowerPoint presentation -- which shows a lake in front of a grassy hill. Underneath the button is the word "Picture." A dotted line extends from the man's eyes to the button, indicating that he is looking at it.

3:10 Voiceover: "And suddenly, I was overcome with a desire to see that picture again. So I made the long journey back to the toolbar." As before, the man fades in and out, seeming to move across the screen to the toolbar. He kneels down and appears to look at the button with the picture on it.

3:20 Voiceover: "I got down on my knees and stared at the picture. I could see a lake with clear water, lapping against a grassy hill. I had the feeling that I could reach inside the picture and touch the water. But when I tried it, I felt myself being sucked in." The man stretches out his arm as if trying to touch the picture. He appears to dissolve into the picture. The picture enlarges and moves to the center of the white slide. Slightly more details are visible -- the picture looks like an oil painting. The man appears inside the picture, standing at the bottom of a hill. Voiceover: "I ran to the top of the hill, to get a better view." He runs to the top, via a crude stop motion movement, and then surveys the terrain with his hand at his forehead, as if shielding his eyes from sunlight.

3:47 Voiceover: "Looking around, I thought I saw that stupid house I built. The image of the house fades into the picture, positioned at the bottom of the hill."

3:52 Voiceover: "I took one step toward it, and suddenly I felt myself sliding down the hill uncontrollably." The man appears to lose his balance and slide down the hill. The colors of the painting smear as the man goes by, as if the paint were still wet. The man slides right out of the painting and hits the vertical bar that separates PowerPoint's slide pane from the left panel. The man seems to bounce off the bar and fall, backwards, to the bottom of the interface, where he seems to lie unconscious. The paint from the painting seems to wash down over him. He seems to liquefy and get carried off screen by the flowing paint. The music is bittersweet.

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4:07 Voiceover: A river of paint washed me away, and I knew I had left the land of PowerPoint.

4:09 A sequence from earlier in the film runs in reverse. The dispersed color swatches are sucked back into their original places on the color palette. The slide thumbnails move back into their regular positions, changing from black to the standard white. A sound effect played in reverse reinforces the sense of moving backward. It gets louder until it stops suddenly. The screen turns to black. The only thing visible is a white rectangle with "Click to add ideas" in the center of it. A purple butterfly flies across the screen. Everything fades to black.

4:18 Closing credit: David M Sheridan.