

Unit 3:

The Conversion to a Digital Platform

In Unit 2, you're using various research tools and methods to collect information and compile it into an academic research paper suitable for an audience of college educated adults wanting to learn more about your subject. Now it's time to use technology to convert your research to a completely different platform for a completely different audience. You will also give a short presentation about your project.

PART ONE

First, you will begin by selecting an online platform on which to convert your research and deliver it to a new audience. This could take the form of a blog, a Facebook page, a Twitter account, a Tumblr, a YouTube channel, or any other platform that can reach other people. Whichever you choose, you must:

- Set up the account.
- Paste the link to the account into the dedicated Google doc with your name no later than 8:00 am 3-12-15
- Creatively begin converting your research into a form that's appropriate for the platform you've chosen – what are the conventions of Twitter, Facebook, a blog, etc.?
- Get others to engage your account. Who can you reach out to? Friends? Family? Industry Professionals? Use the search feature to find other users interested in the same thing?
- What can your platform do that a two-dimensional research paper can't? Link to other users/content when relevant.

This will be ongoing through the end of the unit, 4/15. The frequency of updates to your platform will be discussed in the form of a fast write, but you will have to post regularly!

Assignment due 3/12/15 – Your Social Media Strategy 2pgs.

Use Google to search out tips for making your page on your particular social media platform successful. Based on your research, write a short paper (2 pages) describing what strategies make for successful accounts, what you're going to do to augment the research you present, the conventions of the platform you chose (message length, text driven vs. image driven, layout, etc.). Be observant and be a detective! Describe how you're going to apply what you learned to your own account – how often are you going to post? How long will your posts be? What will the tone of your page be like?

PART TWO

Presenting your work to an audience is an important part of ENGL 121. You will do this in the form of an Ignite presentation in front of the class:

Rules of Ignite:

- 20 PowerPoint slides, one slide every 15 seconds
- no more than 5 words of text on each slide
- share your passion!

The Ignite format sets some restrictions. You have only **5 minutes and the images advance automatically**. It is a really good exercise to be brief and to the point, to train your creativity and to select images that empower your message.

Prepare your Ignite Talk

How could you prepare for an Ignite presentation?

First **create an objective and a headline** that matches your research paper topic.

Objective: do you want to inform, motivate or entertain? These are the three main objectives to choose from. Formulate your objective as in “I want to inform people about the science behind a smile and motivate them to smile more.”

Main message: try to say in one sentence what your presentation is about. This helps you to focus on your main message.

Structure the content

First explore your topic and gather all the interesting information you would like to share with the audience. Then try to structure all the content of your presentation. Don't go directly to PowerPoint, no!!

Draft the structure off-line. You will have to delete, cross out and select the information properly. Think of every piece of information if sharing this on stage helps you to reach your objective and if it's in line with the headline. Writing it out on index cards may help.

When you have more or less the structure of the presentation, **prepare 20 slides in PowerPoint**. Change the settings so that the slides advance automatically to the next one after 15 seconds and paste your text in the comments of the slides. In the slides themselves you can quickly write a word or draw a picture of the kind of image you want to show at that point of your talk. If you need help making a PowerPoint, visit the Academic Projects Center – they can help!

Images

When you have your text and the ideas of the pictures you need, you can start to look for the right images. Check that your images are free of copyright or make sure you are allowed to use them. A good website to start is the one of [Creative Commons](#). I found a lot of images on [MorgueFile](#). **Give all the slides a unified look:** the same style, the same frame or all the comments in the same color and font.

Rehearse

When you have everything ready the most important part arrives: **rehearse!!!** Practice your presentation as often as you can, especially the opening and the conclusion. You will see you want to change some sentences, maybe even change a slide or modify the order of the slides. That's OK, but stop making changes two days before the presentation. Practice in front of some people who are willing to give you honest feedback. Another great tool is to record yourself on video and to watch yourself back. Don't forget that the Academic Projects Center has a presentation rehearsal room!

The event

Then show time arrives! Dress up a little – make a good impression! **Make sure you make contact with the audience, focus on the delivery** and ... SMILE!