Preparing a scientific poster

Students create their own poster on the topic of cancer and risk factors. They will improve their ability to summarise information in a range of forms, and will think about how they can communicate scientific ideas using a poster as a cue.

Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- summarise a significant topic in the form of a poster

Time required

15 minutes introduction + homework

Outline of the activity

Explain that scientific posters are used by scientists to communicate their work at conferences.

1 Start the activity by telling students that they will be required to produce a poster on the topic of cancer and risk factors.

2 Ask the students 'What should be included in each section of the poster?' to elicit their ideas about content. Note ideas on the board as part of a class discussion.

3 Use the slide presentation to run through the requirements of the activity.

4 Point out that the students will be presenting their poster to a reviewer (which will be one of their fellow students) as part of the subsequent activity 'Evaluating a scientific poster'. This will require them to explain the contents of their poster verbally, and be prepared to answer any questions that are posed on the topic. Following this review students will have the opportunity to explain how they could improve their poster.

6 Run through the specification for the size/formatting and content of the poster, and set the deadline for submission.

Tips and strategies

A lot of work is involved in creating a poster, and you may decide that this type of activity lends itself to the development of team-working skills, in which case students could work in pairs or small groups. However, it should be within the capabilities of an A-level student to put together an appropriate poster.

Depending on the topic chosen, you may set the task at the end of the topic to help students consolidate their knowledge and understanding. However, if you are confident in the ability of your students, this activity could be set at the start of the topic as part of a 'self-study' approach.

You may wish to issue the criteria for assessment from activity 'Evaluating scientific posters' here. It is important that students are aware of the criteria for evaluation of their posters.

Preparing a scientific poster: briefing sheet

Your task is to prepare a poster with the title *(fill in as directed by your teacher)*:

.....

The diagram below gives you guidelines about the content of the poster, but you have some freedom to choose your presentation style.

Unless your school or college has the facility to print A1 posters, which is unlikely, you will need to prepare the different sections as smaller pieces. These will need to be stuck onto some sort of backing card or paper.

In the next activity you will be asked to present your own poster, and evaluate others.

Layout of a scientific poster

Poster format

Size: A1 (4 times the size of A3)
Font style: Arial
Title: 84 point font
Names and institution: 36 point font
Sub-headings: 54 point font
Main body text: 24 point font
Image captions: 16 point font