Presenting your work to young audiences

Lucía de la Riva Pérez
Postdoc CMMI, DoLS (2008 – 2011)
MSc in Science Communication (at the moment)
What, to whom, where?

- Face to face events (talks, lectures, workshops)
- Children and teenagers
- Contexts:
  - Imperial Outreach: School visits, demonstration lectures at Imperial, Open days, Reach out lab
    http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/outreach
  - Independent outreach – your own initiative
  - Science Festivals: talks, workshops, stands
    http://www.britishscienceassociation.org/web/ScienceinSociety
Why matters?

- Good for them:
  - Opportunity to interact with real scientists and hear about real science
  - Educational tool: it helps them learn about, consider and question scientific issues
  - Opportunity to understand the benefits that science brings to society
  - Inspirational: science as a career choice
Why matters?

And good for you:

- It develops your communication skills
- It can lead to new perspectives on your research
- It can reinvigorate your own interest in what you are doing
- It boosts your job satisfaction
First thing to do, ask yourself:

- What’s your audience? How old are they?
- What do you want them to get from your event?
- What activities are going to work best with your audience?
  - The more interactive the better, but...
    - It depends on your particular research, the size of the group, and the resources
- What are the resources, and how many people are going to help you?
- What do you feel comfortable doing?
DON’T

- Don’t underestimate their capabilities to follow you and understand what you say
- Don’t think that being authoritarian is the way to catch their attention
DO

- Be enthusiastic and passionate!
- Be sympathetic
- Contextualise your work and make it relevant to them
- The younger, the fewer ideas you should convey
- Make it two-ways, but then...
- Be open and ready to unexpected comments
- Invest time in adapting images and graphs to comprehensible texts
DO

- Use analogies
- If demos, practise before hand!
- Check and double check that you have everything you need
- Discuss your event with the teachers, especially when preparing your first events
Thanks for listening and good luck!