

I. Introduction:

The introduction is certainly the most important part of your presentation because it will reveal a lot not only about the way you speak and express yourself but it will also tell the jury whether you have understood the text and clearly identified why it is important and the issues that it raises. This part of the presentation, therefore, must not be underestimated. The introduction should also be an opportunity for you to stand out from the rest of the students by spurring the examiner's curiosity. To do so, you must follow the following pattern and make sure that you move on from one step to the next very smoothly and not in a mechanical fashion.

1. Introduce the document "smoothly:"

This step should be seen as a **lead-in / hook**. The idea here to engage the listener and make sure they understand why – given a particular (social, economic, political, etc...) context – the article was written. Some students feel more comfortable starting with a quotation. You should feel free to do so too as long as your lead-in places the document within its broader context.

2. Introduce the text / audio recording *per se*:

Be careful, your **introduction of the document** must not be clumsy and must **serve a purpose**. You cannot introduce the document just for the sake of it. In other words, your examiner must understand why, given the context, you have decided to introduce the document. This introduction must also be relevant to the rest of your synthesis.

- **type of document**

The text / the document / the article under examination / consideration / study is...

an account / a report / a column = une chronique / a summary / an analysis / an opinion column / a letter to the editor / a speech / a (book / film) review

- **its main issue(s)**

It deals with... / focuses on / raises the question of... / tackles the issue of... / bring up the problem of... / broaches the issue of... / reports on... / points out...

The question of... / the issue of... / topic of... / debate on... / argument on... / problem of... / situation of...

A current / important / burning / major / universal / controversial / debated / topical = d'actualité / on-going... problem

A cliché / a stereotype / a commonly-held view = opinion =perspective

The main point in the article is... / The crux of the matter = the heart of the matter is...

- **when/where it was written/for whom**

It was published in... / came out in... / was posted on... (website)

*How to express dates: **in** 2018, **in** April 2018, **on** April 26 2018*

a daily / weekly / Sunday / monthly / quarterly = trimestriel ... newspaper / magazine / broadsheet = journal de qualité / tabloid = journal à sensation...

It was written for American / British readers/an international audience with conservative ≠ liberal views...

- **who wrote it**

It was written by... an author / a journalist / an editor / a specialist / an academic= un universitaire / a politician

- **issues at stake / the author's intentions:**

You must clearly tell what the issues at stake as well as the **writer's intentions** are. In other words, you must explain why – given the context that you spoke about earlier on - the writer wrote his / her article.

- **Outline**

The main difference between a summary and a synthesis being that the latter is coherent and organized, you must come up with **an outline** and give it to the examiner. This outline will basically consist of 2 or 3 different parts. Your parts must **reconstruct the journalist's reasoning** by explaining what his / her arguments are in your own words.

II. Presentation of facts:

- ➔ Do this logically: **You must NOT repeat the text or the recording, you MUST use your OWN words** and show that you have the main information and the intentions of the journalist.
- ➔ Do not forget to *analyze* the tone / the point of view
- ➔ Do not just follow the order of the text / recording unless it is logical. A **thematic approach** is by far a better choice to avoid repetitions - which are very common in the press.
- ➔ Your summary must be clear and organized with **LINKWORDS**.
- ➔ If there is a debate, try to identify and classify the participants according to their points of view or opinions (arguments in favor / arguments against).
- ➔ In most cases, dealing with the facts in a first part, the causes in a second part and the consequences in a third part can turn out to be a very efficient outline. Sometimes, a few solutions to the problem are mentioned in the document. In that case, you should try to come up with a part that deals with these solutions.
- ➔ The body of your presentation should progressively lead to your commentary.

To present a list of ideas: *First, secondly, thirdly...*

To add an element: *Then, also, moreover, furthermore, likewise= de même, as to = pour ce qui est de, finally*

To add an element that is opposed to the previous one: *However, on the other hand, but, nevertheless = néanmoins , yet=cependant*

To give an example: *particularly, for example, that is to say = c'est-à-dire*

To present the consequences: *so, that's why, consequently, therefore*

To present the causes: *due to, because of, thanks to = grâce à, because, since = puisque*

To analyze the intentions of the journalist:

The journalist / writer... describes / focuses on / examines / considers / studies / discusses ...

insists on / stresses / emphasizes / underlines ...

illustrates / demonstrates / provides the reader with examples / testimonies ...

considers the arguments / the reasons for and against / the pros and cons

analyzes the reasons why...

looks at both sides of the question

indicates / points out the advantages - disadvantages - drawbacks

objects to / protests against / opposes / criticizes

denounces / defends

contrasts / draws an opposition / distinguishes between... and...

III. Conclusion / Transition:

- You must very briefly sum up the content of the article and the issues at stake **without repeating yourself**.
- You may start thinking about other issues that might come up to the reader's mind after reading the article.
- The transition is what enables you to move on from your synthesis to your commentary. A good transition clearly shows why the text is at the root of your commentary and the jury must clearly understand how your commentary will go further. This is when you can start giving your **opinion** on the document: remember you are French and your approach might be culturally different! If the article is **incomplete** / **biased**, you can point out what is **missing**.
- All of this will help you come up with the **key question** / **problématique** you will try to answer in your personal commentary.
- Do not forget to tell what your **outline** will be. This will give the jury a first glimpse of how you are going to answer the question that you have raised.

IV. Personal commentary:

- The idea here is to make a point from an issue raised in the article.
- Your commentary will also be made up of an introduction, 2 or 3 body paragraphs and a conclusion. This part represents half of the oral presentation and thus, it must not be looked down. Your commentary should be dynamic in nature and contain a key question to which you must try to answer. You should start from the most obvious, simple, concrete facts to the most abstract and personal interpretations / analyses.

To do so, you mainly have three options here:

1. **Option 1:** expanding on the issue tackled by the author.

Do not repeat what is said in the text (that was the purpose of your synthesis). Complete with your own information. A mere description will not be enough. You must provide arguments and explanations.

2. **Option 2:** branching out.

You may choose to talk about something only briefly mentioned in the text but which deserves expanding

3. **Option 3:** do both

There is no typical outline. You must be as coherent, organized and logical as possible. Remember that you need to defend a point of view and / or show – i.e. demonstrate - something. To that end, your commentary should be argumentative rather than descriptive. As a consequence, you must avoid long lists of examples and favor arguments. In other words, each idea should be defended by an argument which – in turn – must be illustrated by an example.

Although you must give your opinion on the question raised by the article, you must do so in a subtle, organized and informed way and you need to qualify everything you say as well as the arguments that you put forward. That is the reason why you must avoid long lists of examples or commonplaces.

Finally, you must not see the commentary as an opportunity to recount something you learned by heart prior to the exam – such as a lesson for instance.

V. Conclusion:

- Make it short, natural and logical
- Avoid repetitions
- Answer the key question you have raised in your commentary
- The conclusion should be an overall assessment the topic(s) / issue(s) raised in both your synthesis AND your commentary.

A few more tips

- Do not read your notes. Look at the person in front of you!
- Do not mumble but speak out loudly and clearly.
- Check your time on a watch or on your phone.
- Avoid Anti-Americanisms or radical views.