



TEACHING TIBET

How did you first learn about Tibet?

Think back to the first time that you learned about the Tibetan situation. How did you hear about Tibet? Was it through a movie, documentary film, reading a book, hearing a speech? Was it the firsthand account of someone who'd traveled there, or was it through the stories of a Tibetan refugee or ex-political prisoner? Perhaps you saw a cultural performance or religious demonstration or heard the Dalai Lama speak.

What was it that moved you to get involved?

Most people get involved with the Tibetan situation because they were moved or inspired to do so. We can help get more people involved in the movement by making powerful presentations that move people to want to be involved and make a difference.

How can you set up a presentation?

We need to create opportunities for ourselves to go out and give presentations on the Tibetan situation. Talk to professors and teachers of relevant subjects like World Religions courses or Asian Studies, and ask them if you can make a presentation to their class about Tibet. Even a short talk can have a big impact! Contact local high schools and middle schools, ask to speak to the World Affairs or History teachers and let them know you are available to give a presentation on Tibet to their students.

What makes a powerful presentation?

- **PERSONALIZE** the story. If you are Tibetan say so and tell a personal story or the story of one of your family members. If you aren't Tibetan tell a personal story of your involvement and/or why you care.
- **INSPIRE** people with stories of Tibetan resistance and courage. For example: tell the story of Palden Gyatso who spent 33 years in prison for his political beliefs, and even after he was released, continued to fight.
- Make the Tibetan situation **RELEVANT** to your audience. For example, if you are talking to children focus on the story of the Panchen Lama, if you are talking to college students you could focus on the story of Dhondup Wangchen and the lack of basic freedoms in Tibet today.
- **EMPOWER** your audience by telling them they can make a difference and then give an example of a successful grassroots campaign like the Olympics campaign, the World Bank, or the commutation of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's sentence.
- Use **VISUAL AIDS!** Give people something to look at even if it is a simple photograph or map. For example, take a Tibetan flag along and have it at the front of the room. When you describe the situation in Tibet today point to the flag and tell the audience how simply possessing this flag in Tibet is grounds for imprisonment, torture and even death.

Tips and helpful hints for your presentation:

- **Know your audience!** Design your presentation specifically for the age group, number of people and background/interest of the people you will be speaking with.
- **Know your material!** You don't have to know everything about Tibet to give a presentation but you should know what you're there to talk about. If you are asked a question you don't know the answer to – be honest! Tell the audience that you don't know the answer and give them suggestions on where they can find out. Know some useful websites/books to direct people to.
- **Don't use too many numbers/statistics.** This can cause your audience's attention to wander, especially young ones. You also don't want to get caught up in questionable facts.
- **Always have an action on hand** for people to participate in. Hand out campaign postcards or petitions and ask people to sign them right there. This will increase the likelihood of their future involvement.
- **Pass around a sign up sheet** so that people can get more information
- **Always leave time for questions!**

TOOLS & VISUAL AIDS:

****For recommendations, see the Activist Toolbox at studentsforafreetibet.org/toolbox*

- Films (documentary & feature films)
- Photos (large ones to display at the front or smaller ones to hand around)
- Slides (a short Power Point presentation can go far to help your presentation)
- Map of the region (many people are not sure precisely where Tibet is!)
- Books
- Book/Website list (pass around at the end of the presentation)

ALWAYS TRY TO SHOW A FILM

Even if you only have a short time to make your presentation you can still show a film/video. Choose your favorite scene or an informative/moving clip from a film and show it –even if it's only 5-10 minutes. This will help you tell the story of Tibet and increase the impact of your presentation on your audience. Leaving Fear Behind is highly recommended, and is only 25 minutes!

Don't hesitate to contact us at the office if you need help or advice on making a presentation!

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