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# Introduction

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Congratulations on getting a fancy new computer for your classroom. It's sitting there, all set up and ready to go. Of course, it's loaded to the gills with software, and you've heard it can do everything but tap-dance on the table. Naturally, you're excited about this new resource, but to be truthful, you're also a little anxious! You peek at your computer during the day, wondering how you'll find the time in your already overcrowded schedule to learn all about these programs so that you can use them with your students.

Of course, it's not like you've never been around a computer. After all, they've been around awhile. However, it's been a fitful, sporadic relationship, and you've occasionally experienced your share of frustration.

Now you're determined to get up to speed and keep up with technology. *PowerPoint* is installed on your machine and you know it would be useful in the classroom. You're anxious to get started, but where do you begin? How nice it would be if a knowledgeable colleague magically appeared and gave you the lowdown on what works best.

That's where we come in! Think of us as personal guides who will outfit you with the right gear as you start your journey and then stay with you to help you stay on track and reach your destination. We're here to give you knowledge which will build your confidence and make the whole process as easy, fun, and painless as possible. We promise to be there at every point with help and encouragement.

# What is PowerPoint?

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You've heard a little about *PowerPoint*—enough to know that it can help you create a presentation. This is true—*PowerPoint* is an integrated presentations package. What this means is that *PowerPoint* comes with a whole bag of tricks rolled up into one program. In other words, it gives you the tools not only to make presentation slides but also to outline your talk and generate speaker's notes and audience handouts.

This might sound complicated. How in the world can a person do all that without losing his or her mind? Don't worry; it turns out to be very easy. One of *PowerPoint*'s best and most endearing features is the way it lets you easily and quickly do several things at once. You will design slides, work on your outline, and write notes and handouts without blinking an eye. It's a very natural process. You just have to choose from five different views of your presentation.

As if that weren't enough, *PowerPoint* also gives you three wizards that help you outline your content, choose slide layouts and create a unifying design for your talk. The nice thing is that you can easily use these tools without knowing a lot about *PowerPoint*. And you can get good results.

And there are even more ways to use *PowerPoint* once you get into a classroom. You can expand its definition and think of it as a learning tool. Students can use it to extract knowledge into an outline, isolating only the most important details. In other words, they can use it to analyse content. Students who can take good notes and write outlines will have gained valuable higher learning skills.