

Microsoft PowerPoint

The presentation application that is part of Microsoft Office is called **PowerPoint**. PowerPoint is virtually the world standard in presentation authoring tools. It is commonly used in the business world as well as in very many schools. PowerPoint is sophisticated enough to be used to create marketing and corporate information slide shows for multi-million-dollar enterprises, yet it is also so easy to use that students in lower elementary grades can use it to make simple reports and presentations. In between, most users find that PowerPoint is a quick, relatively easy, and very attractive way to communicate information using commonly available computer hardware.

One benefit that arises from PowerPoint's integration into the Microsoft Office suite is that it is relatively easy to import text, spreadsheets, graphics, tables, and clip art from other Office applications into PowerPoint. Further, once you learn how one Office application works – in terms of its menus, Wizards, etc. – it is a simple matter to pick up the logic of another. Thus, if you use Word or Excel, you should be able to understand PowerPoint with little difficulty.

In this chapter of the Guidebook, we will *briefly* introduce you to PowerPoint's menus and take you through the creation of a short presentation. We will also discuss some of the issues and concerns that arise when you consider how PowerPoint is to be used in the classroom.

General PowerPoint Tips

- Start simple. Just as with Word and Excel, it is important to learn the program basics before attempting to take full advantage of the program's features. This means that your first attempt to use PowerPoint should not include self-timed slides, custom audio clips, or animated graphics. Just because you've seen someone else do something with the program, there is no reason to drive yourself crazy trying to make your presentation "just like theirs." Eventually, you'll learn the more sophisticated features. Your students will probably learn them first.
- Save often. When you are learning a program, you *will* make mistakes. Do not work for hours to get something "just right" and then have everything lost when you mistakenly exit the program without saving. Save your work as you go along.
- Use the on-line help, the Wizards, and other documentation. A third-party step-by-step manual (such as the *...for Dummies* books) is very helpful. These manuals are available in most bookstores and all computer stores.
- Finally, our experience with PowerPoint is that the biggest problem most new users confront is that they end up making their presentations *so* visually complex that no one would be able to even comfortably *look* at their slides for very long...much less learn anything from the slides. There are many tools and options in PowerPoint. You have the option of making some *really* ugly slides; and that of course is not the point of the program. So before you get started creating slides, consider the following tips for creating appealing and concise presentations...

Tips for Creating Appealing and Concise Presentations

- **Outline your presentation.**

Before you even start to use PowerPoint to create slides, *first* decide what you want your presentation to say. Outline your topics and key points just as you would any paper or presentation. Then, start to make slides based on that outline. If you want to be totally techno-savvy, you may want to create an outline in Word and then import (or at least cut and paste) that outline into PowerPoint. Well, that's optional...but the point is to outline one way or the other.

- **Slides should convey key points – bullets – and ideas. Keep the text to a minimum!**

Your slides will be flashed on a screen for the viewer to read. No one wants to read a paragraph of text on a PowerPoint slide. *All* that your viewer should have to read is a sentence or two or perhaps a few words to get your meaning. Further, you should be *talking* while most presentations are running. The slides are just illustrations to your discussion.

- **Keep your slides visually simple.**

Clip art, text, headings, and tables are too much for a single slide. Once again, the viewer needs to be able to grasp the meaning of your slide in seconds (and that's about all the time they *will* spend on the slide). If you clutter the slide, your point will be masked. Keep it simple.

- **Use the default color schemes.**

PowerPoint comes with default color schemes that have been chosen for visual clarity. You have a number of these defaults to choose from when creating your slides. Use them. True, you *could* tell the program to put pink text on a yellow background...but why?

- **Keep animations to a minimum**

Just because you *can* make every single line of text appear one.....line....at....a.....time....on your slide, do you really want to? More importantly, will your viewers rise up and strangle you after the third slide that has text flying every which way onto the screen? Once again, keep it simple. Use animations when you need to make a point. Otherwise, just show your slide and move on.

- **Keep it short**

You cannot show 36 slides in 5 minutes. If you try, you *will* run out of time and/or end up showing slides at such a breakneck pace that your viewers will be left in the dust. So you need to be concise and quickly get to and make your points. This is yet another reason for outlining your presentation before you start creating slides.

Now, with all that said, let's figure out how this program works!

Opening PowerPoint

1. Open Microsoft PowerPoint by double clicking on its icon in the Microsoft Office folder **or** by double clicking on its alias on your desktop.

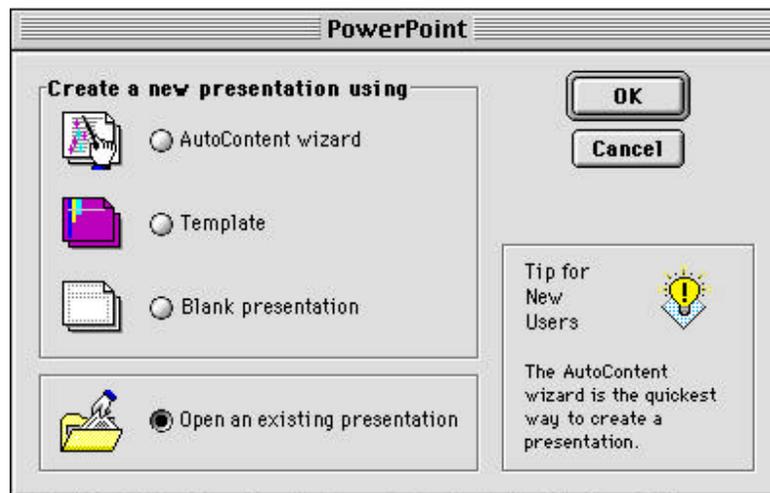


Alternatively, you can just double click on the icon for any PowerPoint presentation, and this will start the PowerPoint program as well as opening the clicked upon presentation.

The icon for a PowerPoint presentation looks like this:

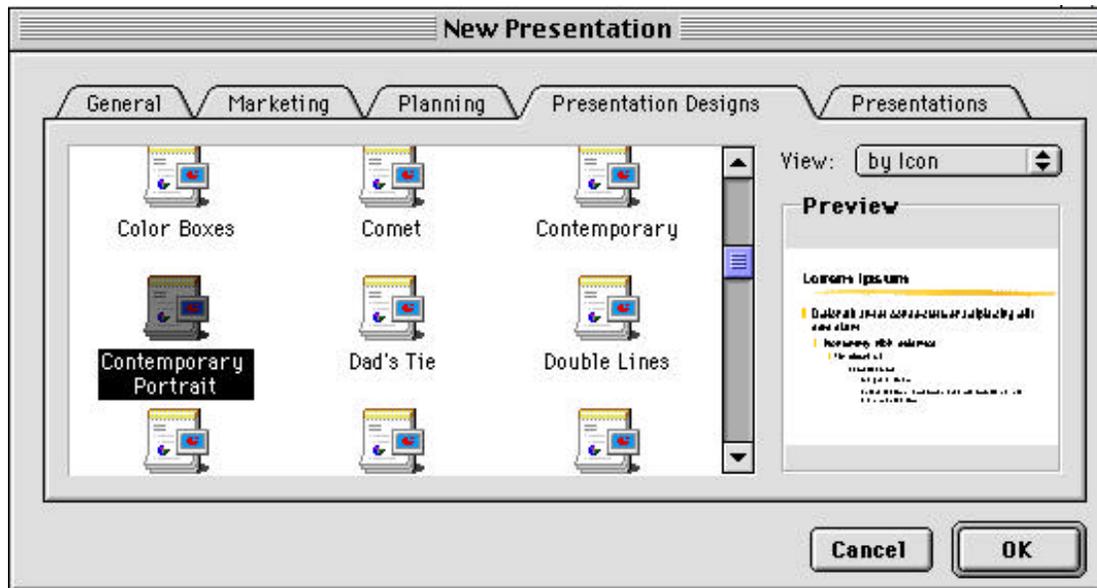


2. If you start PowerPoint from its program icon or alias (versus by clicking on an already created presentation), you will get a screen which looks like this:



The first couple of times you use the program, we suggest that you choose the option entitled “Template.” This is because our feeling is that “Blank presentation” gives you too little guidance (it really *is* blank!) whereas “AutoContent wizard” guides you largely to create presentations that are about business-related topics.

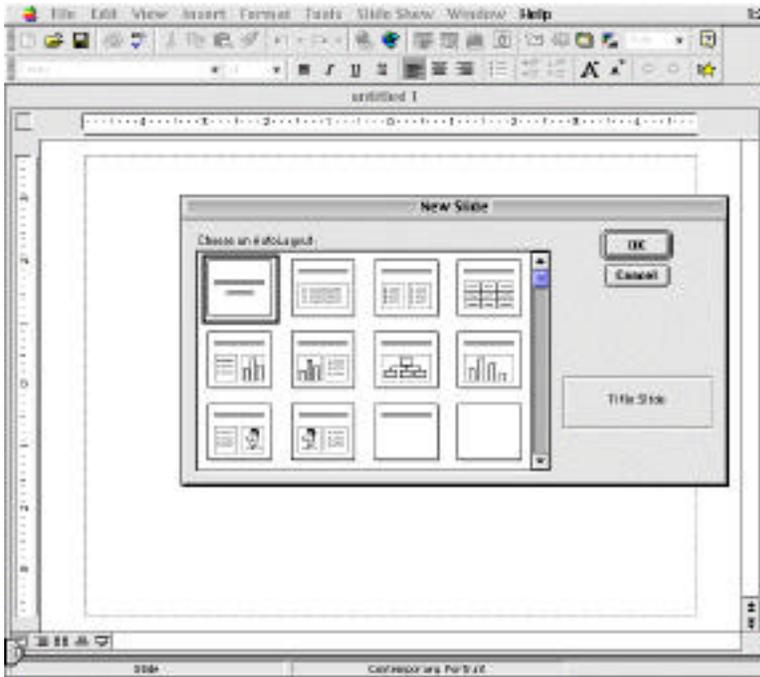
Choose Template by clicking on its radio button and then clicking OK. This takes you to another dialog box which looks like this:



Notice that there are a number of tabs on this box which will provide you with different presentation templates. Again, most of these designs are not particularly suitable for school use. Therefore, we suggest that you click on the **Presentation Design** tab and choose one of the designs. As you click on a design (just click ONCE), you will see it previewed in the window to its right. When you find the one you like, click OK.

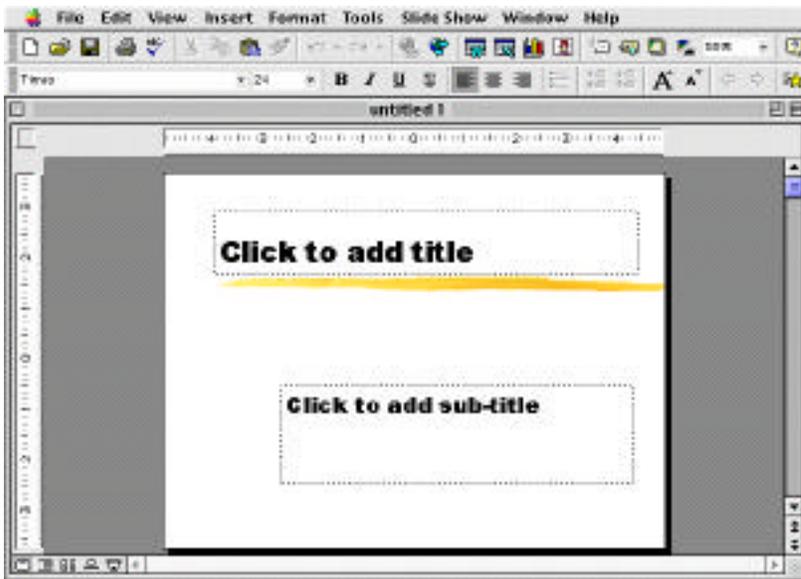
By the way, Presentation Designs control more than just the slide background. They also determine the font, type sizes, color schemes, and other formatting details. You can over ride any of these details later, but for now, accept what PowerPoint gives you.

- Once you have chosen your design (and the one we've chosen in this example is called "Contemporary Portrait"), you get a screen which looks like this:



The thing you need to do now is to choose one of these "Auto Layouts." Basically, these are layouts for slides. The one highlighted by default is **Title Slide**. Choose this one as it will help you layout the title slide (which conventionally is the first slide of a presentation).

- The next screen you see looks like this:



This screen – and the menus at its top and bottom -- is the one you will work with while working to create the remainder of your presentation.

Notice that aside from the standard set of Macintosh Operating System pull-down menus, you also have available a number of icons or buttons. The actual buttons you see are determined by how Word has been configured **on the specific computer you are using**. Therefore, for the most part in this guidebook, we will

focus on explaining the various actions you can make **using menus**. In general, the menus are always the same regardless of how your computer has been configured.

PowerPoint's Menus

By this time, you should have a very good idea as to what lies beneath the menus in a Microsoft Office application. But just in case you are reading this chapter first (i.e., before the ones on Word or Excel), we will overview the main features of the PowerPoint menus.

Also, remember that as with Word and Excel, the menus are *just one* way to execute functions in the program. Many users choose to use the toolbars and buttons to control PowerPoint (but as we have noted, often you will find that someone before you has changed the default buttons and/or toolbars...therefore we will discuss the menu commands which are much less likely to have been changed by a “helpful” student or fellow teacher).

File



Nothing particularly novel here. These are the same options traditionally available in the **File** menu. The major differences between PowerPoint and other Microsoft Office applications in this area comes in the **Print** command. We will discuss this later in this chapter when doing the step-by-step.

Edit



Once again, this too is a pretty standard **Edit** menu for an Office application. Two commands which bear mention here are:

Duplicate.....This will duplicate the current slide or whatever text, graphic, etc. you have selected.

Delete Slide.....This does what you expect. Use it with caution.

View

Key to working with PowerPoint is mastery of the various “views” of your slides. These views are controlled using menu options in the **View** menu – or by the small buttons at the lower left corner of the PowerPoint screen.



Views are also available in other Office applications, but in PowerPoint, they are critical to properly editing/creating slides and to showing your final product as a complete “slideshow.”

Slide..... The Slide view allows you to view just one slide on your screen, much like a word processing document. This is the best view with which to edit slide content.

Outline The Outline view focuses on slide text. It shows a small version of the slide (known as a thumbnail) which cannot be edited, but allows you full control over text.

Slide Sorter The Slide Sorter view is very useful for two things...1) seeing the order of your slides, and 2) adjusting the animation features – transitions and builds – on your slides. In slide sorter view, you can insert

new slides, drag slides into different orders, and delete slides. While you cannot edit the content of any slide (other than its build animation), you can double click on a slide image within the slide sorter view and be taken into Slide view where you can edit.

Notes Page This view allows you to add notes (sometimes called “speakers notes”) to a slide and also to edit the slide content. This is sort of an expanded Slide view. The notes will not be visible when you show your slide show, but they can be printed.

Slide Show This is the view where you see the ultimate product of your work. This “view” removes all desktop, menu, PowerPoint, and Finder features from your screen and fills the screen with your PowerPoint slide. You move through the slides by clicking with your mouse or hitting the Return key on your keyboard. It is not possible to edit slides in Slide Show view.

Master This takes you to another menu which allows you to edit the “Master” slide, handout master, or notes master. This is a way of changing the background, format, and other features of *all* of the slides in your presentation (this will not effect PowerPoint’s program defaults, just the slides in the current presentation).

The other options in the **View** menu control various ways that the PowerPoint program functions and appears. These options are very similar to other Office programs (i.e., toolbars, rulers, image size, etc.).

Insert



New Slide This is how you add slides to your presentation. While starting the program provides you with the first slide (the title slide, assuming you picked that format), you need to use this menu option to keep adding slides.

Slides from File You can import slides from other PowerPoint presentations into your current presentation.

Slides from Outline.. Likewise, you can bring in slide content (for entire slides) from an outline that you have created using Word or another word processor.

Picture Use this menu option to insert Clip Art, photographs, and other images into your slide. When you choose this option, you will be taken to another menu which will ask you what type of graphic (picture) you want to insert and where the inserted file currently resides (on a floppy, on the desktop, in the Clip Art folder, etc.).

Movies and Sounds.. This option allows you to insert Quicktime movies and audio files into you slides. With these, you can have a movie or sound play while your slide is showing. For more information on Quicktime movies and audio files – for use in all applications, not just PowerPoint – you should consult program documentation, an after-market book, or your technology coordinator.

Chart. Allows you to insert a chart (e.g., an organization chart) that has been created using the Microsoft Chart application. This application starts when you choose the **Chart** menu option. The Chart application is not a particularly full-featured program, and if possible you would be better off using Excel to create a chart (graph) and then cutting and pasting that into your slide.

Object In most cases, objects are the same as pictures, movies, sounds, and charts. It is possible though to insert links to other programs/applications...and that is what this menu option enables. Not too useful to the novice user.

Hyperlink If you have an Internet connection and web browser (e.g., Netscape) installed on your computer – and the computer where you intend to show your presentation – you can insert WWW addresses on your slides. When you do this, you can click on these addresses/hyperlinks during a slide show and automatically “launch” your browser and go to the address. The **Hyperlink** menu option enables this sort of insertion.

Format



The **Format** menu contains a number of commands that (go figure...) control the format of your slide. Here, you can choose fonts, do universal replacement of fonts (**Replace Fonts**), change the **Layout** of your slide (e.g., changing from a Title layout to a Bulleted List layout), change the color scheme, design (e.g., Contemporary Portrait, etc.), and background. Most of these formatting elements can be applied to just a single slide or to all of the slides in your presentation.

Tools



The **Tools** menu contains the expected Spelling Checker, macro recorder, and program default setting (Preferences) and customizing menus. **Meeting Minder** is a small notepad application that allows you to take notes during a meeting or presentation. This really has nothing to do with the PowerPoint application, but some users may find it useful.

Slide Show



The options on the **Slide Show** menu allow you to control how your presentation appears when you have finished it and are viewing it in Slide Show “view.” As noted in the **View** menu discussion, Slide Show view is how you actually present your show. The most commonly used options on this menu are discussed below.

By the way, the term “animation” used in the Office 97/98 version of PowerPoint is what was called **Build** in previous versions. Pretty much the same thing, but with a different name.

View Show.... This option switched you into Slide Show view and starts your show.

Preset Animation This option allows you to choose from a number of preset (i.e., determined by the program’s authors) slide animations. Choosing options here will allow you to have the text and graphics on your slide appear (build) in various ways upon the click of your mouse.

Custom Animation Using options on this menu, you can achieve a much greater degree of control over slide animation (build) than in the Preset Animation menu.

Slide Transition..... The options on this menu control how PowerPoint closes the current slide (in a slide show) and “transitions” to the next slide. You have many options here...fades, boxing, etc.

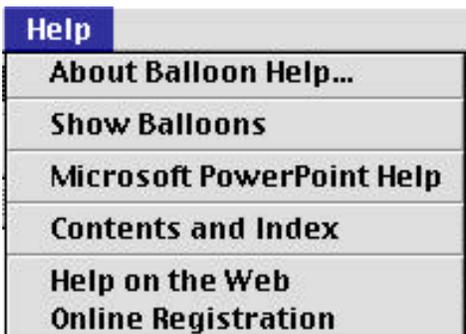
Once again, remember the tips for clear and concise presentations discussed at the start of this chapter. You are well advised to *keep it simple* when choosing slide animations and transitions. No one wants to sit through a presentation that has been cluttered by unnecessary animations. Not every slide *needs* to be animated!

Window



Nothing unusual here. This is just the standard set of commands for creating new windows and arranging open PowerPoint windows if you have more than one presentation open at a time.

Help



And finally, this is the standard Office/Macintosh help menu.

As you might expect, PowerPoint allows you access to the same little help dude is still available in PowerPoint. If you need to summon him (or her), just click on the **Microsoft PowerPoint Help** menu option.



Creating a Presentation

Let's create a simple PowerPoint presentation. In this example, we're going to assume that the **main point** of the presentation is to describe a plan to raise funds for a class trip to Puerto Rico (we're going to El Morro). We already know that we have about 5 minutes to make our presentation before the school PTO, so we'd better be short, concise, and to the point. Ok, let's go...

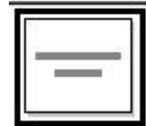
- First, we need to outline. You could create an outline in PowerPoint itself, but for the sake of simplicity, let's just sketch out an outline "on paper."
- Introduction – Fundraising for the Puerto Rico trip
- Who's going?
- Anticipated costs
- Fund raising strategies
- Summary
- Issues
- Timeline

Given the amount of time we will have to deliver our presentation (5 minutes), six or seven slides is about all we will want. Remember, the goal is to have slides which form *talking points* for our presentation...not slides that are to be "read" as text by the viewers.

1. Next, open PowerPoint and choose the Presentation **Template** option from the first dialog box. When asked to choose a design, choose the one called "Sparkle." That's the one that looks like this.



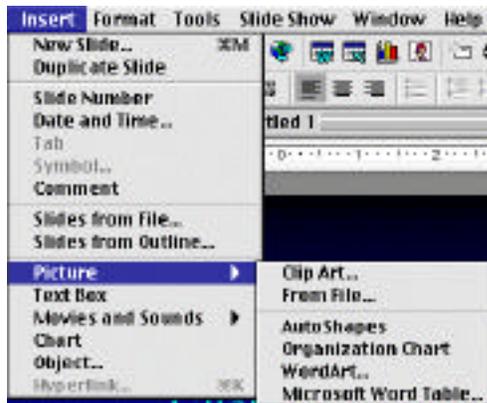
Then, when asked to choose an to Layout (for the first slide), choose the default "Title Slide." This is the one which looks like this:



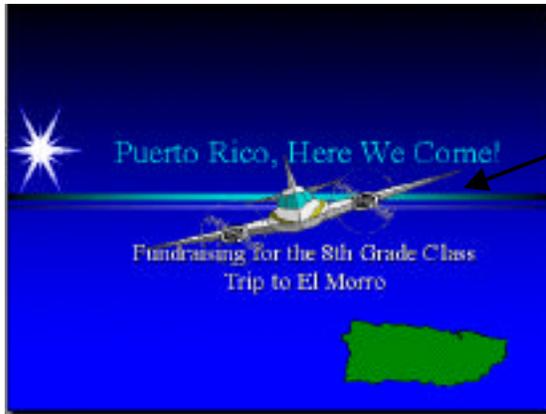
Now, you're ready to move on to the next step, the one where you start to add content to your presentation.

2. Let's put a title on the title slide, some graphics, and our name. Here's how to do that.

Notice that you are in **Slide Layout** view. This means that you can edit all of the content of the slide. You can add text by typing where prompted to on the slide. Graphics can be added by using the **Insert** menu and choosing **Picture**.



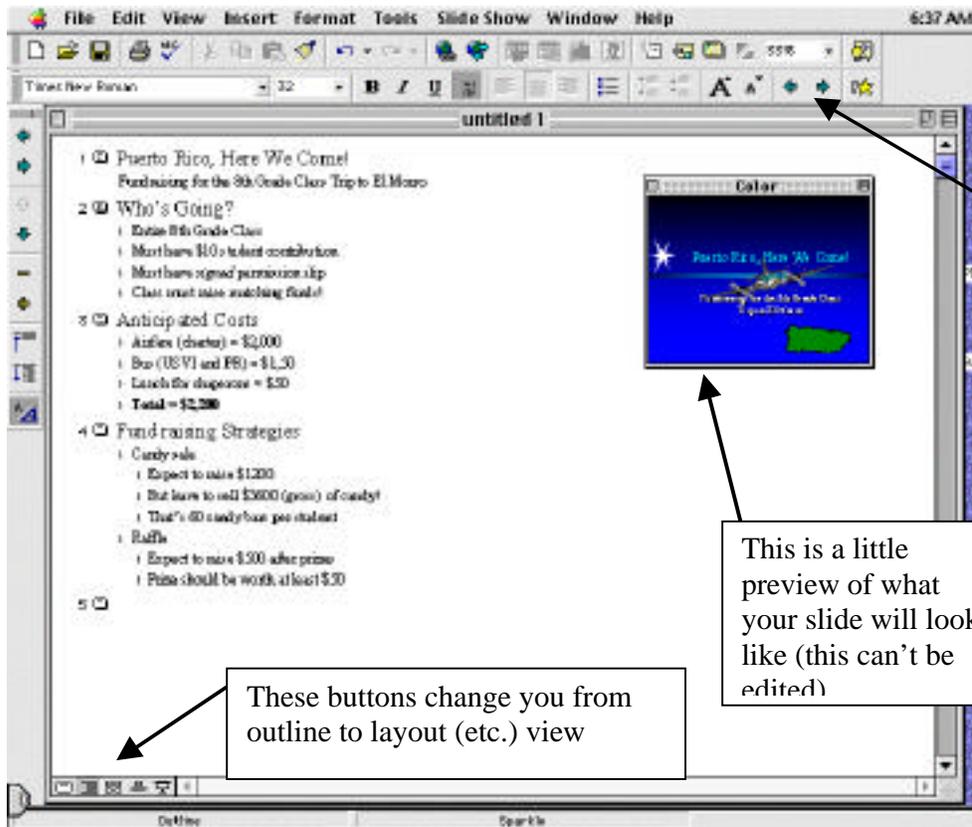
When all done with our title slide, it might look something like this:



Note that the graphic can be placed *anywhere* on the slide!

3. You may find it useful to switch to **Outline** view (using either the command in the **View** menu or by clicking on the little button at the bottom left corner of your PowerPoint window) and to simply *type in* your slide show's text...then later, you can go back and add images and clean things up.

If you do this, you will be in a screen which looks something like this while creating your slides in the **Outline** view:



Use these "Promote" and "Demote" arrow buttons to change the text on a slide from title to list text (or vice versa)

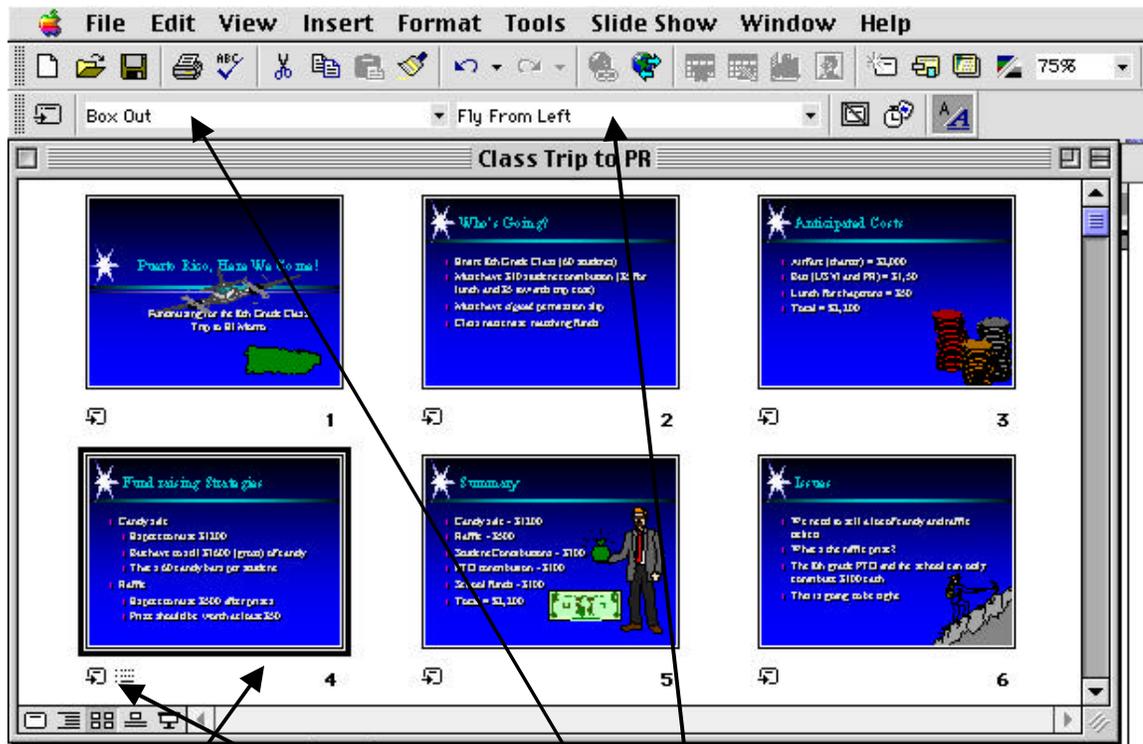
This is a little preview of what your slide will look like (this can't be edited)

These buttons change you from outline to layout (etc.) view

- Once you are finished creating your slide content, it is useful to look at *all* of your slides in **Slide Sorter** view. This way, you can see small versions of all slides, edit transitions/animations, and by double-clicking on any small image, you can go into **Slide Layout** view and edit a slide (add graphics, change text, etc.).

Also, remember to save your presentation!

Slide Sorter view looks like this:



When a slide has a black box around it, you can double-click and edit it...and you can see its transitions and animations at the top of the Slide Sorter screen.

These pull-down menus show the transition and animation effects for the current slide (the one with the box around it). Also, the little icons below each slide image indicate whether there is a transition or animation applied to the slide.

5. That's about it! When you are satisfied with your work, save one last time.
6. When you want to show your presentation, simply open the saved file (by double-clicking on its icon) and choose **View Show** from the **Slide Show** menu.

Displaying a Presentation

Unless you are satisfied with having your entire audience cluster around your computer monitor, you will need to figure out some way to display your presentation for everyone to see. Generally, this is done by using some sort of device to take your computer's video output and display it on a TV, video projector, or LCD panel. The chart below summarizes some of these options.

Device	Approximate Cost	Advantages	Disadvantages
Existing computer monitor	\$0 (you already have one)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional cost No additional set-up time/skills required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too small for more than a few people to view at once Unless you have a Powerbook, the monitor is probably not portable
LCD Panel	\$2,500 to \$4,000 (includes about \$500 for a proper overhead projector)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somewhat portable Creates a large display Can generally be interchanged easily between Mac and PC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Won't work with most school overhead projectors (they're not bright enough) Won't work unless the room is very dark Easy to break and impossible to repair Very costly
Video Projector	\$3,500 or more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single device, no overhead required Can be used in virtually normal room light Very clear and sharp image Easy to set up Very portable Will work with Mac, PC, laser disc player, VCR Most also have speakers for sound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very costly
Scan Converter	\$150 to \$500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single device, no overhead required Connects to any existing TV Very cost effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Image not as clear as Video Projector (especially with the inexpensive ones) Not all are cross-platform (i.e., may need one for the Mac and another for PCs)

Our recommendation? Go with the **scan converter**. The video projector is technically the best choice, but until the cost comes down on these units, it is unlikely that your school could afford to buy even one, much less two or three to circulate around the school. The LCD panel is a good concept, but in practice is worthless in most schools. They are fragile and difficult to set up and most classrooms cannot be made dark enough to allow anyone to see the projected image. If you have the money to buy an LCD panel, you *ought* to spend it on a video projector instead.

The scan converter is inexpensive and works with all of those big TVs (19" or larger) you already have! You *do not* need to buy a new or "special" TV. If the TV works with a VCR (i.e., you can plug the VCR into the TV and the picture is good enough for a class or large group to view), then it will work with the scan converter. You can buy several converters and allow teachers to check them out with the TVs for when they think they will need them. True, the image quality is not up to monitor or video projector standards, but they accomplish the primary task of allowing an entire class to see the output of a single computer.

Some brand names for scan converters are *TV View* and *AverKey*. You can generally order these via mail order catalog (Mac Zone, MacWarehouse, Mac/PC Connection, etc.) or ask your technology coordinator for assistance.

Acknowledgements

This Guidebook has been created as a resource for teachers, and especially those in the US Virgin Islands who attended the August, 1998 Summer Technology Institute. The reference materials and step-by-step guides are intended to serve as long-term backups to the hands on sessions and exploration that occurred in the Institute.

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