

Teaching a Pitch Challenge Toolkit Guide

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young entrepreneur INSTITUTE®

What is Young Entrepreneur Pitch Challenge?

A simple set of activities that help kids learn creativity, problem solving, critical thinking and presentation skills.

- Pitch Challenge teaches kids critical workforce readiness skills and helps develop a mindset for 21st century careers whether or not they become an entrepreneur.
- This program is specially designed for kids to connect their passion with the solution to a problem, develop a pitch for their solution, and perform the pitch either live or on video.
- Young Entrepreneur Institute offers professional development webinars to help make the Pitch Challenge easy for you to implement.
- The Pitch Challenge is engaging and relevant for all the kids you serve. And it's fun!

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How will a Pitch Challenge benefit you and your kids?

It introduces kids to the entrepreneurial mindset.

- Instills important life skills in a fun way
- Reinforces academic content
- Easily implemented with free provided tools and content
- Can be completed in three to five steps
- Strengthens relationships in region and/or network
- Raises visibility of programs to attract more kids and families
- An opportunity to engage local business leaders as mentors and judges

Young Entrepreneur Institute developed this contest to give kids a chance to experience entrepreneurship and grow important life skills including:

Creative problem solving
Succinct expression of ideas
Persuasive speaking
Presentation skills
Self confidence
Critical and strategic thinking
Overcoming adversity
Taking ownership of one's life

What is a pitch?

An elevator pitch succinctly and enthusiastically explains what your idea is or what your company does. It should spark interest, be brief, persuasive, compelling and importantly, memorable in some way. Take-aways are the uniqueness and/or advantages of your idea or company.

How to teach the Pitch Challenge

Young Entrepreneur Institute offers educators support materials and a framework of exercises to help kids prepare for and enter the Challenge. Entries can be created in three to five steps, and additional resources are identified at the end of each lesson to expand the learning.

Set the stage

Introduce the Challenge to your kids with interactive questions:

What is an entrepreneur? What is a pitch? Pitching isn't just for Shark Tank! When would you need to use a pitch? Model examples of good and bad pitches to a parent for permission to go to a basketball game. When else might you use a pitch? Promoting your babysitting or lawn care service; getting a job; asking your teacher for an extension; convincing your friends to make a certain choice.

Explain the Challenge and its benefits

What is the Pitch Challenge? Why enter? It will improve your pitching skills; it is a chance to win prizes and recognition; it's fun!

Explain the process to enter

Kids think up a business opportunity, create a pitch, perform the pitch either live or in a 30- to 90-second video. If it is a video, register and submit it to your program's contest website.

Lessons

Follow the five steps shown on the next page to help kids prepare a pitch for a live presentation or a video entry.

Each step could be a 45- to 60-minute lesson or steps can be combined, or skipped if content is covered elsewhere. Content can be expanded by adding exercises recommended at the end of each section.

Each step is connected to a project milestone. The Toolkit folder contains short instructional videos for each activity.

Warmups

Each lesson begins with a warmup exercise which reinforces entrepreneurial thinking.

Additional Resources

Pitching Activities give kids a chance to practice pitching, so it becomes more comfortable.

Venture Lab offers a free, fun, innovative curriculum to build an entrepreneurial mindset. Look for references to specific modules that expand on the work in each section of this Toolkit Guide or try out the whole series. Visit www.venturelab.org to learn more.

People Rocket is produced by Stanford Design School professor Tina Seelig and lecturer Rich Cox and offers a selection of popular creativity and innovation exercises. Access it at: http://bit.ly/PeopleRocketToolkit



Outcome: CONTEST ENTRY



Problem Identification

Warm-Up

Ten Uses for a Shoe

Begin the discussion by asking your kids, "why do we wear shoes?" The answers will probably be: "to protect our feet from harm" and "keep them clean," and maybe, "to improve performance." Now ask what other uses they can think of for a shoe aside from wearing it. Either gather ten uses as fast as possible or time them to see how many they can think up in a minute or two. Common answers are: planter, door stop, fly swatter, phone holder, bed for small pet, laces to tie things together. You can write the solutions on the board or tally the idea count on your fingers.

Another way to run this exercise if you have more time is to use "brainwriting." Each kid has a piece of paper and writes down one or more ideas and passes it to the next person who adds to the list. Once most of the lists have ten items, ask the kids to raise hands and share. This gives a better chance for good ideas from shy kids to be heard and everyone is compelled to think of multiple answers but can be inspired by peers.

Main Event

A Day in the Life

Talk through a "day in the life" to help kids think more critically about their life and surroundings to find opportunities for improvement.

Prompt them to think about:

Getting up, having breakfast, packing their backpack, getting to school, using a locker or desk, wanting snacks, keeping track of homework. What do you do after school? Do you have a hobby or play sports? How do you interact with your friends and family?

A twist on this exercise is to imagine the same activities from the perspective of someone with limitations – of vision, of hearing, of mobility for example. This is a good way to nurture empathy.

Write ideas up on the board in a brainstorming fashion.

In this exercise it's important to stay focused on problem identification and definition. Separating the activities of problem definition and solution development is a hallmark of design thinking and results in more creative, effective solutions. The problems defined here are the input used in the next module

Goals

To introduce problem identification and choose one or more problems that are meaningful and build kids' interest.

Outcome

One or several problem ideas that will hold kids' interests and have possibilities to be developed into a business idea for a pitch.

FURTHER RESOURCES

Venture Lab

Creativity B: Observation Idea Generation A Idea Generation B

People Rocket

Imagination

- Observation
- Interview

Problem Identification continued

Pitching Activities Basics

These simple activities in each of the following sections, give kids a chance to practice pitching so it becomes more comfortable. Ideally, they should have a chance to practice each time they gather during the preparation for the Pitch Challenge.

For groups of more than ten kids, divide into groups of four or five. Kids will each pitch in their smaller group, after which one kid from each group will be selected to present their pitch at the front of the class. In the first activity the "finalist" can be the kid who is chosen as best presenter by the group, but in subsequent activities other kids should be chosen until all have had a chance to experience the "finals." Keep a record of who is in each group and which kids have been finalists. If you choose to rate the finals, prizes can be a piece of candy, a coin or dollar, or a behavior award.

Pitching Activity 1

Scripted Pitches

Kids are provided a pre-written pitch to read and perform. They then compete for best presentation of the pitch. Below is one example, or you can write your own. For larger groups of kids, it's good to have varied content to keep it interesting but the content should be similar enough in length and complexity that each kid is getting a similar level of challenge.

Sample 1

I'm here to tell you about Brain Power Shakes.

Brain Power Shakes are awesome because they are made with fresh, all organic ingredients and handmade with care.

The reason they are called Brain Power Shakes is because the vitamins and protein give you the power to learn.

Brain Power Shakes are good for you and the strawberry-banana-coconut is dairy-free!

Brain Power Shakes are delicious! They are a bargain at only \$3 for a 16-ounce cup.

Here are some of the yummy flavors: strawberry-banana-coconut, berry-peach cream, and coconut ice.

Visit our table at the Farmer's Market on Saturday. Happy shakes!

Business Opportunity

This module is all about coming up with a business opportunity for the pitch. The Warm-Up offers a fun way to come up with ideas. The Main Event consists of two activities:

- Ideation Pitch Exercise (Worksheet #1) incorporates the problem list from the first module to create solutions proven to be viable opportunities. Alternatively, ideas from the warm-up can be tested for viability using this worksheet.
- Explore Value Proposition (Worksheet #2) further defines the opportunity, introducing the idea of value proposition.

Warm-Up

Invention mash-up

Think up two things and "mash" them together to come up with a new invention. Either prompt with some ideas or let kids drive the conversation.

Examples of existing products:

- Food processor/blender + water bottle = Nutribullet®
- Ear Plugs + headphones = noise cancelling headphones
- Kayak + origami = compact collapsible kayak
- Tapioca pudding + specialty drinks = bubble tea

See how many business ideas your group can think up in ten minutes. This provides a nice segue into the next topic – determining if an idea is an opportunity.

Main Event

Opportunity Venn Diagram (Worksheet #1)

Successful business owners do what they know about and love, and their product or service solves a problem or fulfills a need. Use this diagram to qualify whether the business idea meets those criteria. If so, it is a viable opportunity.

Kids can jump right into this worksheet or start by working through an example on the board. See page 9 for a sample worksheet from a group exercise.

Problems/Needs (left)

List one or more of the problems identified in the first module.

Skills/Resources (right)

List interests, skills, passion, resources available

Solution → Opportunity

Find connections between left and right to suggest solutions. If starting with a solution, work backwards to define the problem it solves and the skills and resources needed to support it.



Goals

To develop an idea and determine if it is a business opportunity.

Outcome

One or two business opportunities that the kids can get excited about.

FURTHER RESOURCES

Venture Lab

Opportunity Analysis A Opportunity Analysis B Business Model A Business Model B

People Rocket

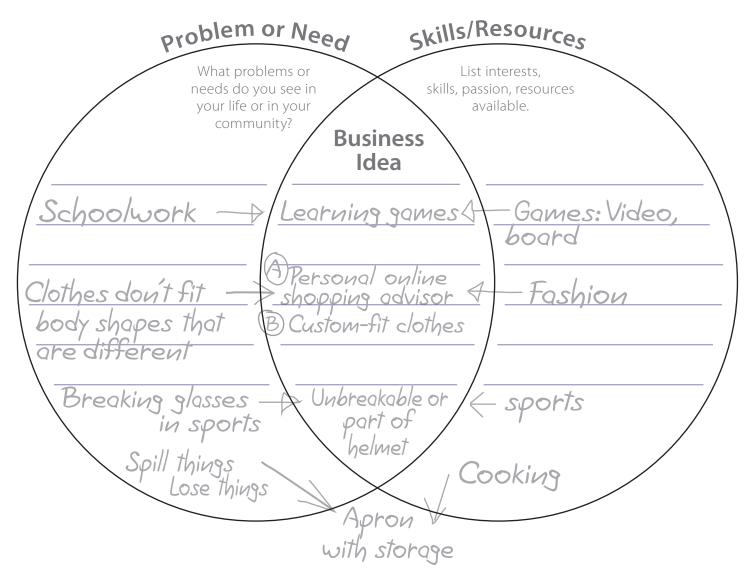
Creativity Confidence/Passion Matrix

GROUP EXERCISE EXAMPLE

Developing a Business Opportunity

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

DETERMINE IF YOUR IDEA IS AN OPPORTUNITY



Successful businesses solve a problem or fill a need



successful business owners do what they love and what they are good at doing.

Is your business idea at the intersection of your skills and customers' needs?

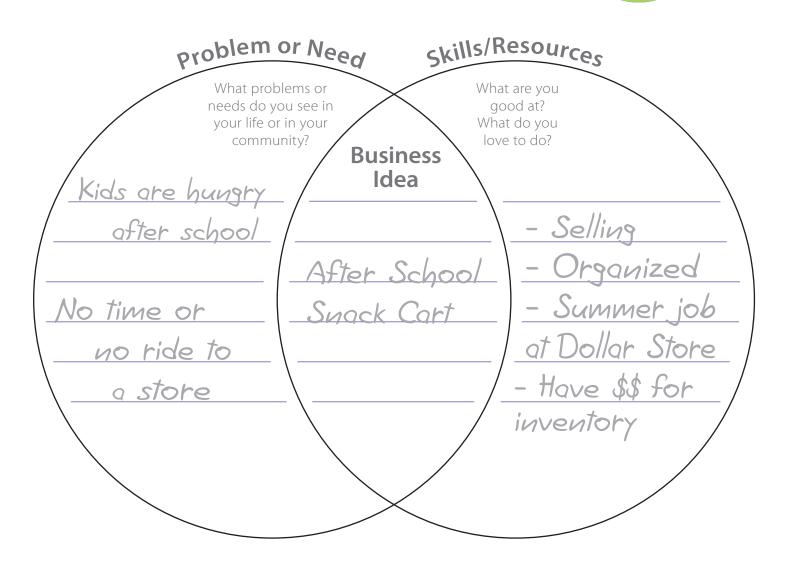
CASE STUDY





DETERMINE IF YOUR IDEA IS AN OPPORTUNITY

Developing a Business Opportunity



Successful businesses solve a problem or fill a need



successful business owners do what they love and what they are good at doing.

Is your business idea at the intersection of your skills and customers' needs?



Business Opportunity continued

Introduce Example Used in Worksheets

The worksheet examples in this section are based on the scenario below. Other sets of worksheet examples are available in the *Blank Worksheets, Forms & Case Studies Toolkit Guide*).

Sam is an organized kid who had a summer job at the Dollar Store. His friends who play sports or stay after school for other activities complain about being hungry. He has a little money saved up and is thinking of starting a business selling snacks.

Putting it Together (Worksheet #2)

The diagram in Worksheet #2 is a classic value proposition matrix used in business. Value proposition is what a product or service uniquely offers to customers. In order to develop the value proposition for the pitch, complete the worksheet matrix by answering the questions below.

Customer

Customer versus Consumer

Does your product or service have a different customer and consumer?

A consumer uses the product or service, a customer pays for it. In the Snack Cart example, the consumers are the classmates but the customers may be parents.

Target customer

Anyone with money can be a customer, but who is *most likely* to buy it? Who is your target customer? Think about what "job" someone is "hiring" your product or service to do.

Solution (Business Opportunity)

What makes the business unique and better than other solutions? In the next module there will be additional opportunity to understand and expand on this concept of *unique competitive advantage*.

Problem

What problem(s) does it solve? Input the relevant problems/needs identified in Worksheet #1 and perhaps expand on them.

Team (You)

How are you best suited to providing this product or service? Input the relevant skills/resources identified in Worksheet #1 and perhaps expand on them.

Putting it Together





COMPLETE THIS TABLE TO CREATE CONTENT FOR THE BODY OF YOUR PITCH

Your Product or Service

Sam's After School Snack Cart

Customer

Who is the target customer? Who is most likely to buy or will be first to buy?

Consumer: kids at my school

Customer: Parents who give kids \$

Team (You)

What special assets or qualities do you possess that make this a good business for you?

- · Available after
- · able to buy snacks in bulk
- · Locker for storage

Problem

What is the customer's problem? Why do they buy?

Kids are hungry after school

No ability or time to go to a store

Solution

How do you *uniquely* solve the problem? What is different and better about your solution compared to other customer choices? Why buy from you?

Convenient-on site Variety of drinks and snacks Pre-order?



Business Opportunity continued

Pitching Activity 2

Pitching Improv

In this exercise, kids are developing and performing pitches with minimal preparation time. Write each of several topics on index cards. Kids draw a card and give a 30- to 90-second pitch on the topic shown.

Topics should be selected based on what is age appropriate for the kids. Examples include:

- your school
- your favorite sport or hobby
- a charitable cause
- your favorite type of pet
- your favorite restaurant
- your favorite food
- your favorite game

The topics could also be chosen to align with a theme of study from the class or program.

Pitch Content and Structure: What Makes a Great Elevator Pitch?

An elevator pitch succinctly and enthusiastically explains what your idea is or what your company does. It should spark interest, be brief, persuasive and compelling. It is important that the message is in some way memorable. Take-aways are the uniqueness and/or advantages of your idea or company. Pitching is a skill that can be applied in many situations. Cite examples such as asking to get a puppy or new computer or later, a job or a promotion. Your pitch should motivate the listener to want to learn more about you and your idea.

Warm-Up and/or Pitching Activity 3

Favorite Cookie

Warm-up: This exercise reinforces the concept of the value proposition. Start by revisiting the idea that successful businesses differentiate from competitors by articulating their value proposition. Ask kids to name their favorite fast food restaurant and why it is better than a competitor. Price? Location? Menu options? Quality?

Next, invite two kids to the front of the room. Explain that they are promoting their favorite cookie. Take turns in the following sequence so both kids have a chance to think of original ideas: Person #1 names one advantage; Person #2 names two advantages. Person #1 names two more advantages; Person #2 names a third advantage. Use the differences between the answers to illustrate that even products in the same space can have unique selling points.

Pitching Activity: List several types of cookies, such as Oreos and fancy bakery cookies. Ask why someone would buy one over another and how much people would pay for each. Have kids each come up with a favorite cookie – one that already exists or an idea for a new one. Give kids two minutes to devise unique competitive advantages. Then have them pitch their cookie ideas.

Main Event

Message Map (Worksheet #3)

Here is one way to structure your ideas for a pitch. Find other ways in Further Resources (to the right). Try several to improve your familiarity with the content. This activity provides a framework for kids to structure their ideas to create an effective 15- to 30-second pitch. Optional – watch the Forbes video that introduces how a message map is used to pitch a business in 15 to 30 seconds.

The Hook Create a catchy phrase to introduce your pitch. It could be a question or statement related to the problem solved by the business.

Unique Competitive Advantages Record these and add details to support them. Looking up statistics to support your claims adds credibility and persuasiveness. **Call To Action** It is important for business pitches to include a way listeners can learn more and buy the product or service. If your business is imaginary, visualize a website or location. Contact method should be appropriate for business type.



Goals

To understand what makes a great pitch and formulate one.

Outcome

Draft pitch script.

FURTHER RESOURCES

Venture Lab

Intro to Entrepreneurship B Pitching A Pitching B

People Rocket

Entrepreneurship Story Spine

PITCH BASICS

- A pitch is 30 to 90 seconds long, so you don't lose the attention of the listener. Every word should be precise; strip out any excess!
- · A pitch is your verbal business card.
- · Your goal is to make the listener more curious about you, your product, service, idea or company and then tell them how they can find out more.

CASE STUDY



Telling Your Story in 15 to 30 Seconds



Your name

Sam

Your business name

Satisfying Sam's Snack Cart



Create a Hook:

What are you selling? Keep it short but informative; 10 to 15 words should be enough. Perhaps it includes the problem your business solves.

Hook - A Compelling Introduction

Sam will satisfy your hunger!



How is your business different and better? These are your Unique Competitive Advantages.

Advantage #1

Advantage #2

Advantage #3

Pre-order

Your favorites

Details

For a longer pitch, add details about each advantage – be specific.

- •On site
- · Open after school
- Can get before or after your program
- Pick what you like-
- · so many choices!
- · Nut-free options
- for you
- · Get it quickly
- Make sure we have it

Call to Action

How can your customer connect with you? If you don't actually have a business, you can pretend, like "yummybrownies.com" or "The Yummy Shop on Main Street."

Find us in the main hallway from 2:30 to 4:30 every day!

Sample Pitch





Satisfying Sam's Snack Cart

Are you hungry after school? Do you participate in sports, drama or other after school activities? Haven't eaten since lunch? Could you use a snack to give you energy to continue your day and perform well after school?

Come to Satisfying Sam's Snack Cart, conveniently located in the main hallway every day and satisfy your hunger!

We are open from 2:30 to 4:30 so you can get a snack before, during or even after your program. We have lots of choices of drinks and snacks, are well-stocked and you can even order the snack or drink of your choice ahead of time so you will be sure we have it.

Pitch Practice

Warm up

Elevator Pitch Essentials (Worksheet #4)

Act out or find video samples in the Toolkit folder online of good and poor pitches and ask kids to identify what is done well and poorly. See how many qualities they can name before you hand out the sheet.

Main Event

Iterative Practice

It is essential to know the material well enough to speak without reading the pitch or seeming to recite from memory. Confidence with the pitch content comes from familiarity as well as practice. One way to build familiarity is to engage in dialog about your idea.

Have kids work in small groups, taking turns to present their pitches and giving constructive feedback to each other. One technique to guide this is using the language "glows" and "grows." Glows are praise and grows are constructive criticisms phrased in a helpful and encouraging way. It's important to establish from the beginning that this is a safe place to make mistakes and practice.

During the critique period, the listeners can ask questions such as: Who is your target customer? What gave you this idea? Why are you excited about this opportunity? What makes your product or service better than competitors'?

Give kids time before the end of the lesson to revise their pitches with any new ideas that emerged in the discussion.



Goals

To improve presentation skills and have kids become confident in delivering their pitch.

Outcome

Confident presentation of pitch.

FURTHER RESOURCES

Venture Lab

Pitching B



Pitch Practice continued

Pitching Activity 4

Pen Exercise

Optional: start by showing the "Milkshake" video from the Toolkit resource folder. This introduces the marketing concept of a customer "hiring" a product or service to perform a certain "job," as in "what job are you hiring that milkshake to do for you?"

Now hold up these pictures* of pens (or use actual pens) and answer the following questions for each one.

- · What job does each pen do uniquely well?
- · What features demonstrate this?
- Why is it different and better than other solutions like it?
- Who is the target market for this product? Who cares about these differences?









Next, instruct kids to come up with another type of pen (existing or imaginary.) For example, a pen with a built in LED for writing in the dark. Have each kid describe in 15 to 30 seconds why their pen is different and better and who would care about these differences, using the guidelines in the instructions to accommodate larger groups of kids.

* A larger size picture of the pens is available in the Blank Worksheets, Forms & Case Studies Toolkit Guide.

WORKSHEET #4 — PITCH ANALYSIS

Elevator Pitch Essentials

30 to 90 seconds long Verbal business card Goal – Make them more curious and then stop



Two "PIPES" to a great pitch:

Projection, Inflection, Pace, Eye Contact, Stance

Projection Speak clearly, articulate, and speak loud enough.

Inflection Vary the tone and emphasize key words.

Talk at a normal speed for you, not too slow, not too fast. Pace

Look at the audience or individual but don't be creepy. **Eye Contact**

Stand straight, use hand gestures. Stance

People, Information, Practice, Enthusiasm, Style

People Know your audience.

Information Make sure your content is clear and concise.

Practice Be prepared; practice is critical to a successful pitch.

Enthusiasm If you are not excited, the audience will not be either.

> Smile occasionally; it is a universal indicator that draws people in, projects positivity, and is encouraging in

building a relationship with the customer.

Be yourself. Be sincere. Be engaging and personable. **S**tyle



Warm up

Practice, practice, practice

Kids can work alone, in pairs or in small groups to polish the presentations. If technology is available, kids can make test videos of themselves or each other.

Coaching: Helping the Speaker

Having the speaker practice their pitch in front of you is the best way to help them. Do remind them to practice at home in front of a mirror, with a friend or parent or using their phone. Time the presentation to make sure it's approximately 30 to 90 seconds and adjust the content if necessary.

Remind the speaker to stand up straight and look at the judge or the camera, both of which give the impression of confidence and credibility.

Remember that the content and delivery of the pitch are the most important parts. Coach kids on this and try to get them to just talk to you. Be encouraging, approachable, and friendly. Most kids are nervous and your real job is to make them comfortable telling you their amazing idea.

Coaches can be another facilitator, a peer or near-peer, volunteer or parent. Coaches should be patient, have good rapport with the kids, and make them feel at ease and confident about presenting.

Main Event

Live Presentation Preparation

Filming is a great way for kids to practice and improve their pitches even if you are having kids pitch live to judges. A live pitch is a performance and like a play, it must be practiced.

Filming

Filming Pitches - How to Film a Pitch

Movie success depends on many factors, including the director and producer. The kids may be great screenwriters and actors but if the producer, director or camera crew does poorly, the movie may be unsuccessful. The sections below offer guidance and best practices for filming.

Before Filming

Select your device for filming (video camera, iPad, smart phone, etc.) The day before you will be filming, test the device to confirm you know exactly how to



Goals

Coach the speakers for either live or recorded presentations and record the videos if using that format.

Outcome

Finished video or preparation for live presentation.

 necklist: ELPING THE SPEAKERS
Practice
Time the presentation
Remind kids to stand up straight, have eye contact
Use a key points "cue card" (optional)
Be encouraging with

Coaching and Filming continued

use it and that it is working correctly. Make sure the batteries are charged and you have all the cords needed to plug it in.

If possible, use a tripod as this makes for a smooth, no-shake video. If a tripod is not available, be careful to hold filming device away from the body so your breathing isn't audible.

Know and understand the memory capacity of your device. Will you be storing the videos on a memory chip? If so, how much capacity does it have? Will you be storing the video in the Cloud (e.g., Google Drive or Dropbox) or on the device itself? Have a plan for getting the files stored and entered after filming.

If possible, have a second (back-up) device ready. Bring it with you for filming.

Reserve a quiet space for filming. This can be a classroom that is not being used or even a closet or the corner of a hallway. You do not need a lot of space but you do need decent illumination and acoustics – echoes and shadows can be distracting for the judges.

Filming Day

If filming multiple kids on one device, use a roster to manage the order of filming so it's easier to rename the video files later and to keep track of who has completed their video.

If possible, have a coach available to prepare each kid "on deck" before filming. Encourage practice in front of the camera before filming. Instruct the kids when to start and where to look. Have the speaker write key words on paper and tape them to the front of the camera or tripod, just under the lens of your filming device. This will allow the speaker to glance at their notes while still looking into the camera. Think of the notes as "cue cards." You may need to remind the speakers by using hand signals to look at the camera and not to focus only on the paper. Many kids like knowing that the summary sheet is there but won't always use it. It is a nice crutch if needed.

During practice run, time the presentation to make sure it's approximately 30 to 90 seconds.

Test the sound and lighting of the film by reviewing a sample video. Set the camera at eye level or slightly above. Stay in focus. Avoid zooming in and out.

If you decide to allow retakes, make careful notes so you know which is the best version. Even better, delete the mistakes so there's no need for later review, which can be very time consuming.



•	Checklist:
•	BEFORE FILMING
•	
•	Test device
•	Charge batteries
•	Cords
•	Tripod
•	Check device memory
	☐ Know how to store files
•	Back-up device, if possible
•	Reserve quiet location
•	Check lighting of location
•	Instruct film crew
•	Secure and train coach
•	FILMING DAY
•	Class roster
•	Timing device
•	Tape for "cue card"



Art Directing

Have the speaker stand in front of a solid wall such as a black board or a classroom wall. Remove any posters or notes on the wall behind the speaker. Ideally, there should be nothing in the frame of the picture except the speaker. This includes cords, clocks, posters, door frames, light switches, etc. This is not always possible, but try to make the picture frame only the speaker.

Make sure that there is even lighting and that no funny shadows fall on or surround the speaker.

For sound, make sure that the kid speaks in a normal voice and the camera is picking it up well. Be aware of and avoid distracting background noise, such as band practice or thumps from the gym.

If you are filming outdoors, make sure that you consider what is in the background, the lighting, and avoid any extra noises that might be picked up on the video. Avoid direct sunlight and glare. All of these can be distracting to the judges.

Reflection

Reflection is an important part of the learning experience. If the culmination of the pitch program is a live pitching event, make sure there is an opportunity to reflect on the experience afterward.

The kids have just had a chance to try on the entrepreneurial mindset. This is great training for other entrepreneurial endeavors or programs. Either in open discussion or by journaling, take a little time to consider the following questions with them:

What did you like about the Pitch Challenge? What did you learn? What did you do well? What would you do differently next time? How might you use these skills in the future? If you started a business now, what might it be?



Checklist: ART DIRECTION
Solid wall–no clutter
Even lighting
Sound check/noise check
Outdoor location check

Notes

