PechaKucha Project

Translate your research into a PechaKucha. PechaKucha and other visual storytelling forms draw on formal affinities between argumentation and narrative. Research papers often have three-part structures of abstract/argument & evidence/conclusions, which is similar yet different from the classic three-act narrative structure found in myths, novels, and comics: set up/confrontation/resolution.

Narratives involve characters, plot, and setting, while arguments entail evidence, logic, and context. Creating your presentation might simply involve contextualizing the topic for a wider audience. Or as Lee LeFever suggests: contextualizing it, telling a well-crafted story, and connecting narrative elements to descriptions of the formal research. Nancy Duarte draws on narrative theory to design organizational presentations, which she says should mix story and argument to transport audiences from “what is,” through a series of contrasts with “what could be,” to produce a “state of bliss.” The difference between “what is” and “what could be” measure the stakes, the why, of the presentation. Superimposing LeFever and Duarte: start with context (WHY), tell a story as call to adventure, contrast IS/COULD be, and end with description of research as call to action (HOW).

To create your PechaKucha, follow these steps:

1. Outline research story: Why is research important? What is your core message? How to enhance impact?
2. Put story into a sparkline (what is/what could be) with a call to adventure and a call to action.
4. Visualize your text with a series of 20 image ideas (e.g. “picture of road,” “complexity”).
5. Collect actual images using camera, Creative Commons, Google image search, etc.
6. Create PechaKucha using PowerPoint, integrating narration and images and revising as needed.
7. Rehearse using auto-advance: commit story to memory, use images as prompts, explore different deliveries.
8. Record and/or present PechaKucha to live audience, engaging them with eye contact, gestures, props, etc.

Resources
- PechaKucha info: http://www.pechakucha.org/
- DesignLab smart media kits: https://designlab.wisc.edu/pecha-kucha
- Image resources: https://ccsearch.creativecommons.org, https://images.google.com/