The 3MT | MT180 is a University-wide competition that challenges graduate students to showcase their leading-edge research to a non-specialist audience in just three minutes.

- Your talk
- Your slide
- Your presentation
- Your reflection
- Your research
3 MINUTE THESIS

Your talk.

Content:
- Less is more! Focus on three key messages at most
- Separate content into small sections using signposts to help the audience follow along
  E.g. “First,” “and then,” “now,” “on to my next point,” “in other words,” etc.
- Use short sentences (25 words max.)
- Use pauses and chunking (put emphasis on the last content word of a phrase)
  E.g. “Why would you go to school / when you could stay at home / and stay in bed?”
- Use active voice
  E.g. “I wanted to find out...” or “we created a tool...” instead of “a tool was created”
- Avoid jargon and explain key terms in non-specialist language
- Explain concepts and people important to your research. You may know all about Professor Smith’s theories but your audience may not
- Highlight the outcomes of your research, and the desired outcome
- Imagine explaining your research to a close friend or fellow student from another field
- Convey your excitement and enthusiasm for your subject
- Consider presenting your 3MT as a narrative with a beginning, a middle, and an end
- Break your presentation down into smaller sections to make it easier to follow
Structure:

- Introduction:
  - Capture the audience’s attention with a hook
    E.g. Ask a question, tell a story, or give a contemporary example
  - Introduce yourself briefly after your hook

- Body (your research):
  - Provide context/background for your research
  - Keep the messages simple
  - Articulate the significance of your research for society
  - Use examples that the audience will relate to

- Conclusion:
  - Return to your introduction to close your talk
  - End on a high note
  - Thank the audience
  - Remember to keep it under 3 minutes to avoid elimination (practice!)
3 Minute Thesis

Your slide.

Background:
- Leave white/light space
- Use colours that work well on a screen
- Don’t overcrowd your slide
- Be creative
- Make sure your slide is legible, clear, and concise

Images & Figures:
- Use high quality images
- Re-size and compress images before inserting them on the slide
- Use simple graphics to convey important information

Text:
- Use min. 24-point font size and a sans serif font type
- Make sure all of your text is in your language of presentation

Content:
- Only include relevant content that you actually refer to in your presentation
- Use minimal, if any, text
- Do not rely on your slide to convey your message - it should simply complement your oration
- Think about how your slide supports the format and delivery of your presentation
- Personal touches can allow your audience to understand the impact of your research

Optional:
- Your name
- Title
- Sponsors/logos/university

Remember:
- Lay audience
- Simplicity
- Relevance
3 Minute Thesis

Your presentation.

Pacing:
- Speak at a reasonable pace (average roughly 150 words/minute)
- Avoid “ums,” “ahs,” and “ers”

Silent Pauses:
Why you should use them:
- To collect your thoughts
- To appear in control and confident
- To give the audience time to process your message

When to use them:
- Before starting your talk
- When you transition from one point to the next
- After an important point, for emphasis
- After posing a rhetorical question

Body Language:
- Have a confident stance
- Don’t fidget or have your hands in your pockets
- Be expressive with your body
- Dress professionally
- Smile and make eye contact with the whole audience
- Be enthusiastic and show your passion

Have a Clear Outcome in Mind:
- Know what you want your audience to take away from your presentation
- Try to leave the audience with an understanding of what you’re doing, why it is important, and what you hope to achieve

Revise:
- Proof your 3MT presentation by reading it aloud, to yourself, and to an audience of friends and family
- Ask for feedback
- Ask your audience if your presentation clearly highlights what your research is about and why it is important
Checklist:

- Did you introduce yourself?
- Were you explicit about your take-away message?
- Did you speak in short sentences so that the audience can follow ideas easily?
- Did you use vocabulary your audience can understand? (i.e. limited use of field-specific jargon)
- Did you use discourse markers/signposts to guide the audience through your talk?
- Did you support your claim with examples and/or evidence?
- Did you face the audience?
- Did you stand confidently?
- Did you scan the audience to establish eye contact?
- Did you speak fluently without hesitation sounds (“umms,” “ahs”)?
- Did you speak at a pace that allows the audience to digest your ideas? (aim for 150 words/min)
- Did you speak loudly enough for people at the back of the room to hear? (n/a if speakers have microphones)
- Did you exhibit nervous behaviours?
- Did you use visuals to support your words?
- Did you thank the audience for listening/for their attention?
- Did you appear prepared?

Your reflection.
Your research.

Video Resources:

- Interactive hooks:
  - Necola Guerrina 2017 (2nd Place Winner - English)
  - Jay Olson 2014

- Telling a story:
  - Jay Olson 2018 (Winner - English)

- Using metaphors:
  - Sheri McDowell 2018
  - Kashif Khan 2017 (Winner - English)

- Letting your passion shine through:
  - Fannie Dione 2018
  - Laura Joy Boulos 2017 (People's Choice Winner - French)

- Using intentional body language:
  - Gabrielle Houle 2018 (Winner - French)
  - Jay Olson 2018 (Winner - English)
  - Lauren Godfrey-Smith 2016

- Using jokes:
  - Scott Bell 2018
  - Jeremie Abitol 2015