

Figure 3

color may improve attention and learning and allow the student with disabilities a chance to use a customized program that has the same popular characters that his classmates may be using.

The PowerPoint menus (Figure 1) provide an array of possibilities. The Format menu offers choices for font and background color. Inserting graphics and video is done by using the Insert menu or by “cutting and pasting.” The Slide Show menu controls the Action Buttons, Animation and Slide Transitions. These “ooh-and-aah” features may engage some learners but completely overwhelm others. With PowerPoint, you are free to show unrestrained enthusiasm for the student engaged by highly animated activities, or keep the activity at its simplest for a student requiring minimal stimulation.

What will they hear?

Sounds can be added via the Insert menu (Figure 1) or by assigning an action to a particular item on the slide (for instance, clicking on a picture to play music). PowerPoint utilizes sound files in the .wav format. You can find a staggering number on the Web, or you can record your own using the Windows Sound Recorder. It is located by going to Programs/Accessories/Entertainment/Sound Recorder (see Figure 2). You will need a built-in or external microphone. PowerPoint also contains an internal recording utility called Narration Recording found in the Slide Show menu.

How will they experience it?

Each element on a slide can be animated, play sound, hyperlink etc. Let’s look at how to put several of those elements on the following slide (Figure 3). The slide contains six elements. The main picture, three invisible boxes, the text box and an action button. The picture of the frog and fish does not do anything special. It is simply pasted onto the slide. Three separate boxes were drawn - one over the fish, one over the frog and one over the fly on the frog’s tongue. The text is simply typed

into the text box. And finally, there is an action button.

Let’s look at what makes each of these elements special

To make an invisible box perform an action (in this case each plays a different sound), you first draw a box that covers the part of the picture you’re focusing on. Once the box is drawn, by right clicking on it and choosing Format Object, you change the color of the box to “no fill” and set the line width to “no line” (see Figure 4).

By assigning actions to each of these boxes, we create an interactive slide that encourages exploration. Right click on a particular box and select Action Settings (Figure 5) to choose the option that meets your need. Mouse click requires that the actual mouse button be depressed, Mouse Over only requires that the mouse cursor pass over the area for the action to occur. The next step would be to specify what action you want to occur - in this instance the assigned action is to play a wav sound file called fly.wav.

Adding video or movie clips

Digital video movie segments can be inserted into a PowerPoint slide and then displayed in the slide show mode. You should be aware that video clips are usually very large and can significantly increase the size of your presentation.

The first step in adding video is to download a selected clip. To add a video clip to a slide, select “Movies and Sounds” and then

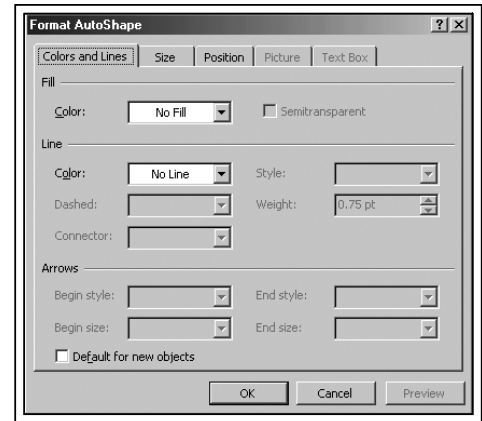


Figure 4

“Movie from File...” from the Insert menu and locate the clip that you wish to add. Once the video clip has been inserted, it will appear on the slide. You can then resize it or reposition it, however, you must click on it first to select it. Notice that the selected object will have selection squares on all sides.

Digital movies come in a variety of formats. The most popular movie formats for PowerPoint are QuickTime and AVI. AVI is the default video format for Windows while QuickTime is the default video format for the Mac. MPEG files will also play in the Windows version of PowerPoint. Clicking on the picture when you run the Slide Show starts the video. In order for sound and video files to play correctly, the original media files must be located in the same directory or folder as your PowerPoint presentation.

Using Slide Transitions

Typically the Slide Transition menu (see Figure 6), found in the Slide Show menu assigns a movement or fading effect to each change of slide and allows you to determine how quickly slides advance in an automatic advancing presentation. This is also where you control how each slide, a group of slides or the entire presentation advances and by what means. In addition, you can assign one of PowerPoint’s built-in sounds or another sound of your choosing to play when the slide appears. For example, if a slide is to begin playing a song, you would choose Sound from the dialog box and then specify Other to locate the sound file you want to play when that slide appears in your show. For as long as you want that sound clip to continue playing, you would set each slide to advance automatically after a preset

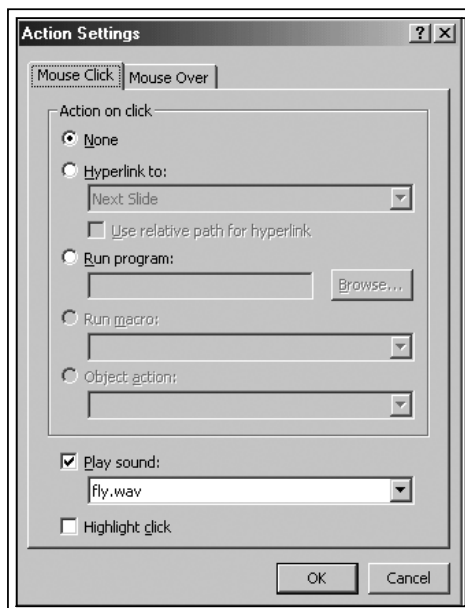


Figure 5

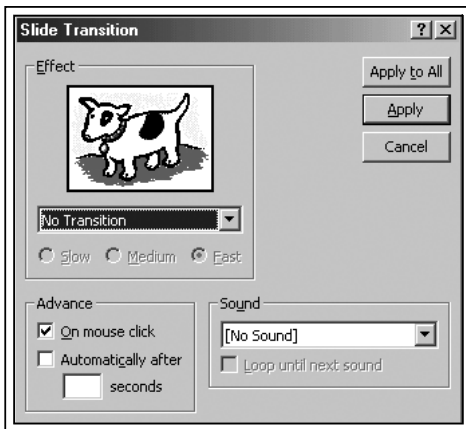


Figure 6

amount of time. You also have the option of setting the choice of Stop Previous Sound as a transition effect for a slide.

In order to keep random mouse clicks from automatically advancing your slide show, deselect the option "On mouse click." If you make this choice you must then create an action button that will advance your slide when you click on it, or you must set the slide to advance automatically after a predetermined amount of time.

Adding a box for text entry

Under the View menu choose Toolbars and select Control Toolbox (Figure 7) to access the feature for adding a text box to your show. This is a feature that allows

a student to fill in one word or add a paragraph.

Select the "abc" box and then draw your text box on the PowerPoint slide. To add enter-key and multi-line capabilities to the text box, you must make some programming changes. While the text box is highlighted, click on the Properties icon on the top left of the Control toolbar. Choose the "categorized" tab and, under "behavior", click on "enter key behavior" and switch it to true from the drop-down menu. Also under behavior switch "multi-line" to true, to allow the typist to enter more than one line of text. To change font size, select "font" from list. It expands to the font menu, allowing you to make your selections. Close the Properties box when you have finished. When you run your slide show, a student can add text right to the slide he/she is viewing for a fill-in-the-blank effect.

PowerPoint as a launcher

PowerPoint can be used to launch other programs or Web sites, or even to open other PowerPoint shows. In order to do this, you create a slide with one element for each item you want to launch. For example, you might paste in clip art that represents the Web site you have chosen. Right click on the item, choose Action Settings and

then Hyperlink to? from the dialog box. In the drop-down menu choose URL, and either type or paste in the exact URL of the Web site you have chosen. You can use the same method for launching other programs or PowerPoint shows.



Figure 7

Endless possibilities

PowerPoint has proven to be effective for many special needs applications. I have used it to create electronic storybooks and to mock-up a communication board with Boardmaker symbols and a touch screen. Whether you want to create a science activity or drill and practice vocabulary, the PowerPoint possibilities are endless.

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PowerPoint Tips

PowerPoint tutorials

www.actden.com/ppaitt.acadiau.ca/tutorials/PowerPoint97/
www.quasar.ualberta.ca/edpy202/tutorial/PowerPoint/PowerPoint.htm

Clip art

classroomclipart.com/
www.kidsdomain.com/clip/index.html

On-line Stories

www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/stories.html
www.ipl.org

Sounds

Nature sounds

www.zooish.com
www.naturesongs.com/
www.tpwd.state.tx.us/adv/kidspage/sounds.htm
members.tripod.com/Thryomanes/AnimalSounds.html
 Movies, television, Commercials
www.wavcentral.com
www.dailywav.com
 Multi-topic sound sites
www.ultimatesoundarchive.com/

Video

PowerPoint 97 for Windows plays video files in both AVI and MPEG format. I generally search for the topic I want plus "AVI file" or "MPEG file." Download by right clicking on the video or link and choose "Save as target..." If you

wanted video about foxes you could go to: www.foxforest.com/movies.html and insert a movie onto a PowerPoint slide.

Search Engines that let you search specifically for sound or video files

multimedia.lycos.com/
www.altavista.com
www.hotbot.com
 How to make your own wav files
www.slonet.org/~rloomis/makewavs.html