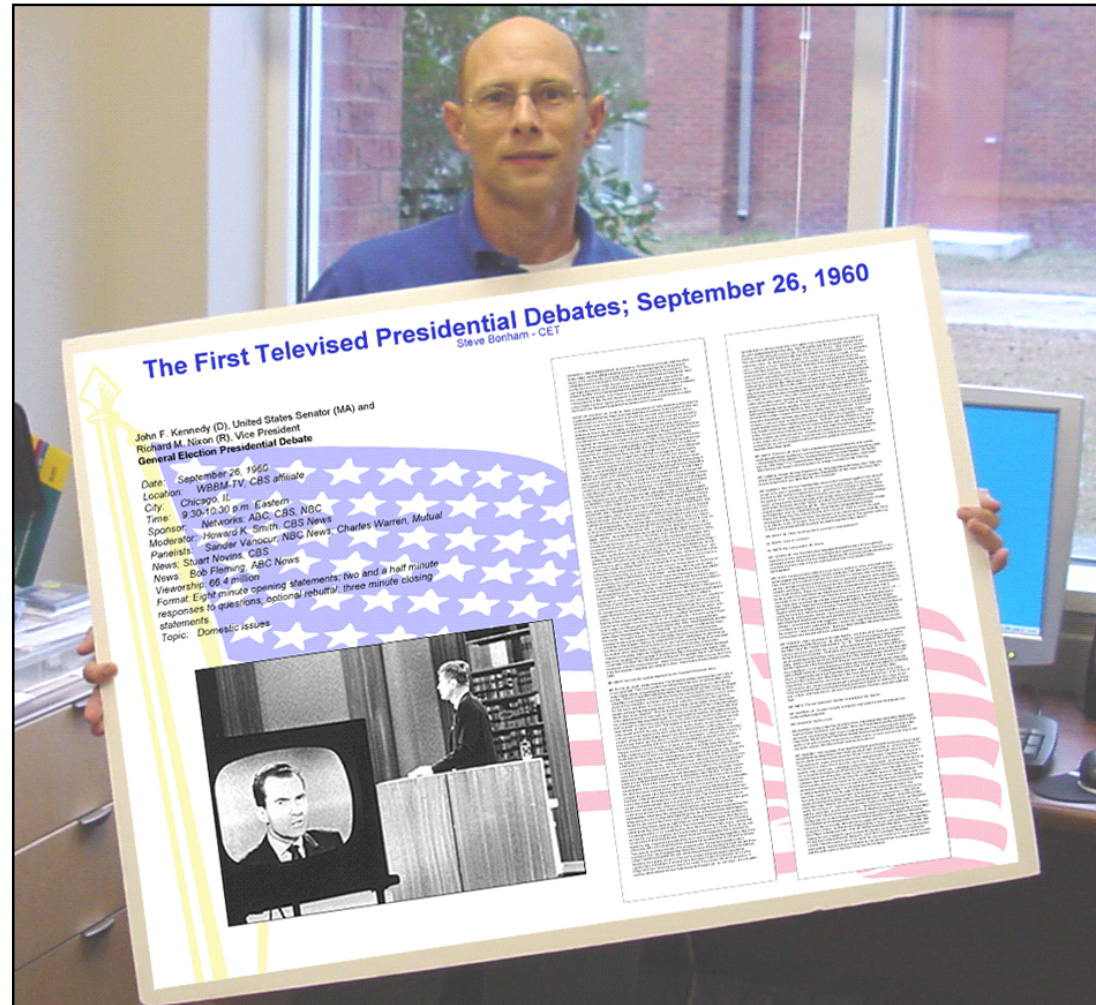


How to Create a Poster with PowerPoint

Steve Bonham
Center for Excellence in Teaching



Final output of this project

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Hopefully you already use PowerPoint for creating presentations, right? GOOD! If not- You should look into taking our workshop entitled "Creating Desktop Presentations using Powerpoint 2000 - Introduction."

If you are a PPT user already - great. You may learn some new tricks here. This is a "work in progress." If you find errors or have suggestions for improvement (or if my instructions strand you somewhere along the way) please let me know. I will use your feedback to make this better for future users. You can e-mail me at sbonham@georgiasouthern.edu

Thanks in Advance,
Steve Bonham

The Final Product ----->

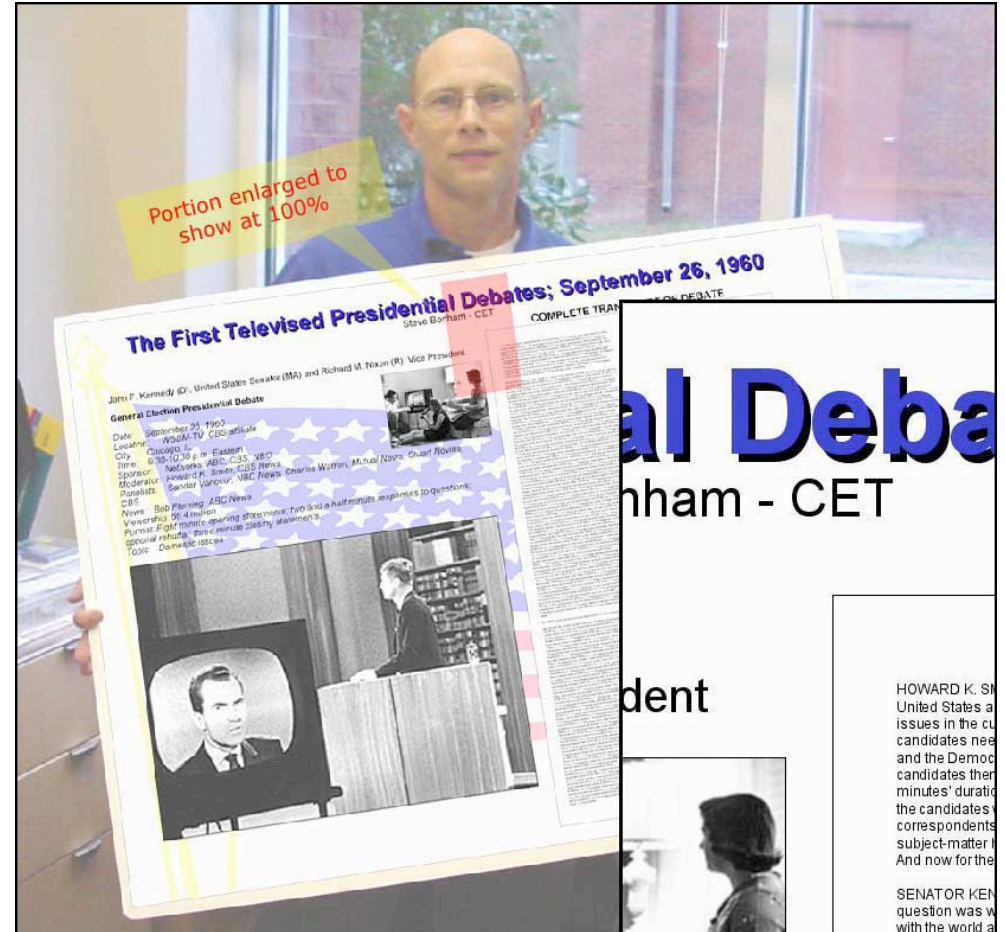
OVERVIEW

The descriptions, illustrations, and screen snapshots that follow guide you through the process of creating a one slide PowerPoint presentation. You will learn to:

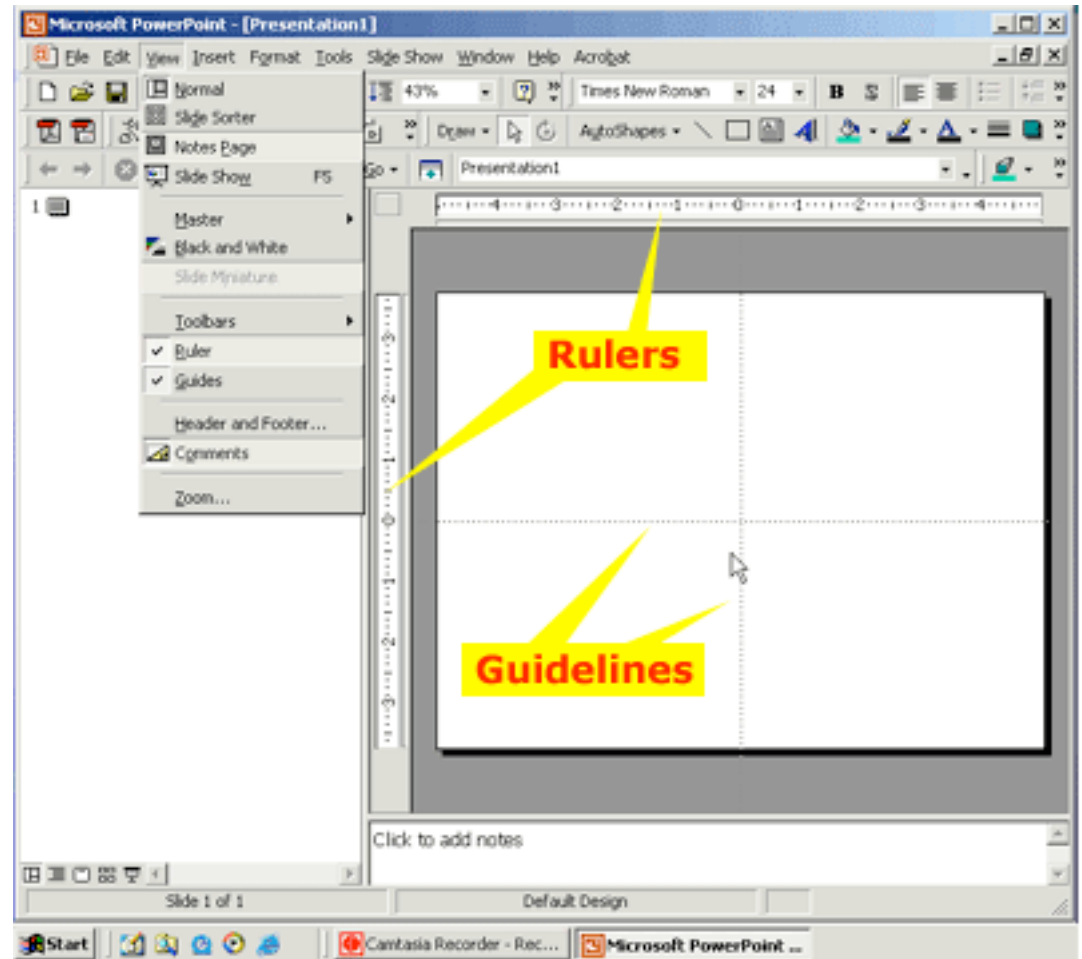
set-up the page to the appropriate dimensions

use layout tools rarely used in creating computer presentations

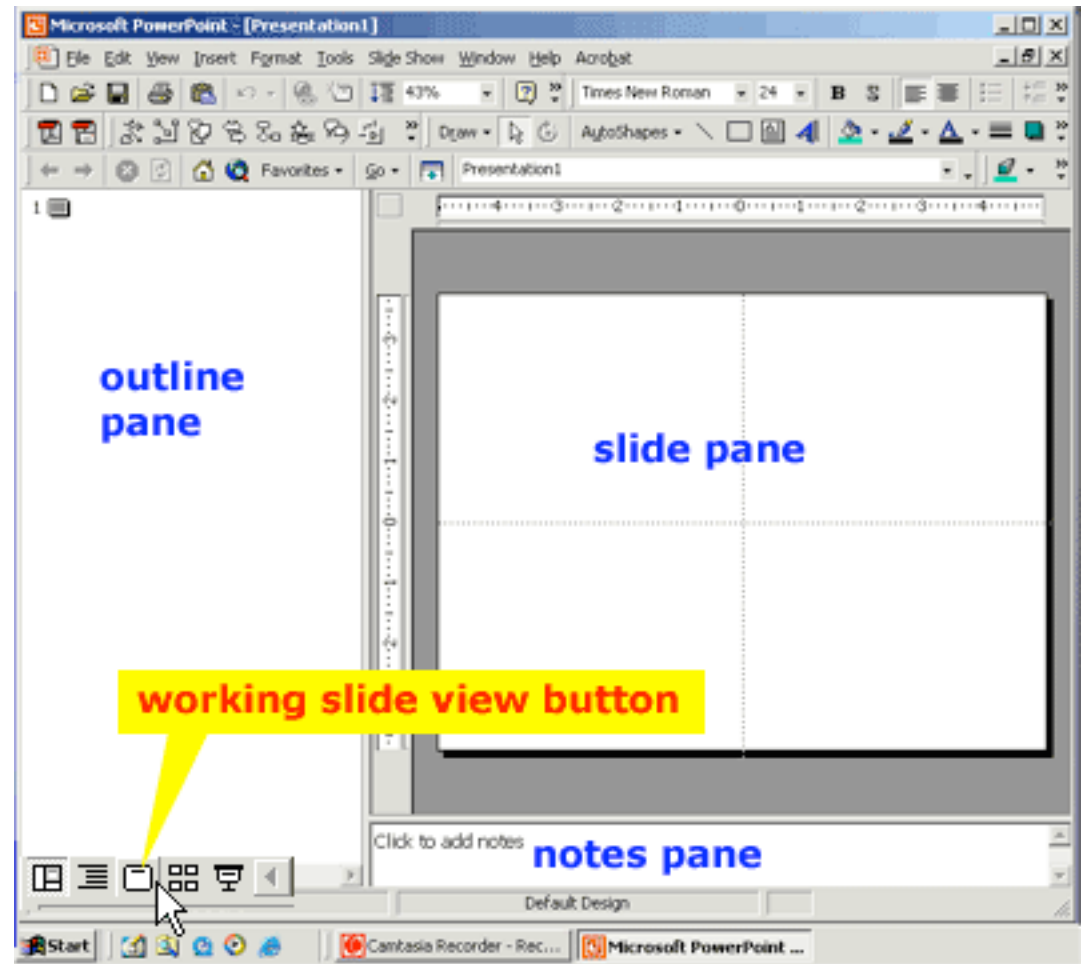
format text and text boxes so that the results are legible and heighten interest



1. There are two viewing aids that are not ordinarily visible in PowerPoint; the ruler and the guides. To display them select each in turn from the View menu. If either item is NOT checked on the View menu; Select: View > Ruler and/or select: View > Guides



2. You'll need as much "screen real estate" as possible when designing a poster. The default view in PowerPoint is the "hybrid" view where the outline, slide and speakers notes panes are all accessible. Click the "working slide" view button to maximize the slide pane.



3. Okay- that's better.

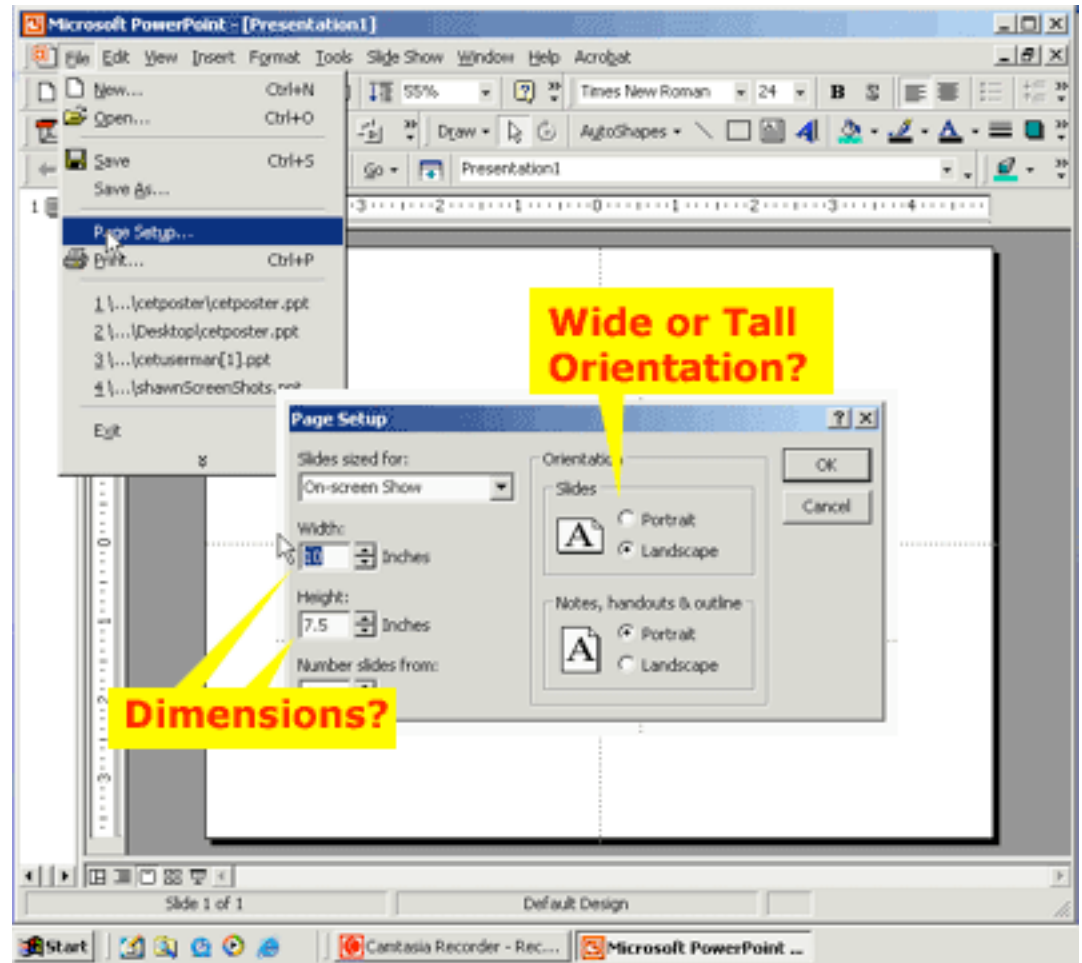
Now for page set-up...

Select: File > Page Setup...

The CET's poster plotter uses a roll of paper 36" wide. So that is the maximum for either the height or width of your poster.

The default PowerPoint slide is 10" wide by 7.5" tall. But PowerPoint offers up to 56" of width/height maximum. The standard poster size is 36" x 48". Choose the tall (portrait) or wide (landscape) orientation desired in the slide orientation area.

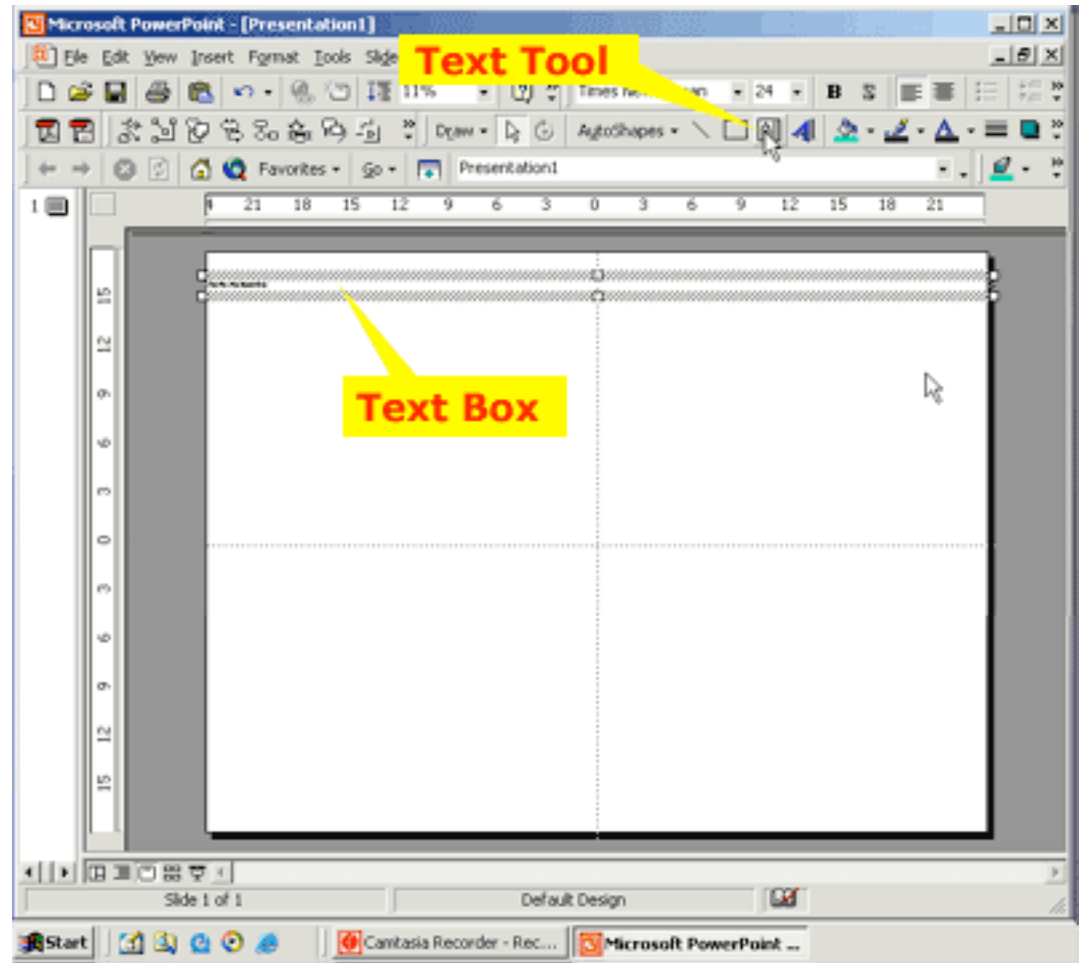
Check with your conference organizers about the poster display area and the orientation [tall (portrait) or wide (landscape)] option preferred and plan accordingly.



4. Select the text tool.

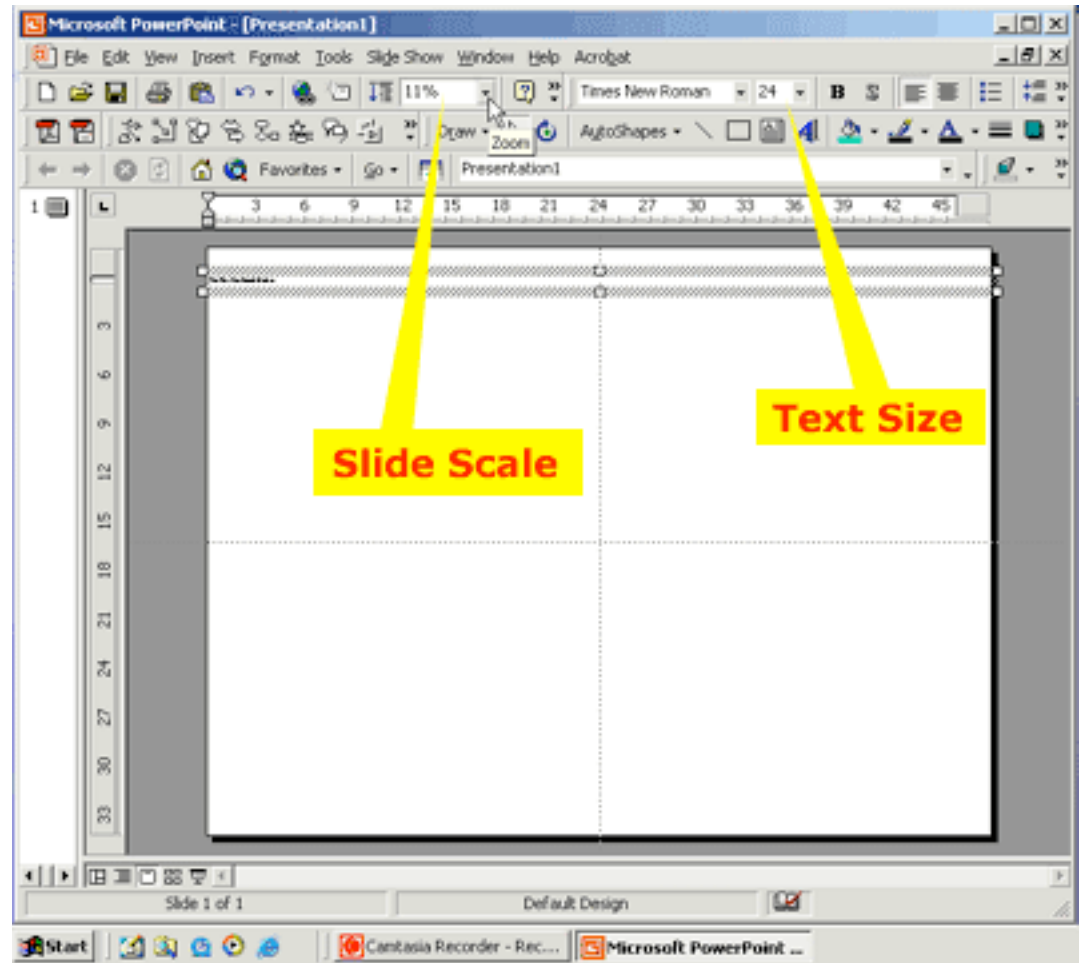
Then click-drag the I-beam cursor within the working slide area to create a text box.

Type the title for your poster. It will be so tiny you won't be able to read it. That's okay. We'll increase the text size, and adjust color, alignment, etc. of the title later.



5. The reason you cannot read the text is because we've made the slide so large (when we changed the page set-up). Unless you are lucky enough to have a 48" monitor, PowerPoint has scaled the image to fit.

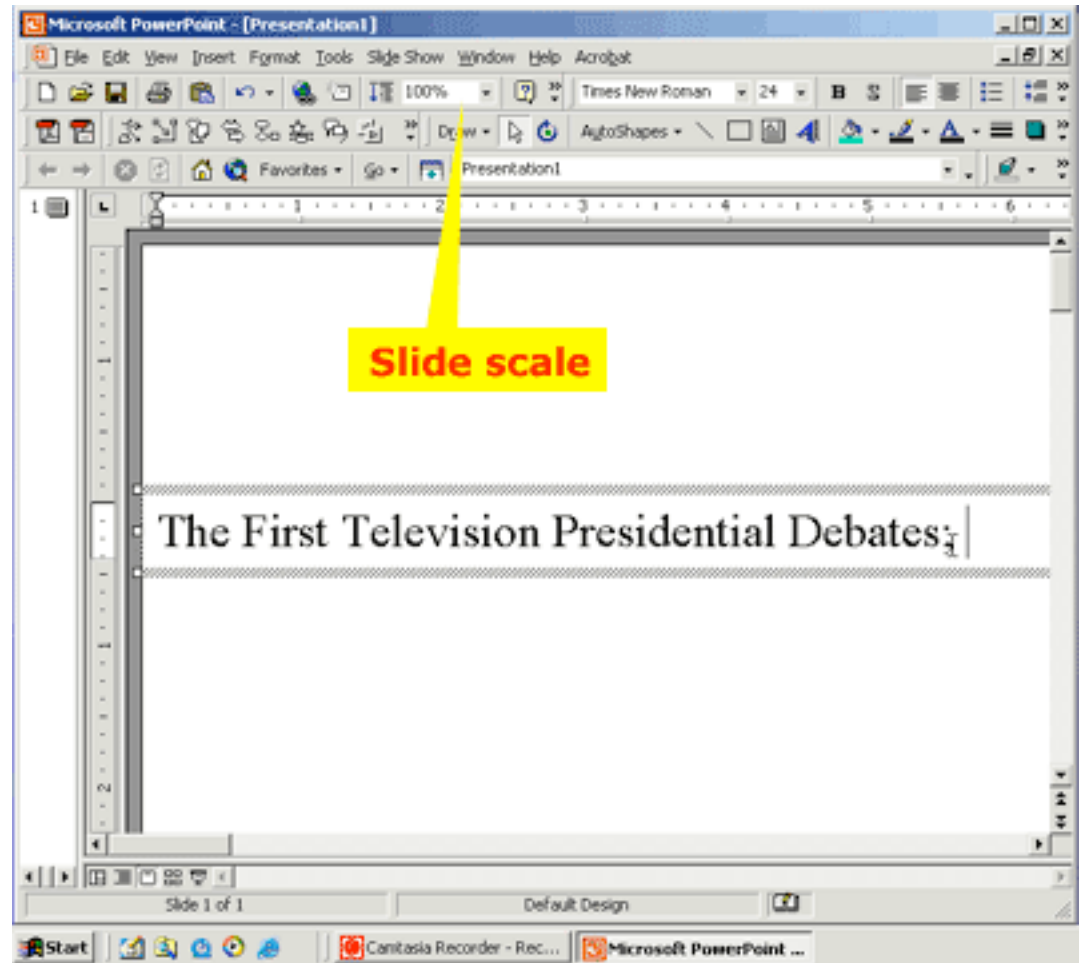
Look at the slide scale. The slide is shown at 11% of its true size. The text you typed is 24 point but it looks more like 3 point! Since 3 point text cannot be displayed the text is "Greeked." That is - some pixels representing text appear in the area so you can see that something IS there.



6. How big is the text really?

Select 100% from the slide scale pulldown and you can see the true size of the text- BUT then you won't see very much of the rest of the poster!

Select "Fit" from the Slide scale pulldown again to see the entire slide. Notice that the scale shows a percentage again after you do so.



7. Let's increase the size of the text.

24 point text will not make an impressive title. With either the text selected (highlighted) or the text box selected, choose a larger text size from the text size pulldown (enlarged here). There are 72 points to an inch. Let's see how large 1 inch text appears.

NOTE!

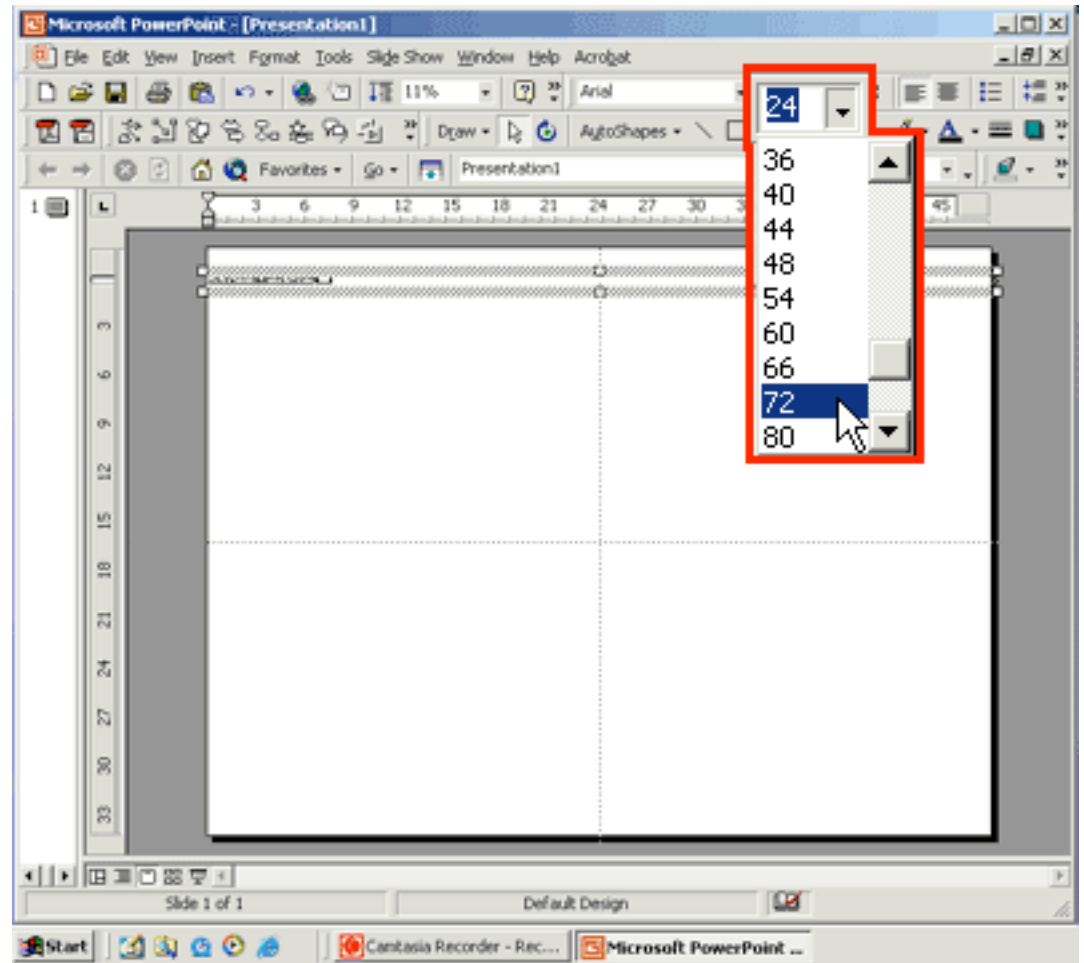
If nothing changes you probably did NOT have the text or the text box selected!

To modify text you have to:

- a.) Get its attention!
- b.) "Command" it (via menus or keyboard shortcuts).

Some refer to this as the "Hey you, Do this!" protocol.

To get a slide element's attention you must "select" it. There are several ways to select a slide element and there are telltale signs to indicate the "state" of the element. First let's look at the first state of PowerPoint text as shown on the next page.



State 1 depicts "de-selected" text. Neither the text in the box or the text box is active. In this state you cannot copy or paste data or move the text box.

In state 2 the cursor has been clicked within the text box. The text box is "active" but neither the text within the text box or the text box itself is "selected." In this state you could add additional text to the text box.

In state 3 the cursor has been click-dragged across a portion of the text within the text box. This text (highlighted in blue) can be copied, cut or modified (font, size, color, alignment, etc.).

In state 4 all of the text within the text box is selected. This can be accomplished by click-dragging across all the text or by clicking within the text box and then selecting Edit > Select All from the menus. This text can be copied, cut or modified.

In state 5 the pointer (arrow) has been clicked upon the border of the text box. Not the dotted pattern is different from the diagonally striped pattern in the text boxes in states 2-4. In this state the text can be modified (font, size, color, alignment, etc.) but also the text box can be modified (box fill color, border, position, width & height).

1 The Title of my Poster **nothing selected**

2 The Title of my Poster | **cursor active in text box but nothing selected**

3 The Title of my Poster **some text selected within text box**

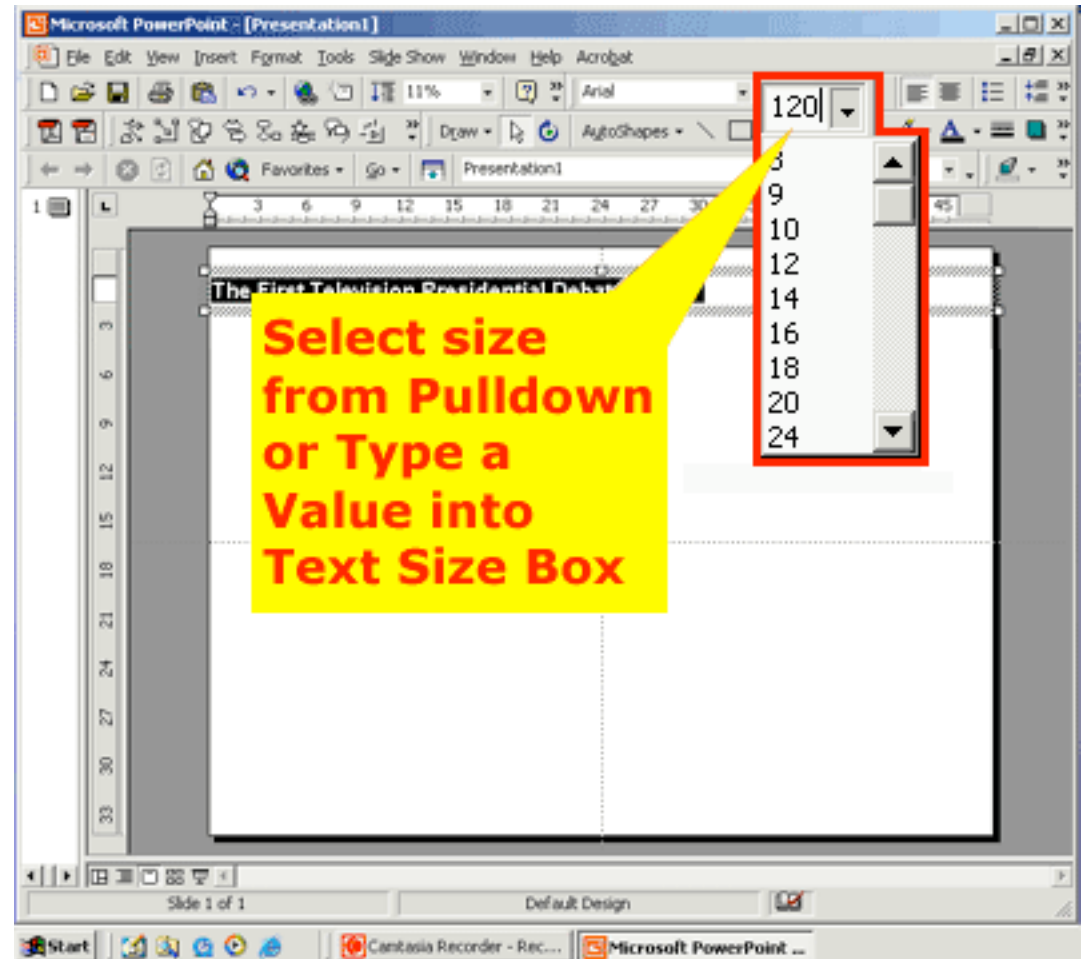
4 The Title of my Poster **all text selected within text box**

5 The Title of my Poster **entire text box selected- note border pattern of text box**

8. Okay- 72 point text looks pretty LARGE- but could it be larger?

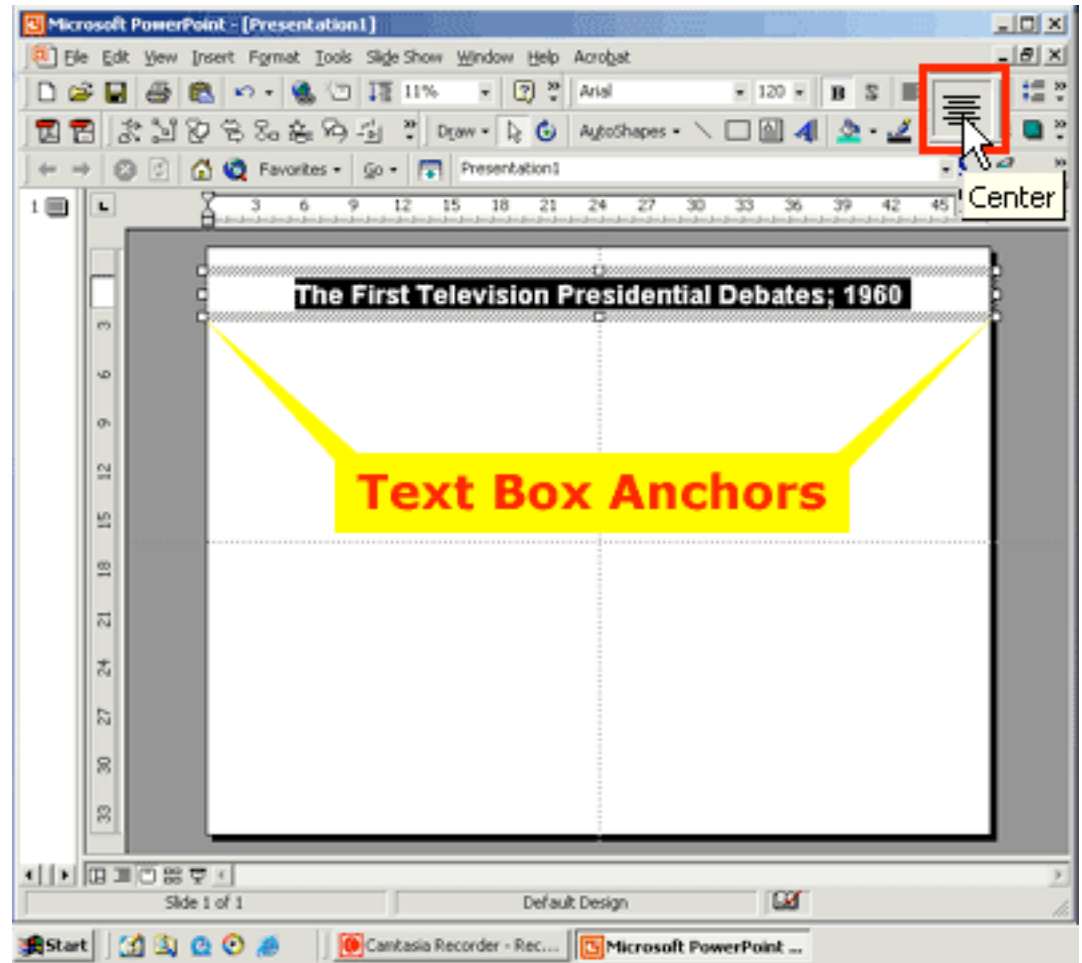
Sure! You can select a size up to 96 points from the text size pulldown-- **BUT** you can type a point value into the text size box (see the box containing 120?). The limit is somewhere beyond 3000 points (that's around 40 inch text!).

In most cases your title needn't be any larger than 2 inches (144 points) in height - and subtitles should probably be around half to three-quarters of the title size. I personally favor 90 to 120 for the title and 48 for the sub-title. I attempt to get the poster title onto ONE line.



9. 120 Point text looks pretty good. Now let's center align the title. With either the title text or the text box selected, click the center align button.

If the text box is not sized so that it extends completely across the slide, resize it now. To do so click-drag a text box anchor (the little squares located on the border of the text box) to shrink or extend it.

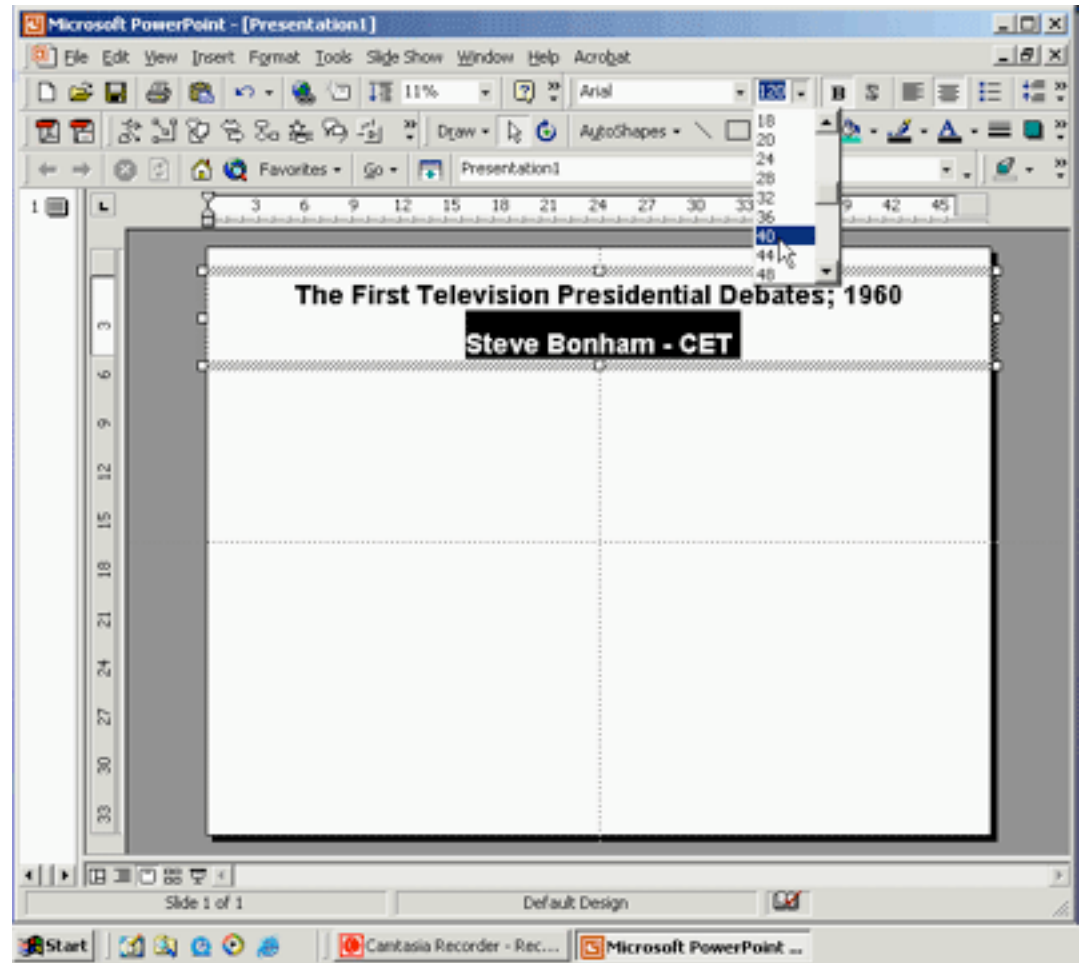


10. Click at the end of the title - hit the enter/return key to drop to the next line and type a subtitle (usually the presenter(s) and affiliation(s). Select the subtitle text and reduce the text size.

Cool. But there is too much space between the title and the subtitle. Can the line spacing be changed?

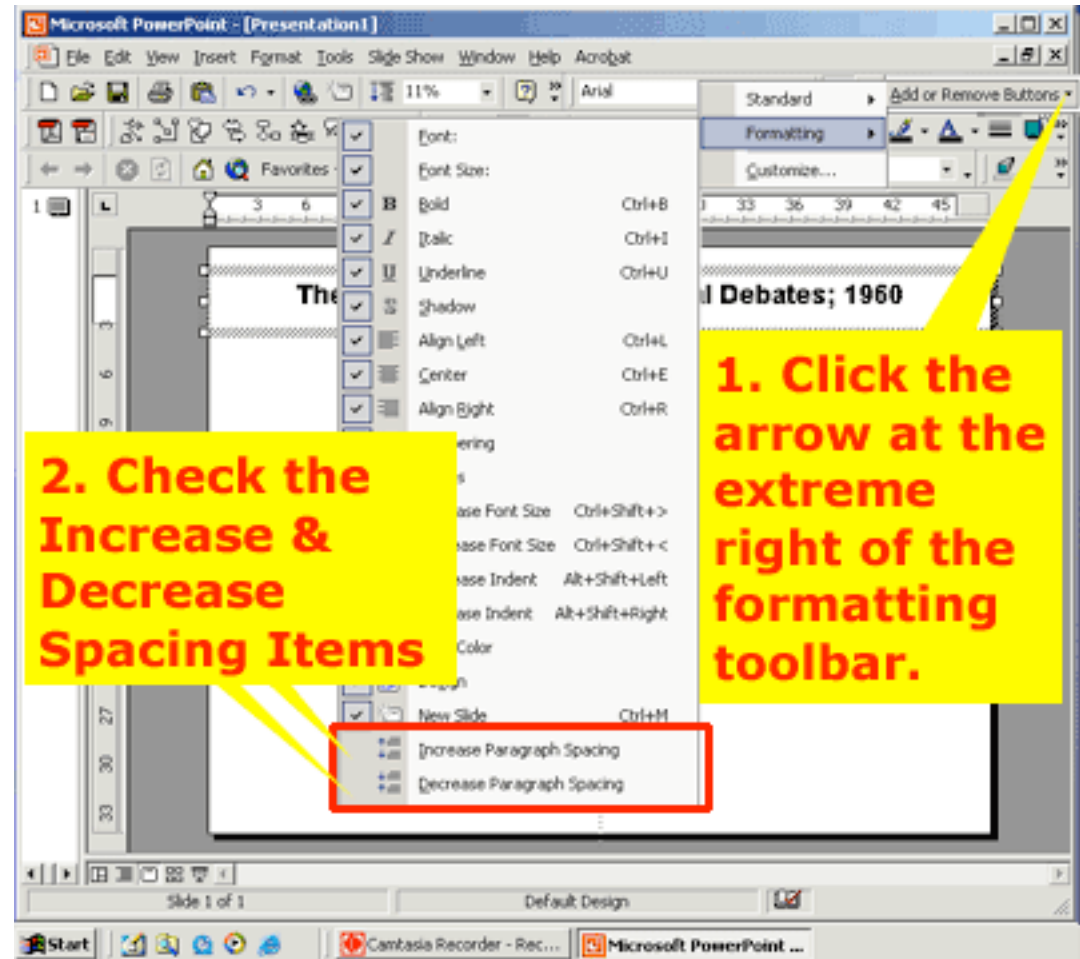
Of course it can. Select the subtitle and click the "tighten line spacing" button.

What? You don't have that button?! Yeah. It's not a "default button." So Let's talk about how to add a button and then we'll tighten up the line spacing.



11. Look on the far right side of the text formatting button bar. The text formatting button bar has the font, font size, and alignment buttons on it. Click the right pointing arrow and look for the option to "add/remove buttons."

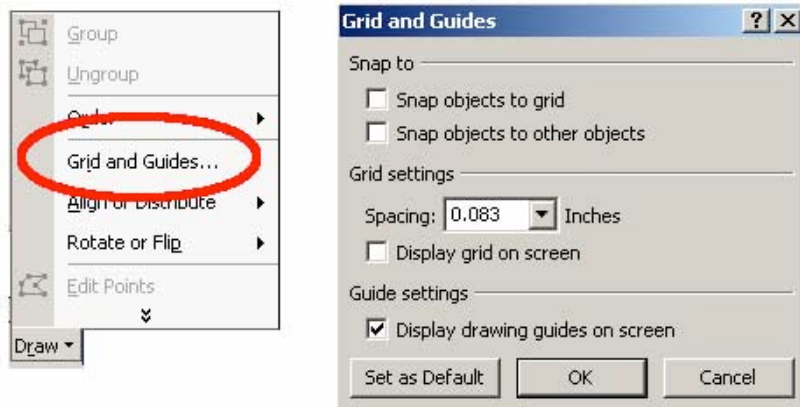
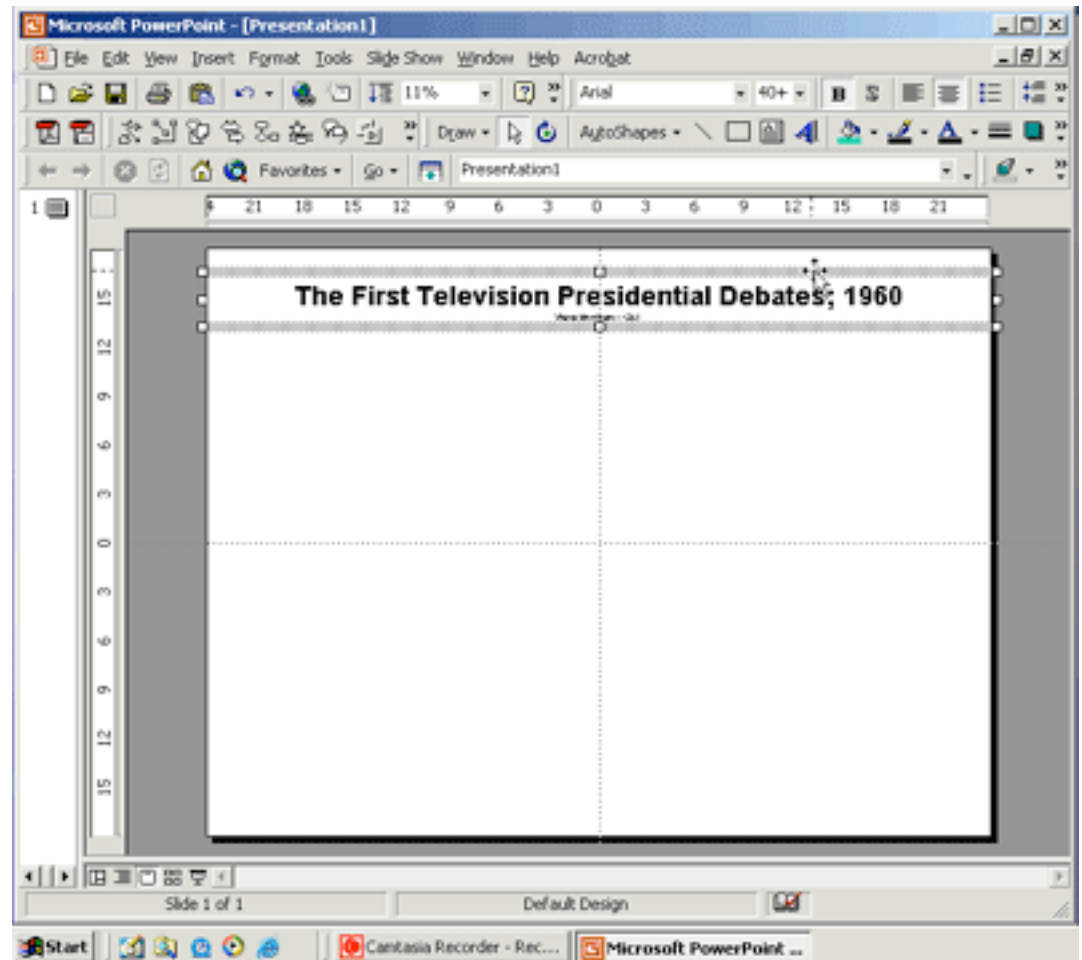
Check the menu items shown at right to add buttons to the button bar for decreasing and increasing line spacing. Now you can go back and do the previous step (tighten up line spacing).



12. Now let's move the title text box up a bit. Position your pointer atop the border of the text box. Notice that the pointer cursor changes into a crosshair or "t" composed of arrows. Click-hold on the border and you can drag it to a new location using your mouse **OR**, you can click the border to select the text box and then use your keyboard's arrow keys to move the box to a new location.

Move the text box closer to the top of your poster.

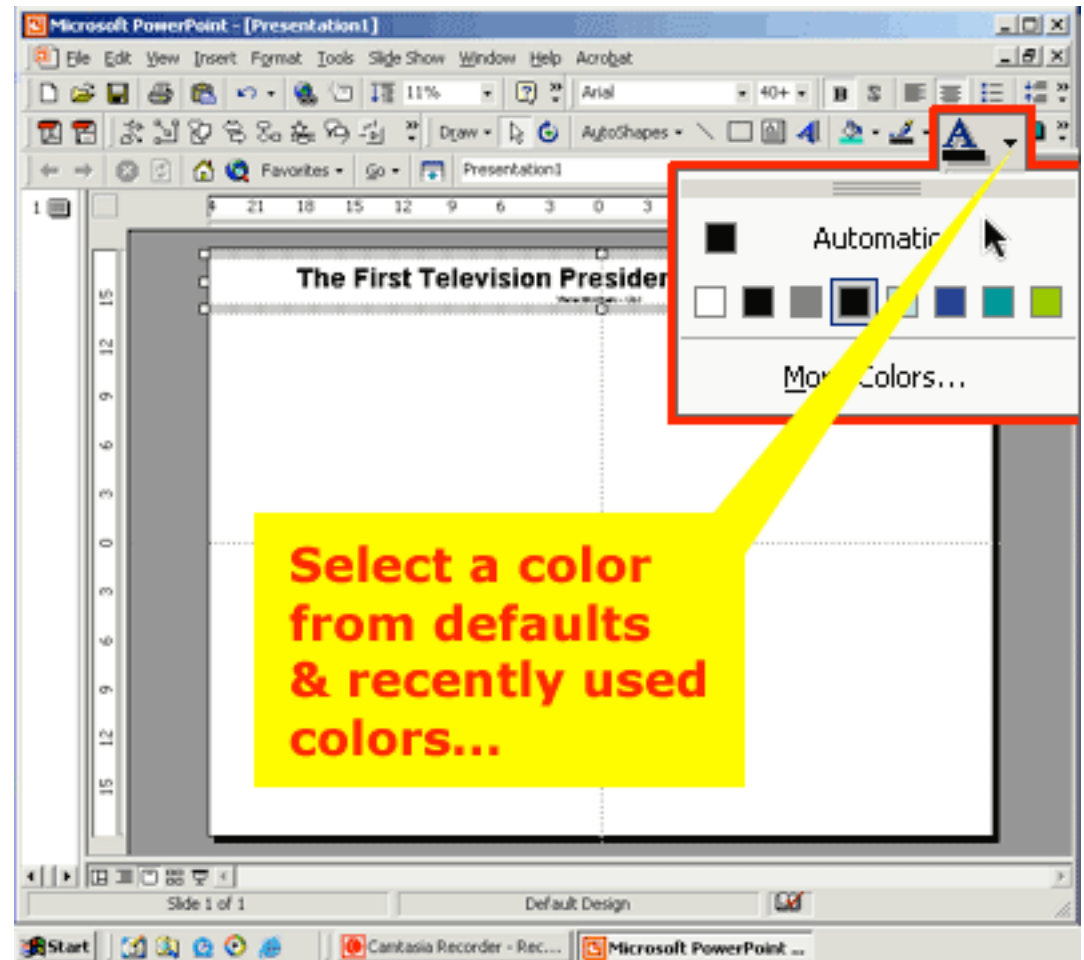
Slide elements will snap to an invisible grid on the slide. This grid is usually set at 5 pixel intervals. If you want "complete and total control" over element positioning you can turn the "Snap to Grid" function off (see image below). Then you can move any element anywhere on your slide. Once the "Snap" function is off, moving elements with the arrow keys gives you 1 pixel interval control.



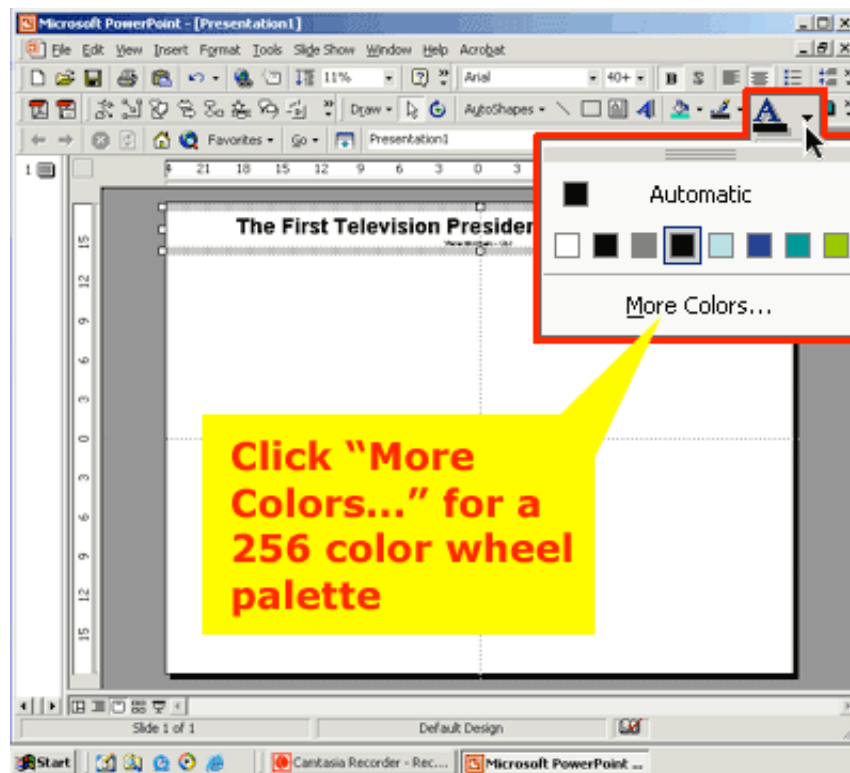
13. A Black Title is sooo basic. Let's jazz the title up with some color. Select the text box or the portion of text within the text box that you wish to change.



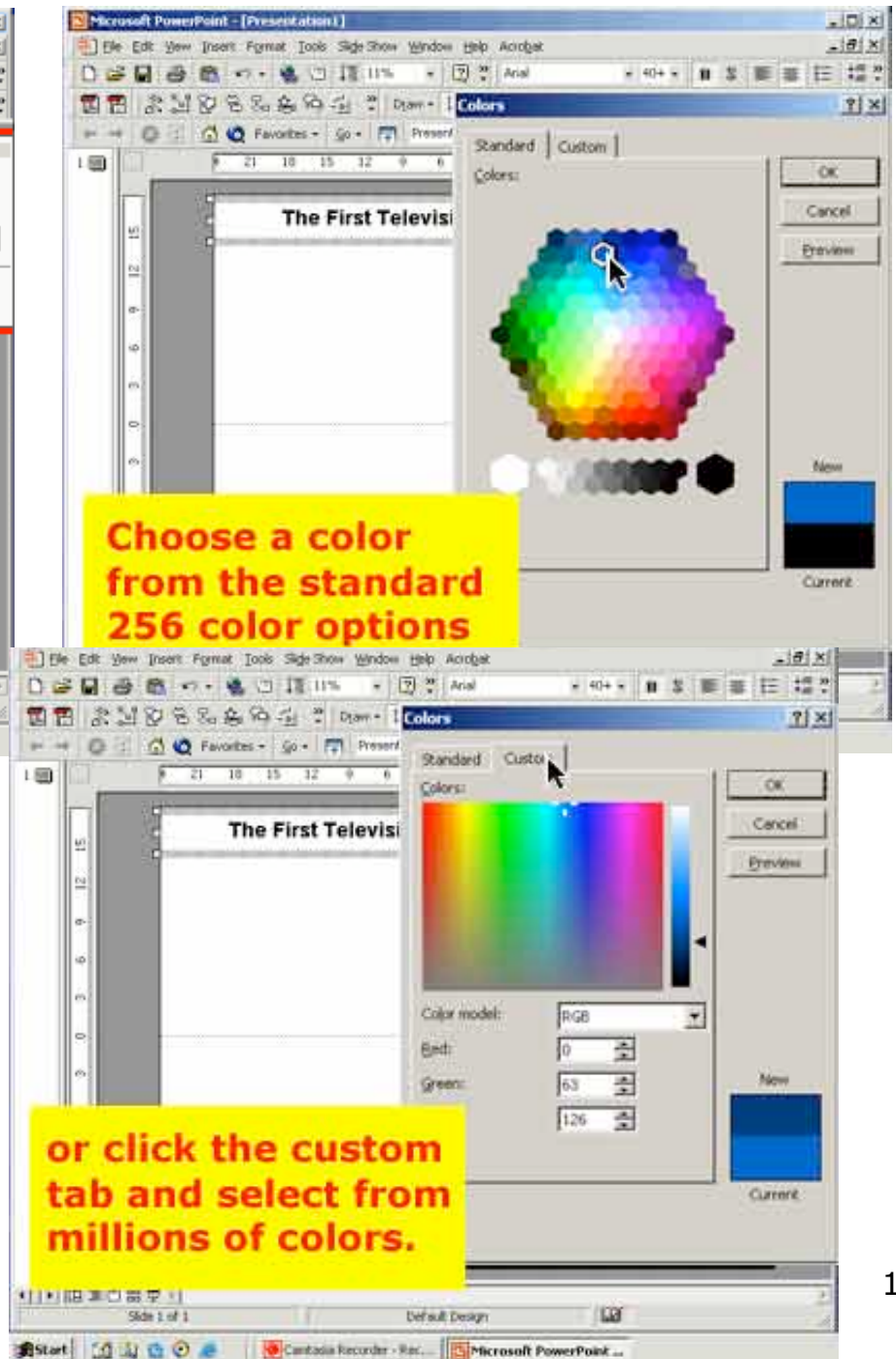
Click on the text color pulldown (the downward pointing arrow just to the right of the text color icon) button and choose one of the colors provided or...



14. Click More Colors... to select from 256 standard colors...



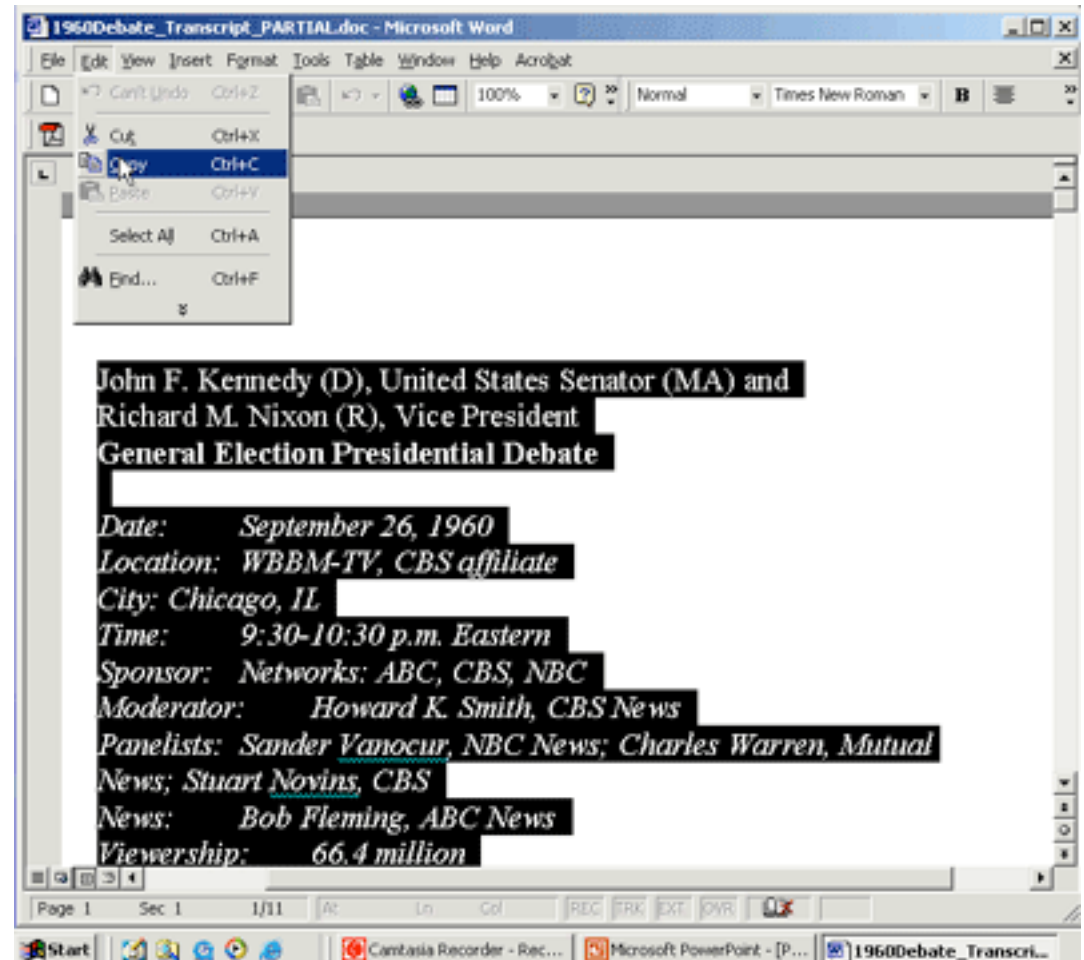
or from the custom spectrum that offers millions of colors. Click the still image at right to see an animation of this.



15. Now let's place some text from another source on the poster. Keep PowerPoint running while you open a Microsoft Word document (or a webpage perhaps).

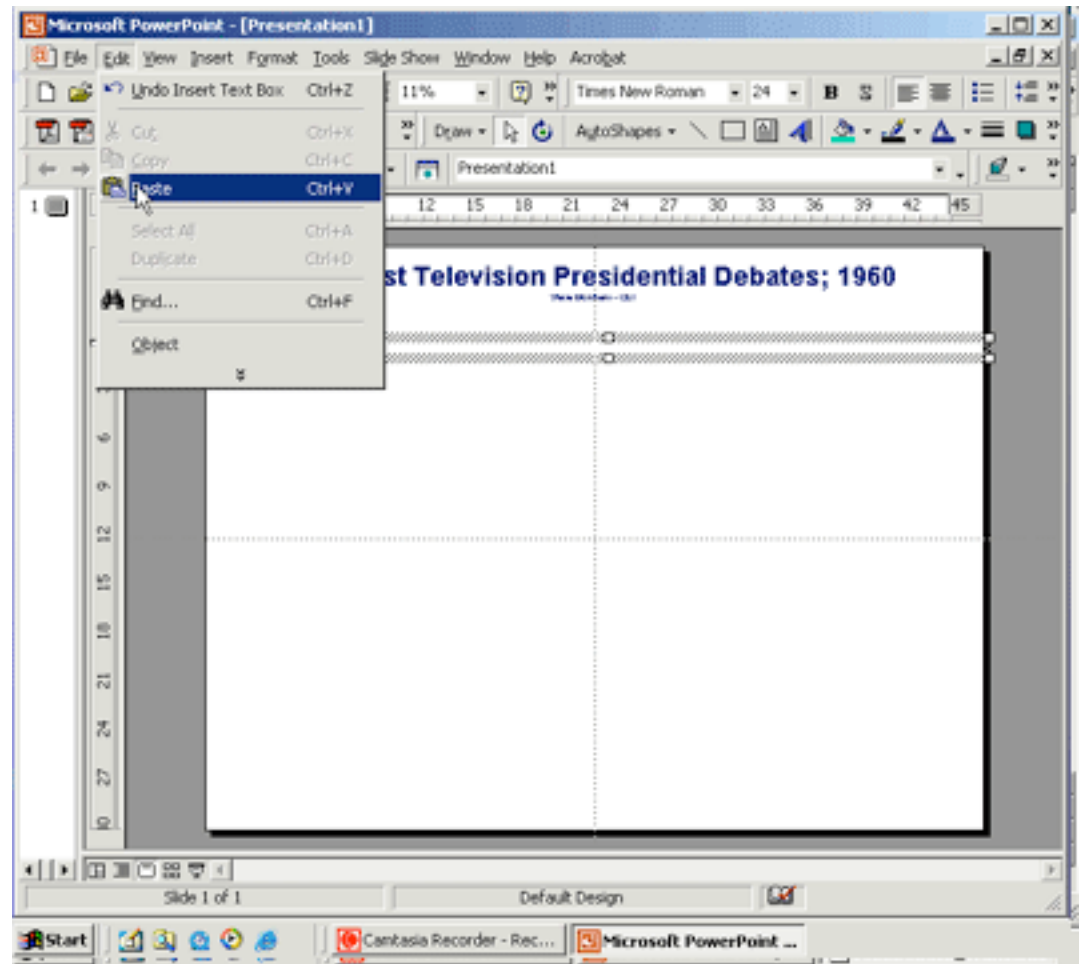
Select & copy some text from that document.

Go back to your PowerPoint poster.

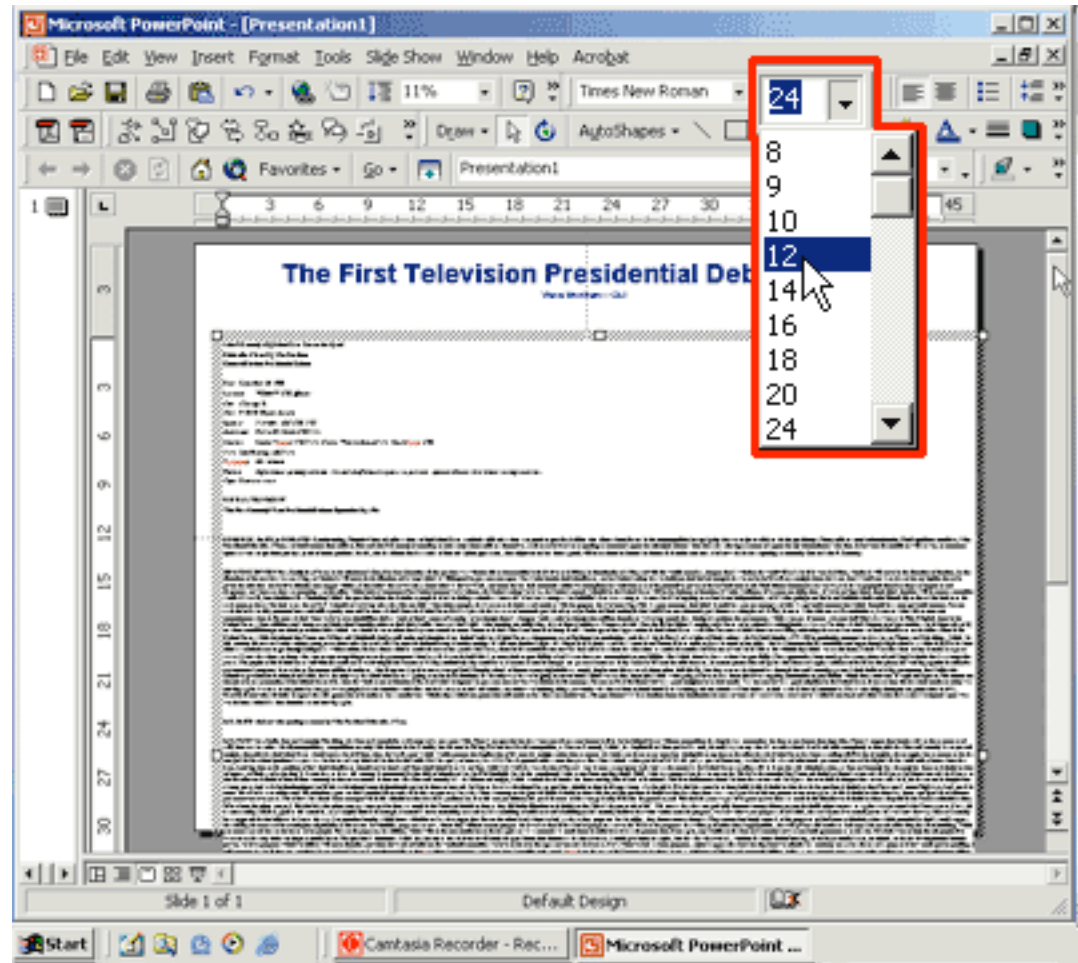


16. Select the text tool again and create a text box. The cursor will be blinking within the new text box.

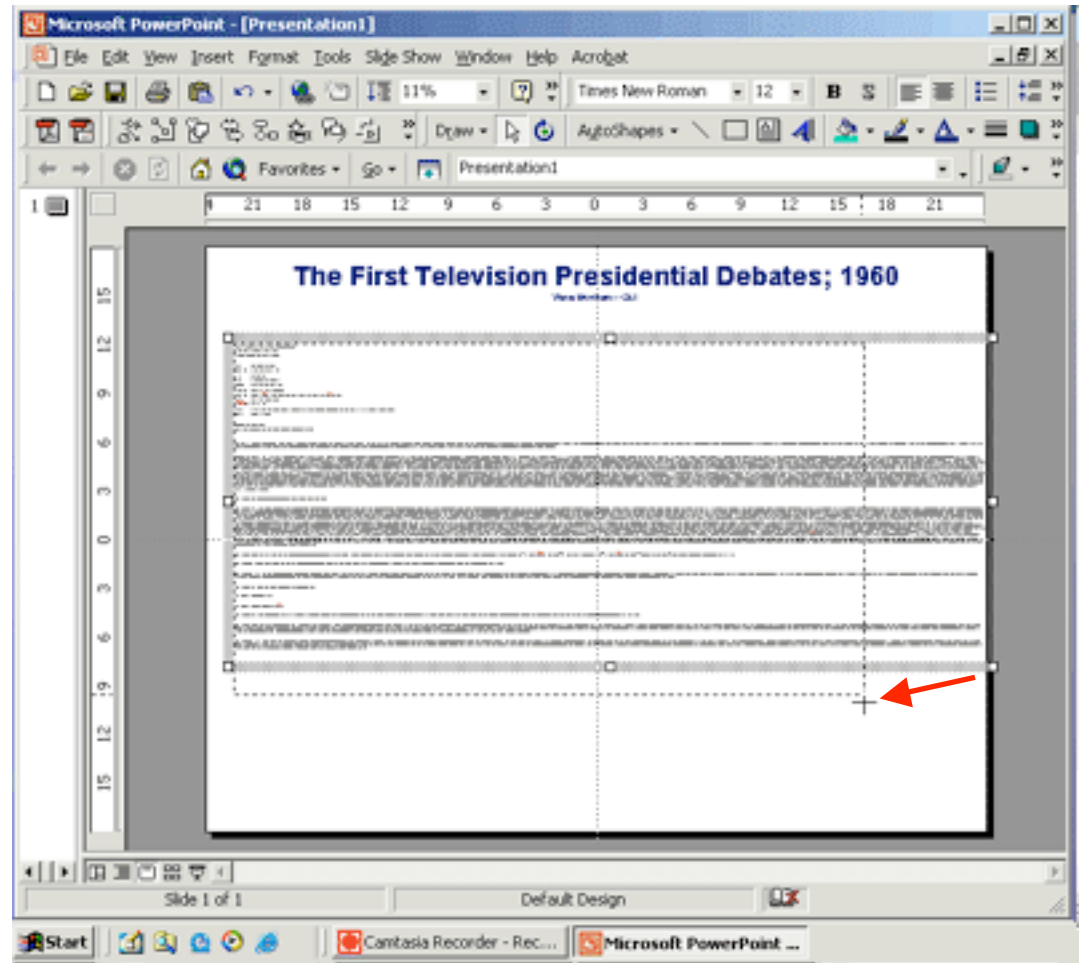
Select: Edit > Paste and the text will appear in the text box.



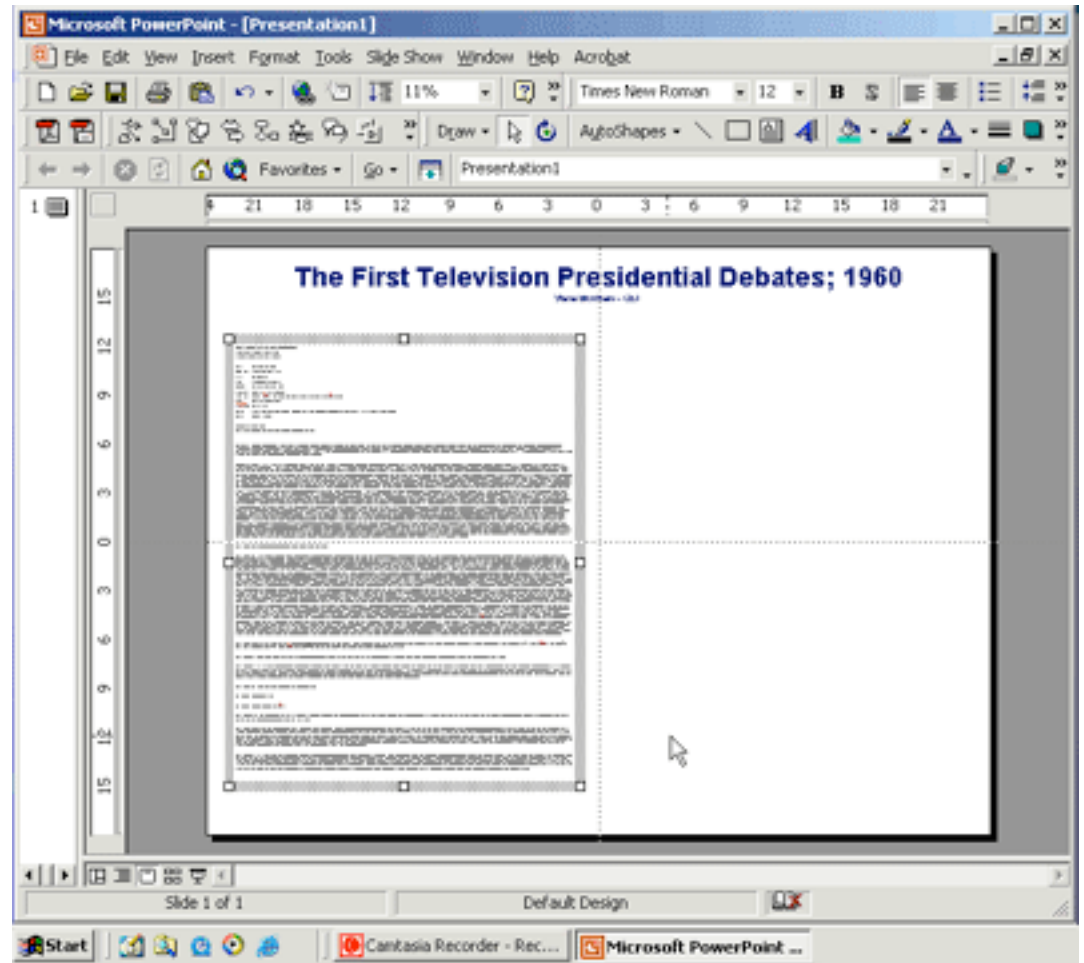
17. The text will probably appear in the default font and size (Times & 24 point). With the text box selected choose 12 point from the text size pulldown.



18. The text box may be quite wide. Click & hold on a text box anchor to resize the text box.



19. Release the anchor and the text will wrap to fit the width of the box. It's difficult to tell how wide this text area is- and if the text will be readable (it certainly doesn't appear so at this scale!).

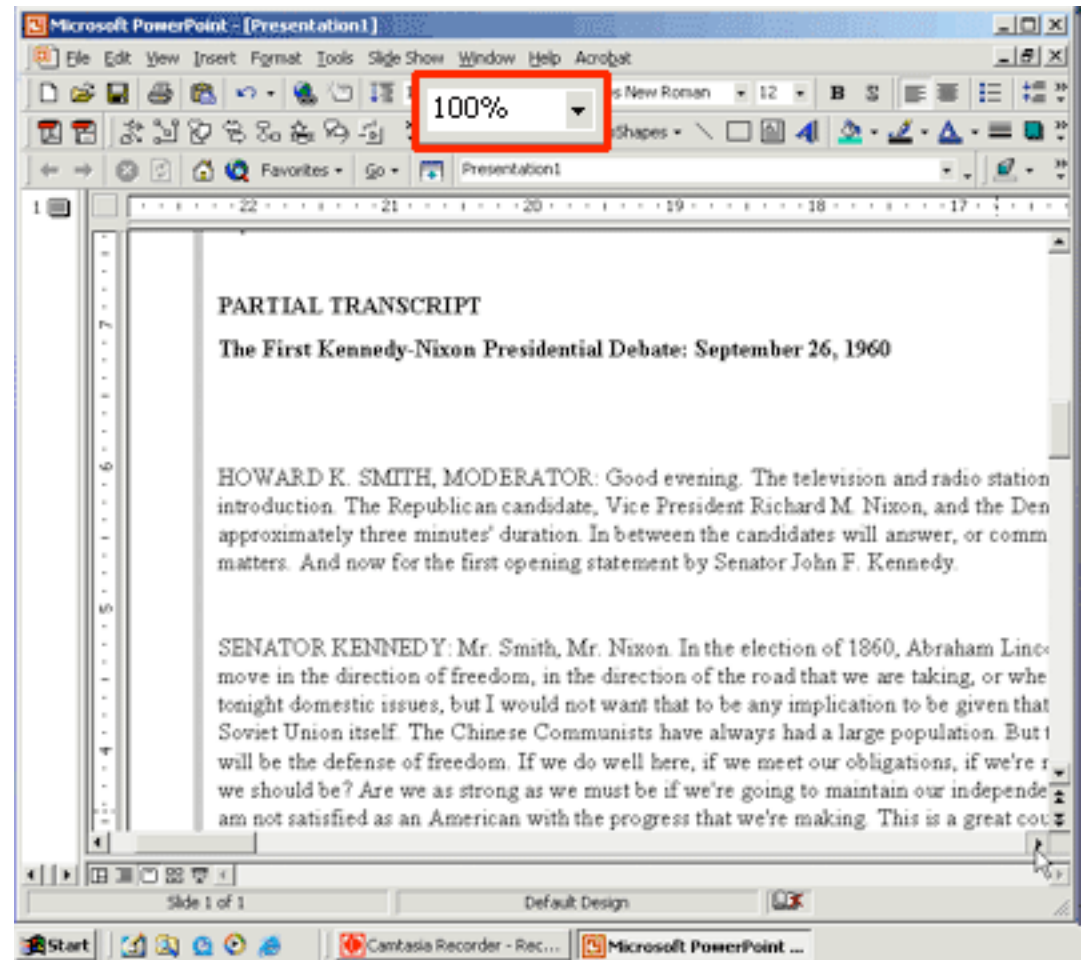


20. If you zoom in to 100% you can see it better. At 100% you can see that **it IS readable**, but you can't see enough of the ruler to determine the width of the text box.

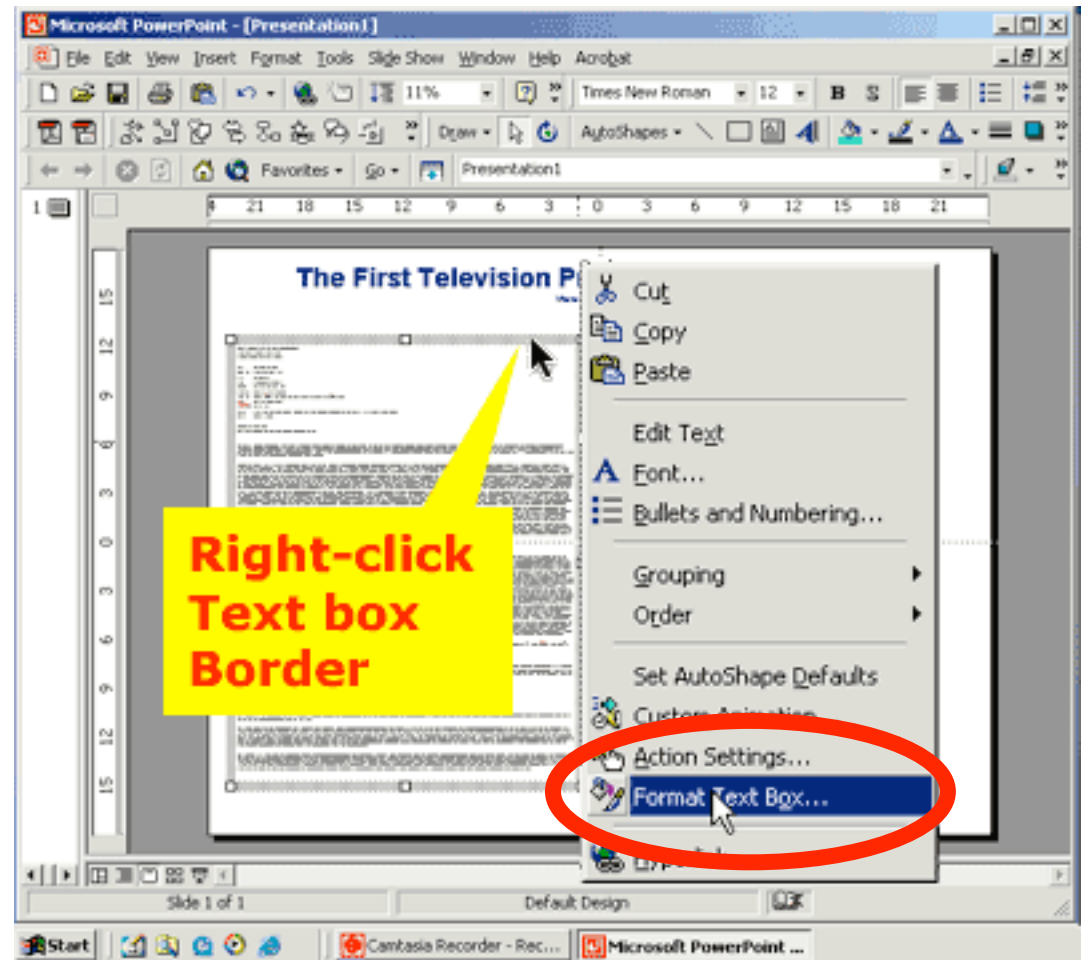
Why is this important?

We read by scanning lines of text sequentially left to right. If the width of the line is too long it becomes difficult for one's eyes to return to the proper next line. Imagine reading a newspaper that has one really wide column instead of the typical 5 or 6 columns!

The maximum width for a column of text is nine to ten inches-- about what you'd encounter on a landscape oriented piece of 8.5 x 11 inch paper.



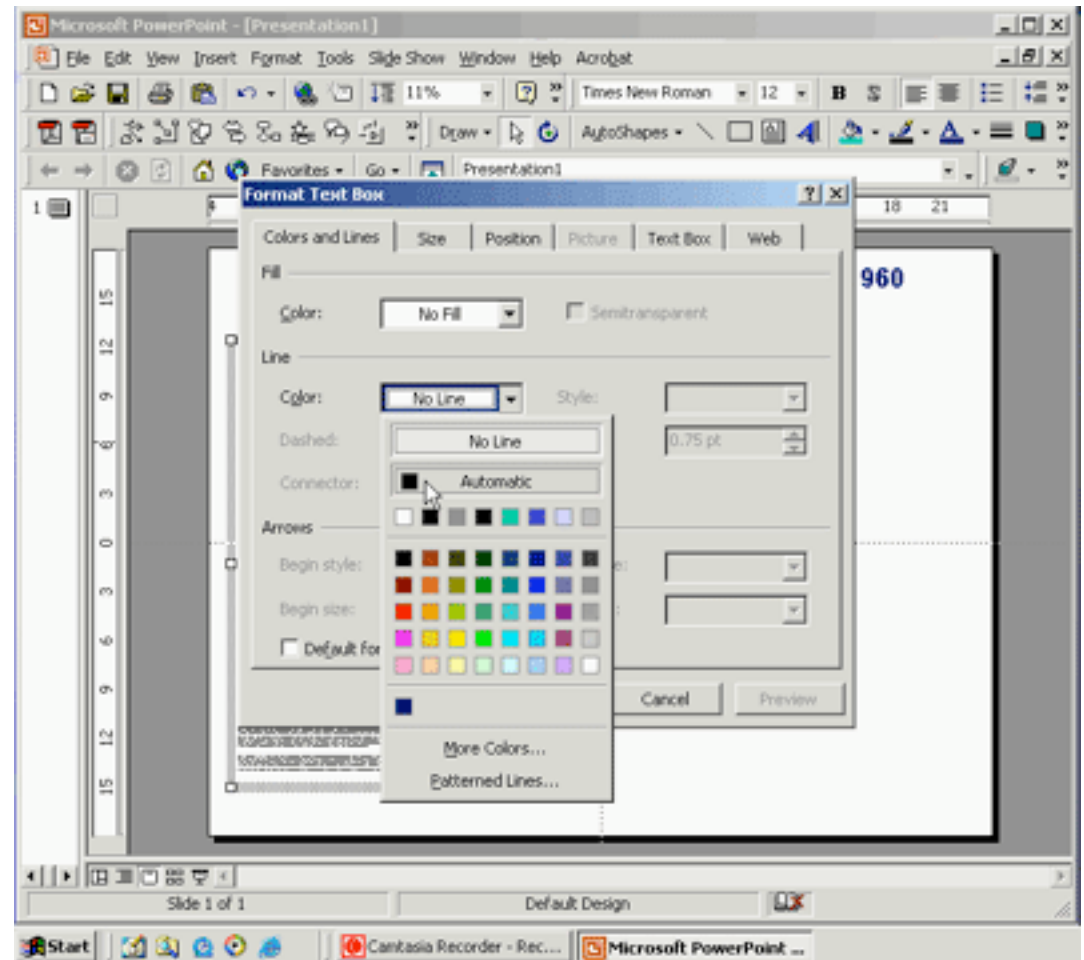
21. To determine or set the width of a text box right-click on the border of the text box and select "Format Text Box..." from the pop-up menu.



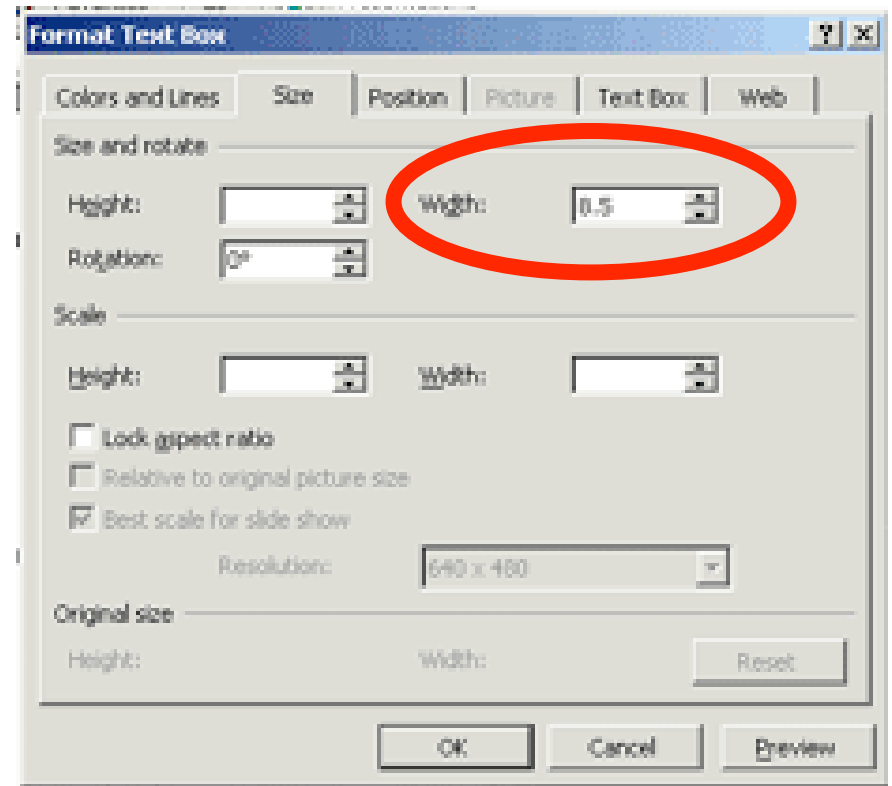
22. The "Format Text Box" dialog box offers five tabs; Colors & Lines, Size, Position, Text Box, and Web.

In the Colors & Lines section you can set the background color of the text box and place a colored border around the text box.

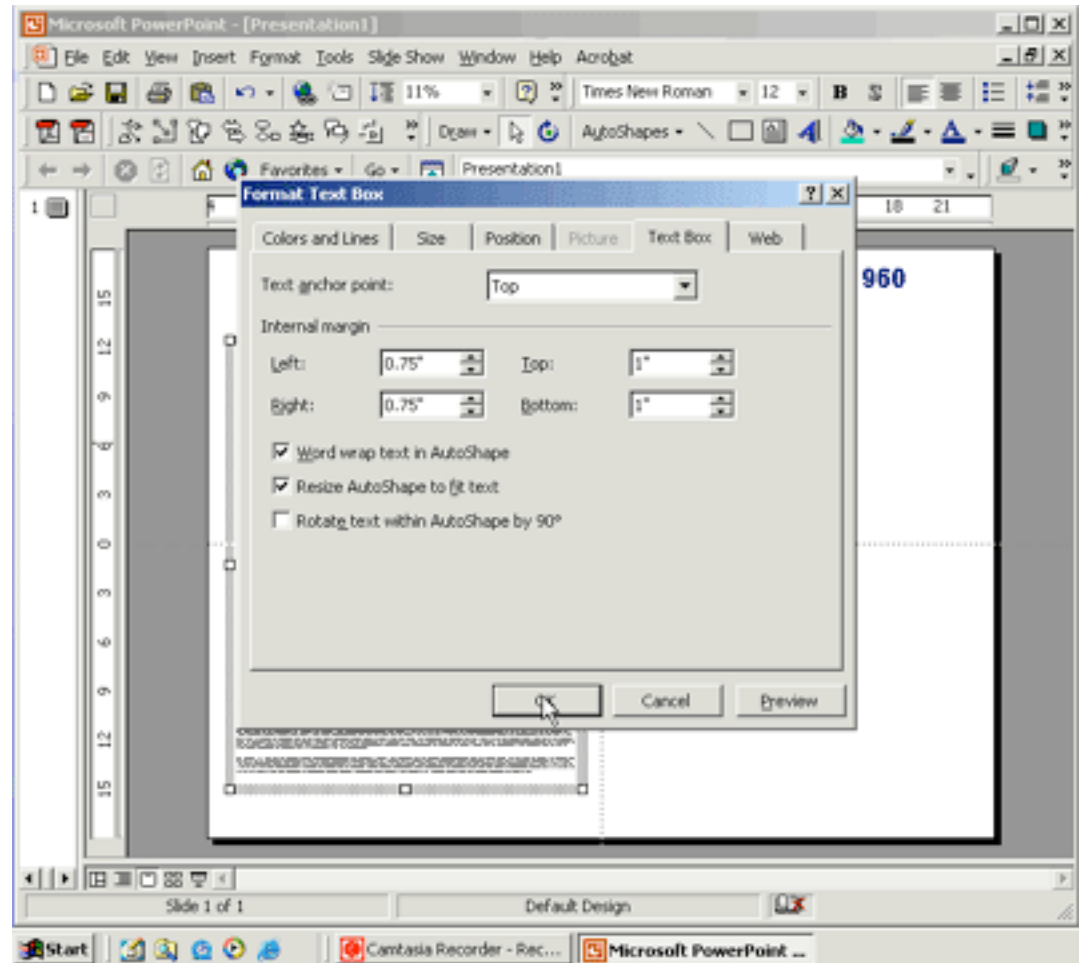
This is particularly useful if you have a colored background or a picture as the background of your poster. You can make the text box appear as a piece of paper atop the background. See sample below. Placing a text box with no background fill (like the white used here) would make for very difficult to read text!



23. In the Size area you can set the width (and height if desired) of the text box. I'm setting the width here to 8.5 inches.



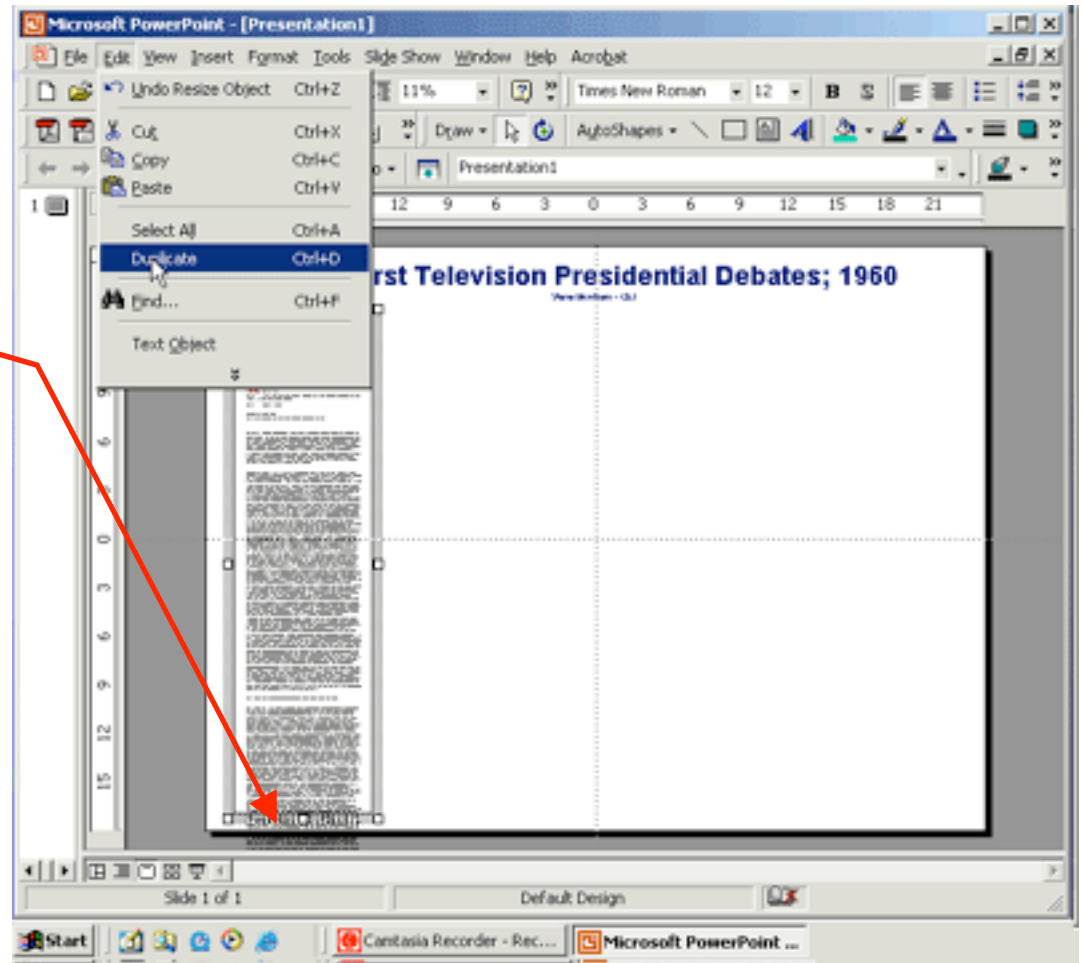
24. The Text Box tab allows you to set margins for the text box. This is really useful when you use a fill color and/or a border. You can also tell PowerPoint to vertically align the text to top, middle, or bottom of the text box here. I'm setting my margins to 3/4" left and right and 1" top and bottom.



25. So-- this text box has lines of text that are 7 inches wide (8.5 - (sum of left & right margins)). That should be easy to scan even if I make the text 12 point or so.

It appears that using this text box width the text passage is too long to fit (See? It extends below the bottom edge of the slide).

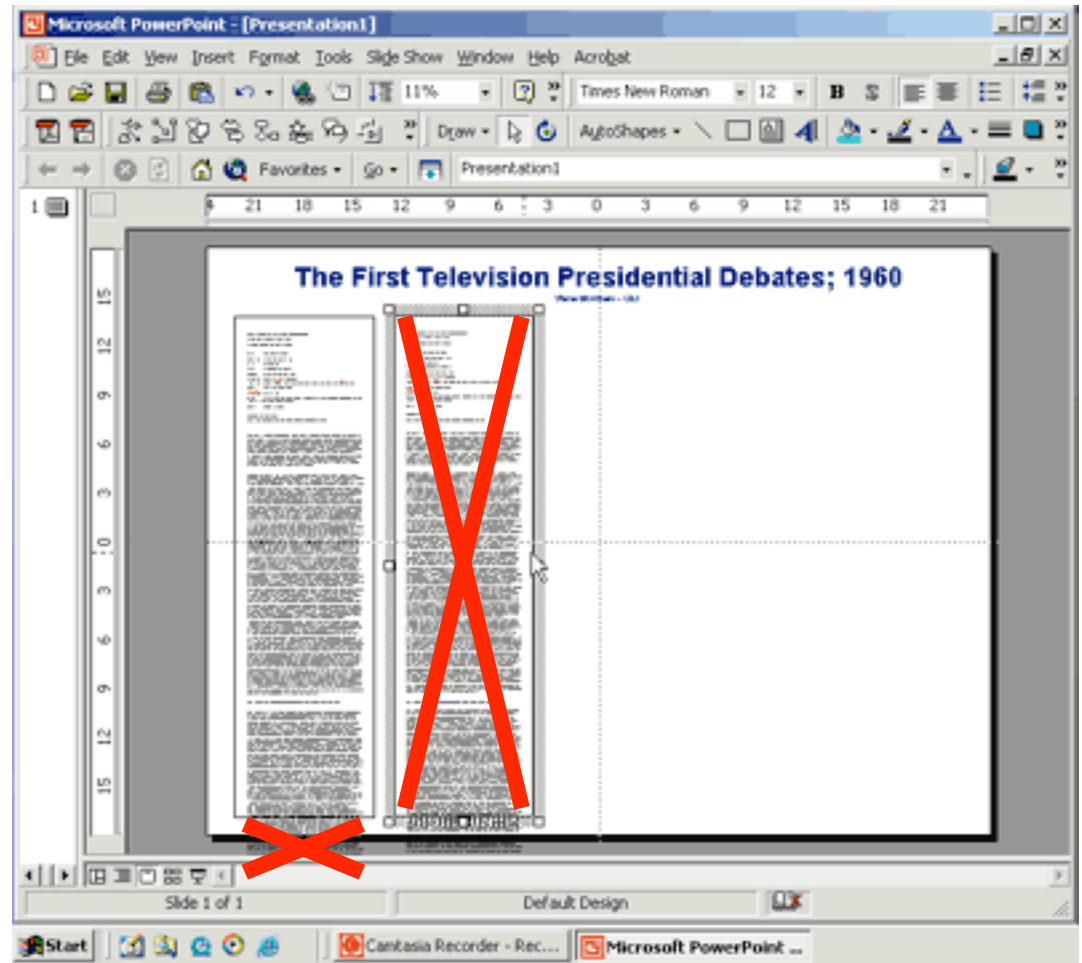
So that I don't have to repeat the text box formatting process I'll just "clone" the existing text box. To do so, with the text box selected, chose: Edit > Duplicate from your menus.



26. An identical text box with the cloned text inside will appear atop the original one. Click-hold on the border of the cloned box and move it over beside the original.

Then- you have to do some "cleaning up" to do. The two text boxes contain identical passages at this point. You'll need to delete the overrun (the text that is off the poster in image #25 above) from the bottom of the original text box, and then eliminate all BUT the overlap from the cloned text area.

You'll be eliminating the text marked here with the red X.

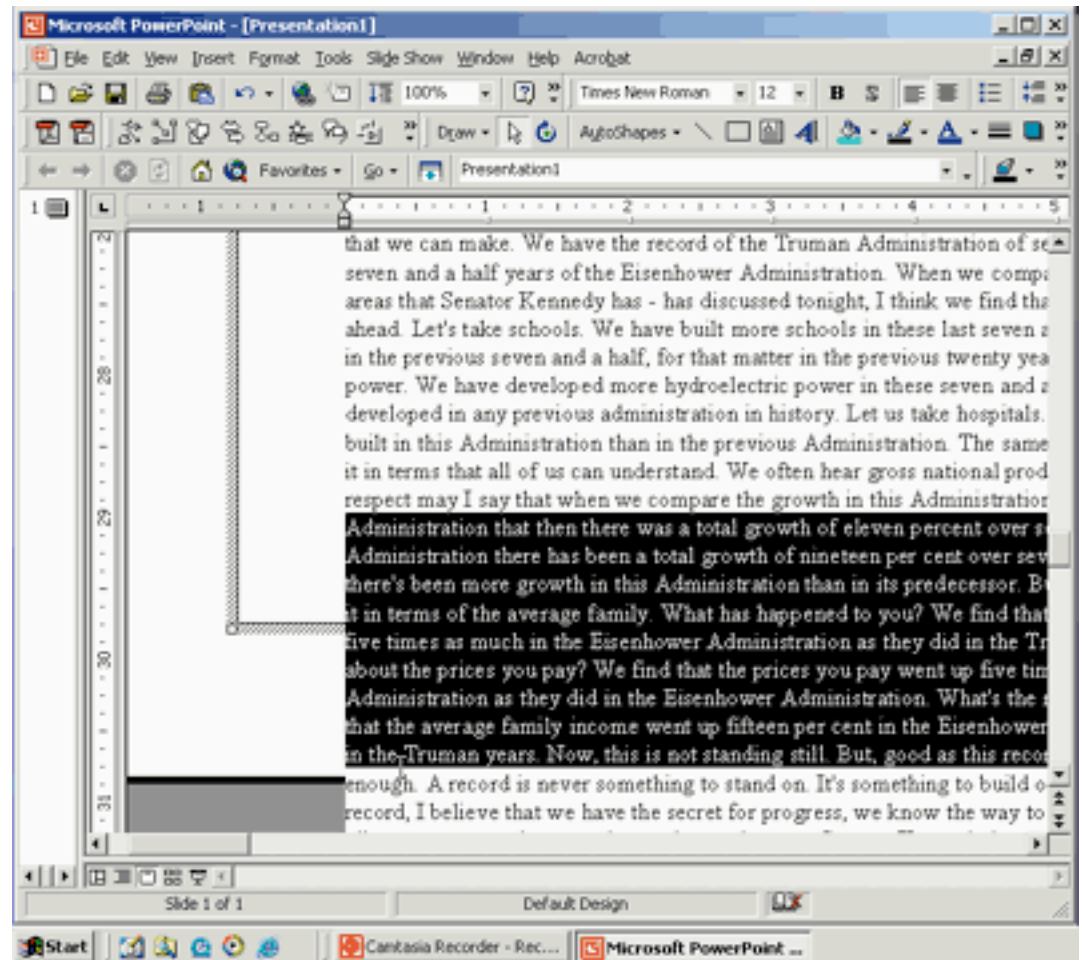


27. Zoom in on the original text box to determine where the break should occur.

If you just have a little text overrun you may decide to:

- a. make the text a size smaller or;
- b. widen the text box or;
- c. decrease the line spacing a bit (step #11)

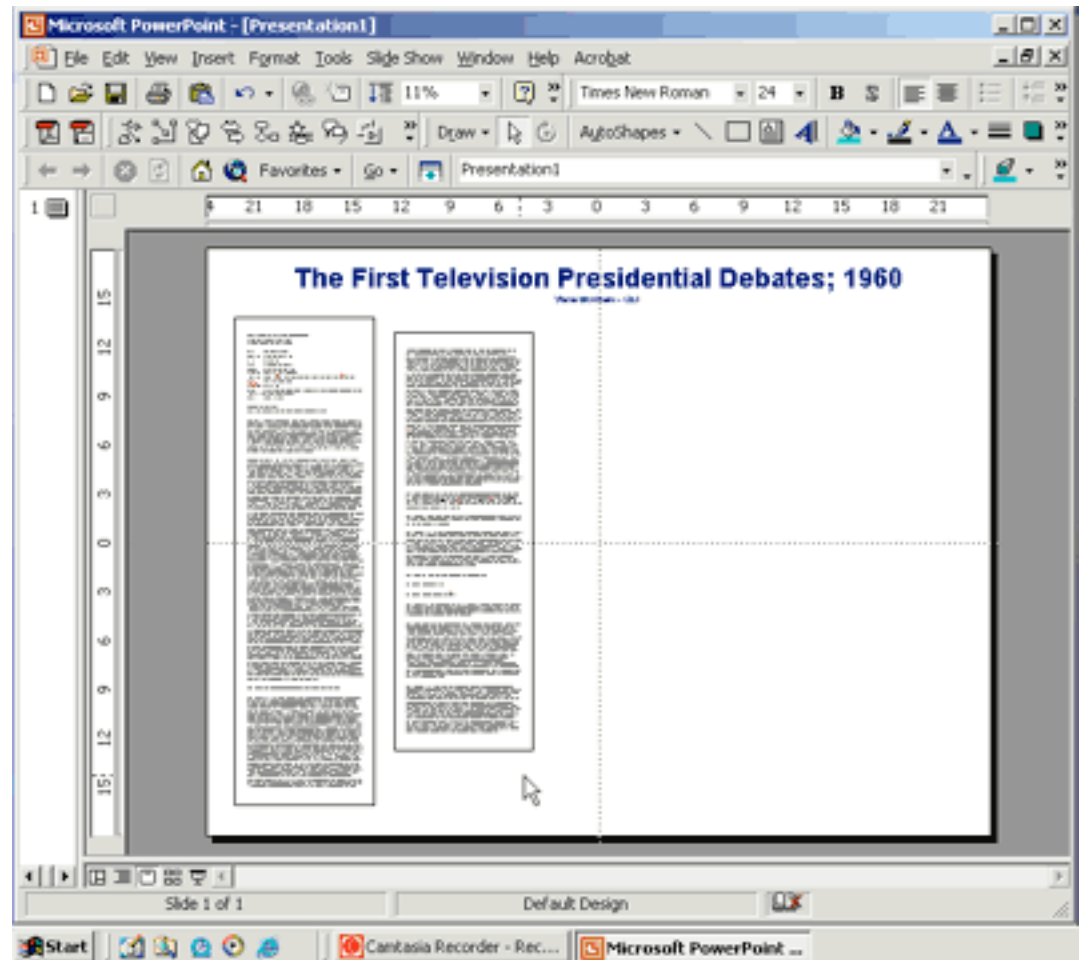
Any one of these, or a combination may do the trick.



28. Okay, text cleaned up?
Great. However, the text boxes are not aligned.

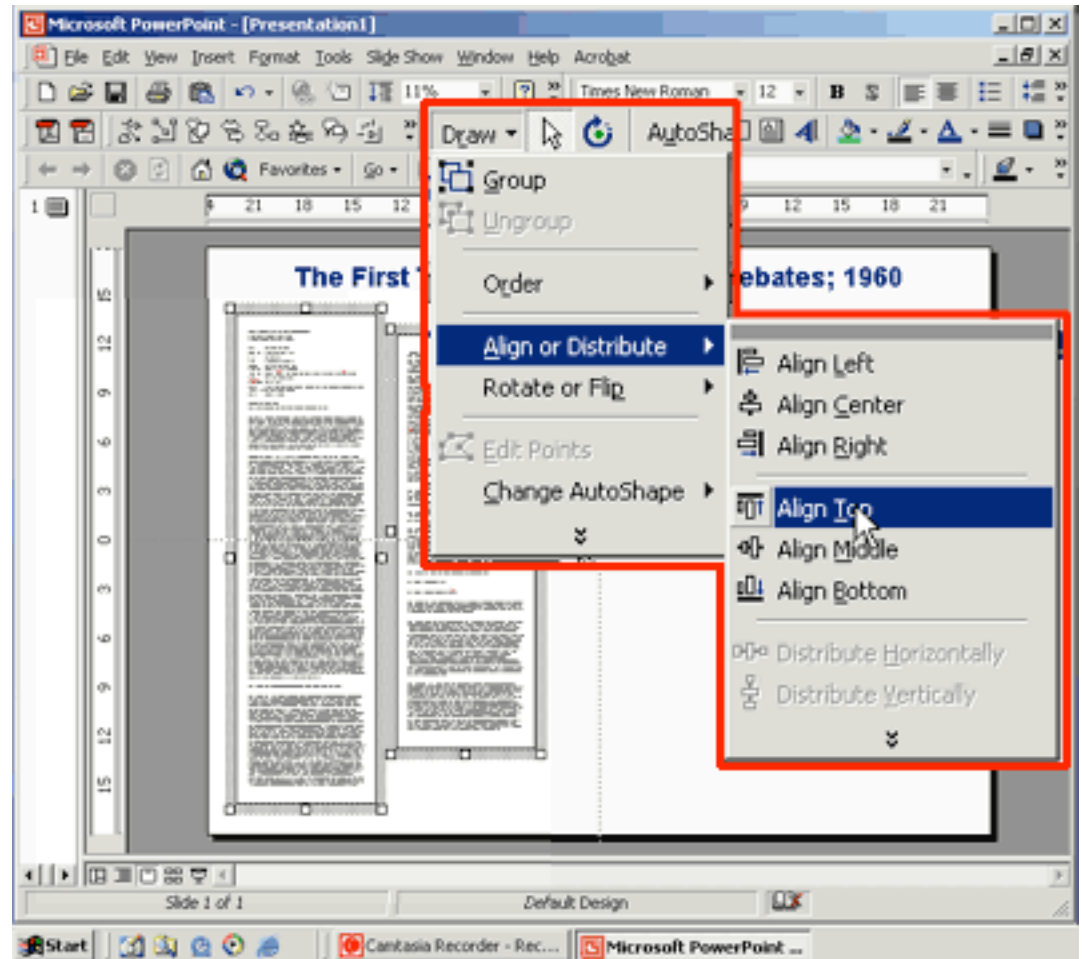
There is an easy way to do this. First, you must select both text boxes.

Click one, then hold the shift key down and click the second one.



29. With both text boxes selected click on the Draw pulldown and select: Align or Distribute > Align Top.

The tops of both text boxes will be perfectly aligned.



30. Now let's insert an image.

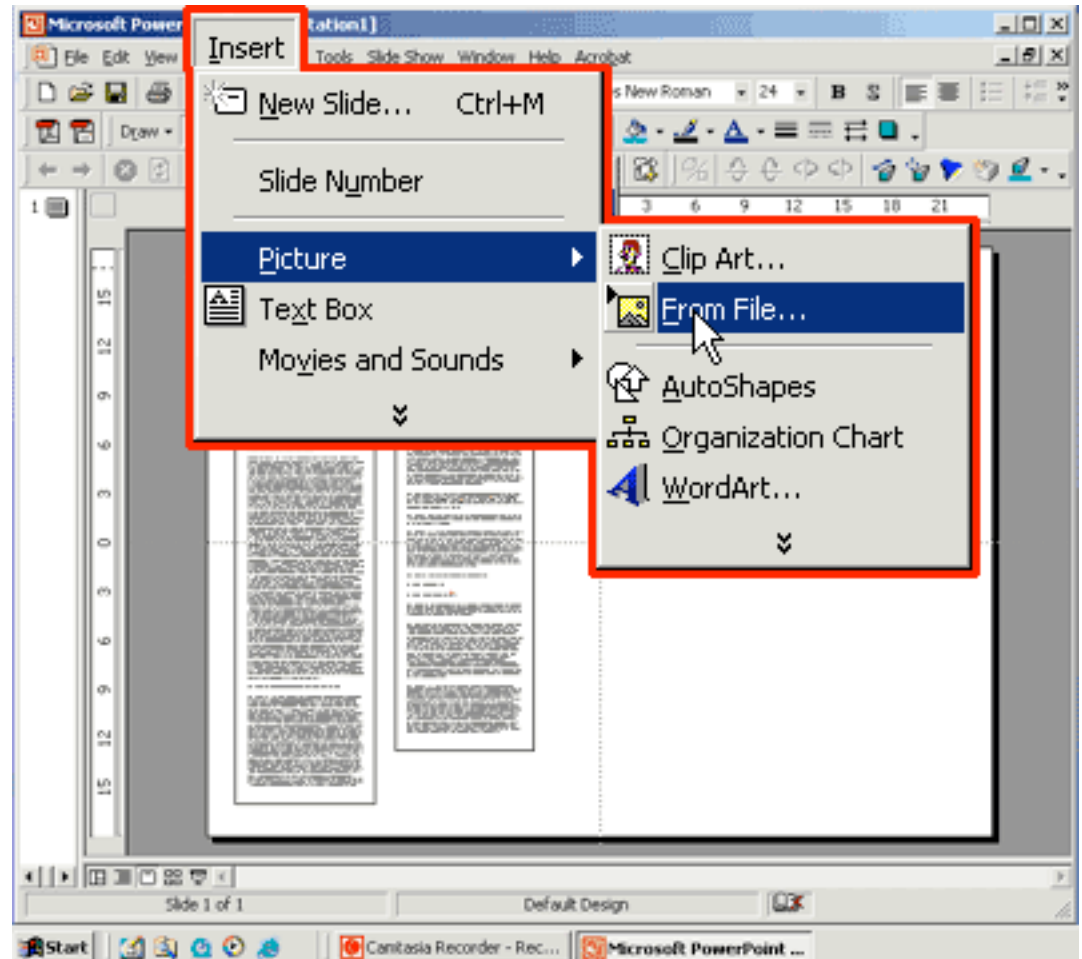
Select: Insert > Picture > From File...

Browse to the image file you desire to use. It should be a jpeg, or gif image.

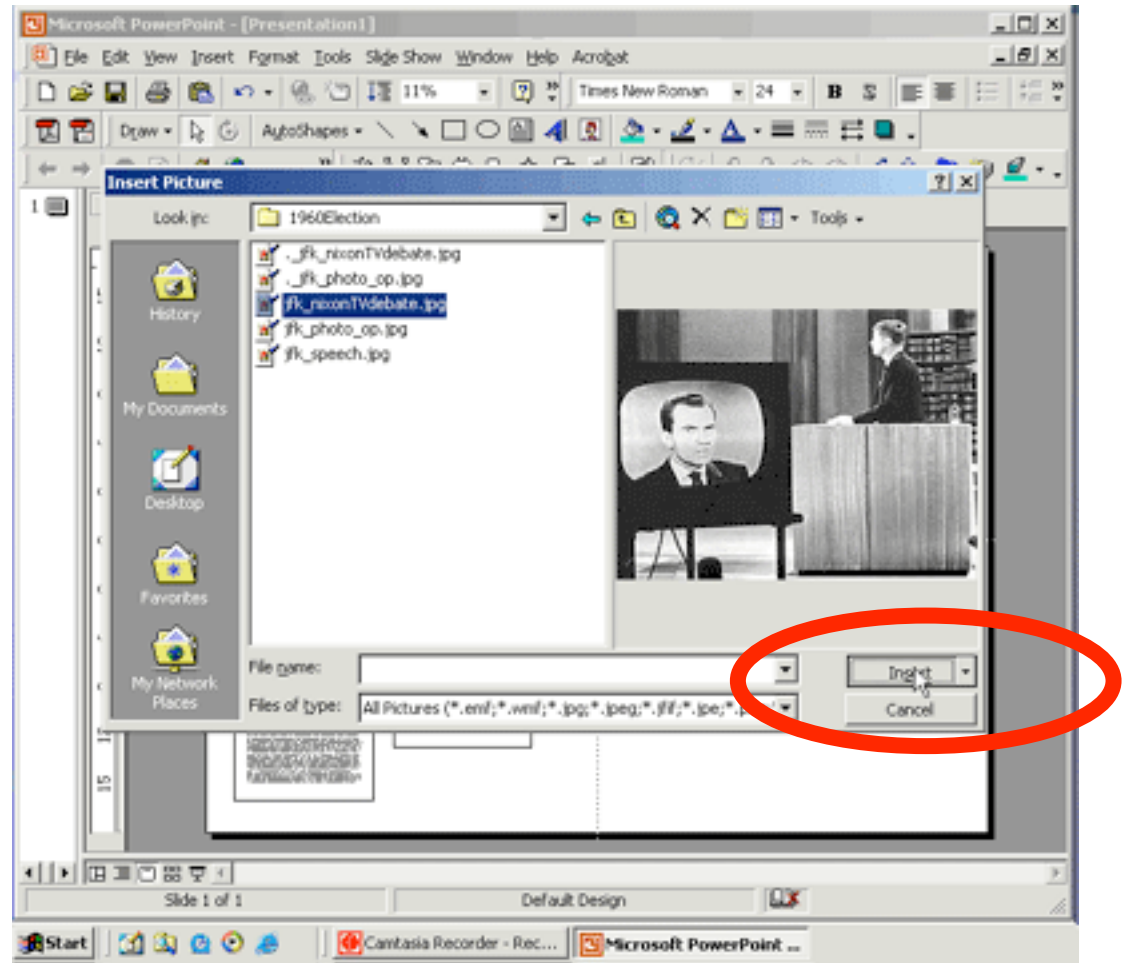
WARNING!

A common error among poster makers is to insert high resolution images when a lower resolution image would have worked fine. If you insert a few high res images the plotter may not have enough RAM (memory) to print the poster!

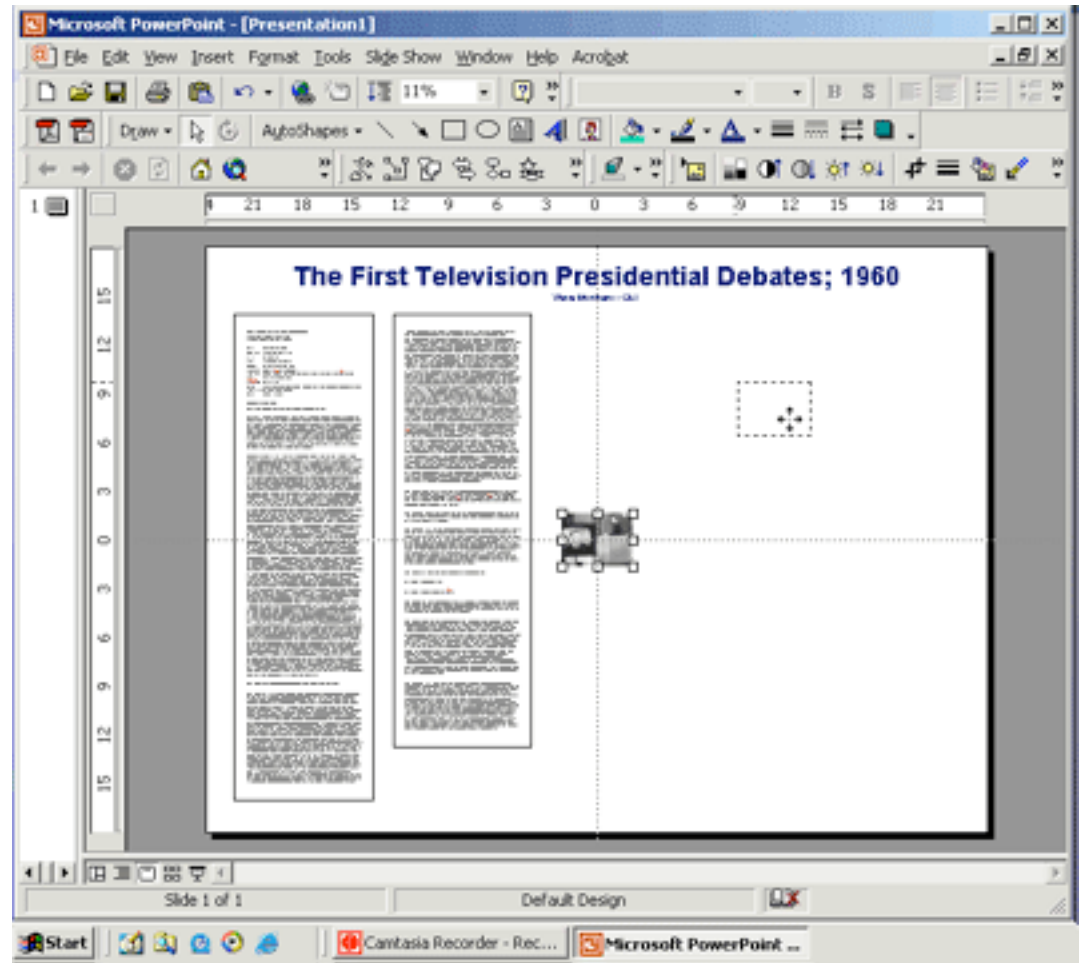
If you scan your images (on a flatbed scanner) or capture your images with a digital camera please optimize them for size and resolution PRIOR to insertion. If you are interested in learning more about this issue take one of our Photoshop or Scanning workshops.



31. Once you've located the image click "Insert."



32. The image will appear centered on your poster in it's original size. You can click-drag the image to move it to another location...



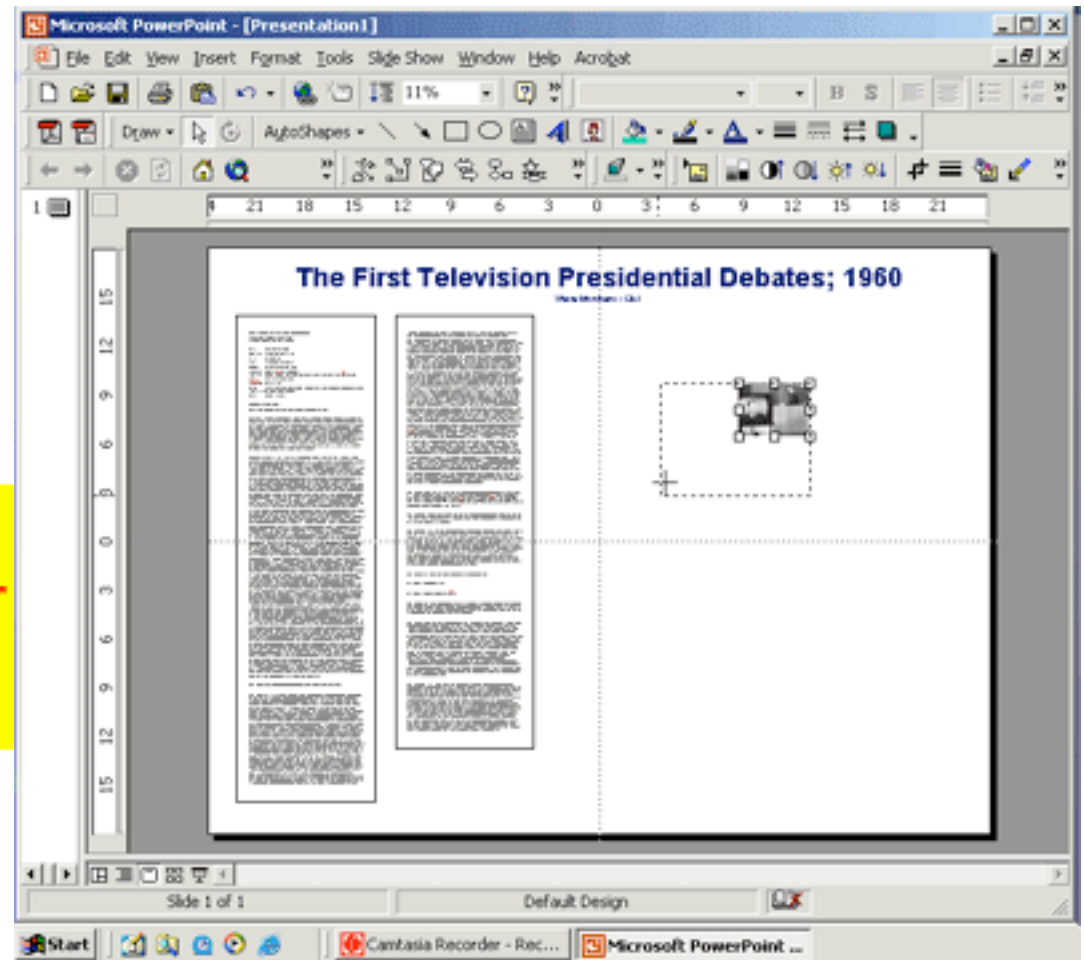
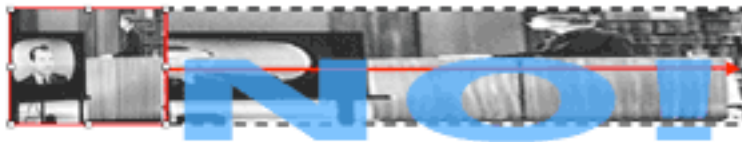
33. and/or expand or shrink the image to the desired size. To do so, click-hold an anchor on the CORNER of the image and drag it outward to increase its size, or inward to reduce its size proportionally.

Careful! If you DO NOT use a corner anchor the image may badly distort.

You can DISTORT/STRETCH an image by dragging a top/bottom or left/right edge.



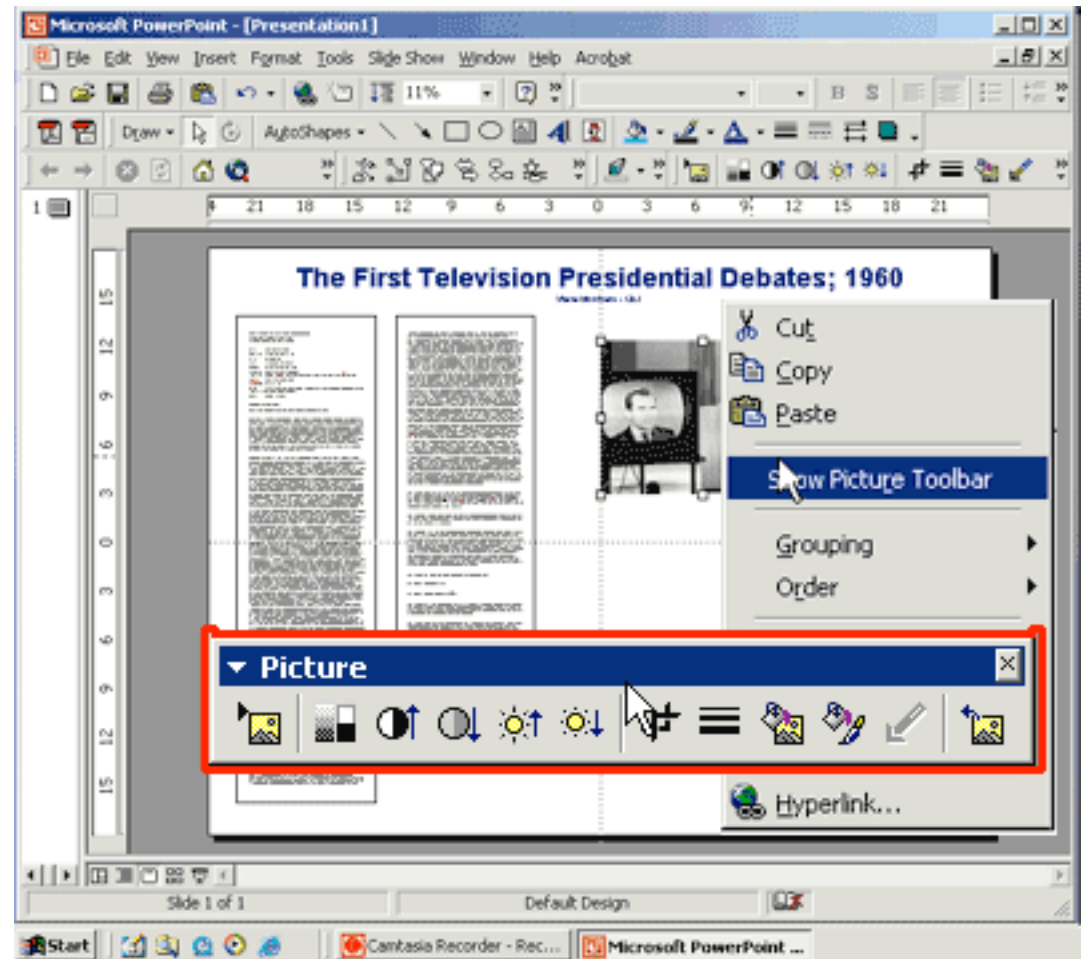
**Careful when
scaling images-
Grab corner
Anchors!**



34. Right-clicking an image displays a pop-up menu with many options that provide for: cropping &/or brightening the image, and adding a border to the image. Let's investigate...

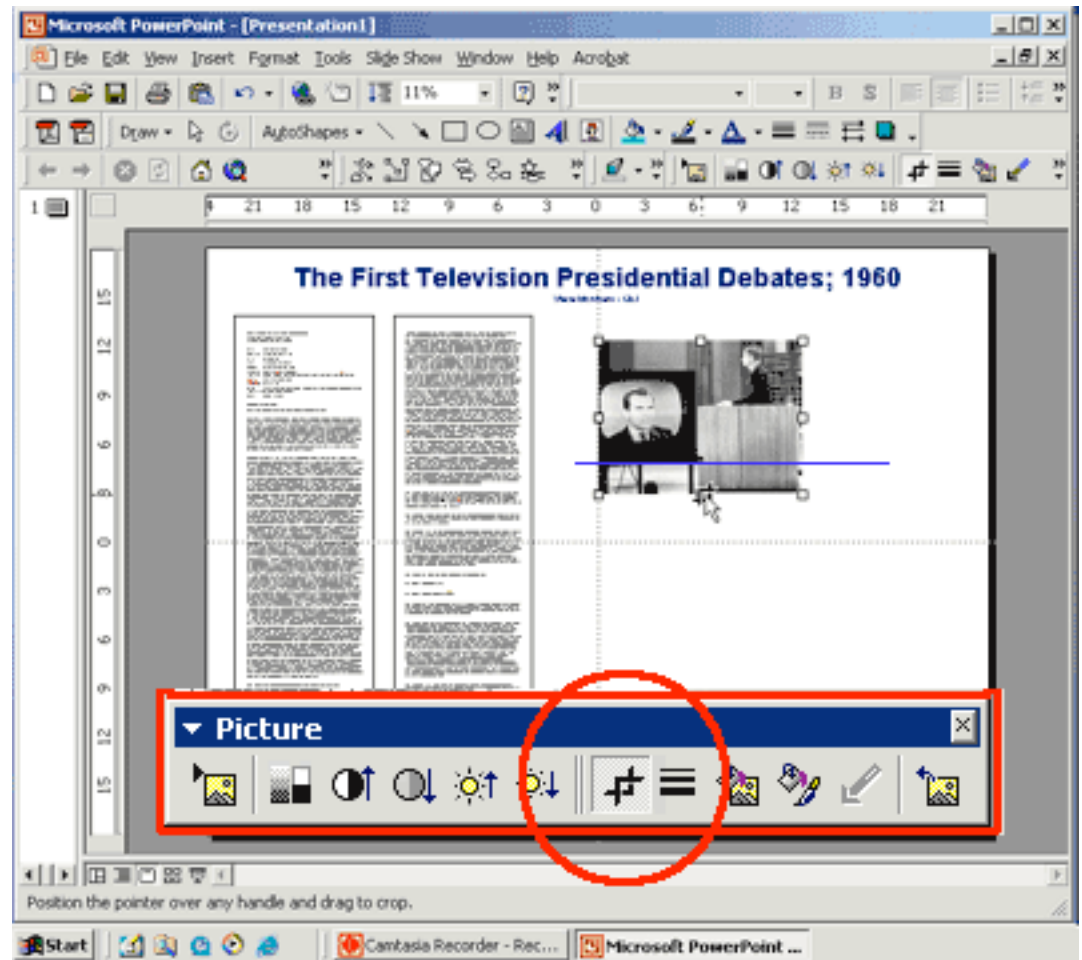
Right-click the image you inserted. Select "Show Picture Toolbar" from the pop-up menu. The picture toolbar will appear.

If your pop-up menus offers "Hide Picture Toolbar" that indicates that the picture toolbar is already open on your computer. It may be docked in the button bar area of your screen.



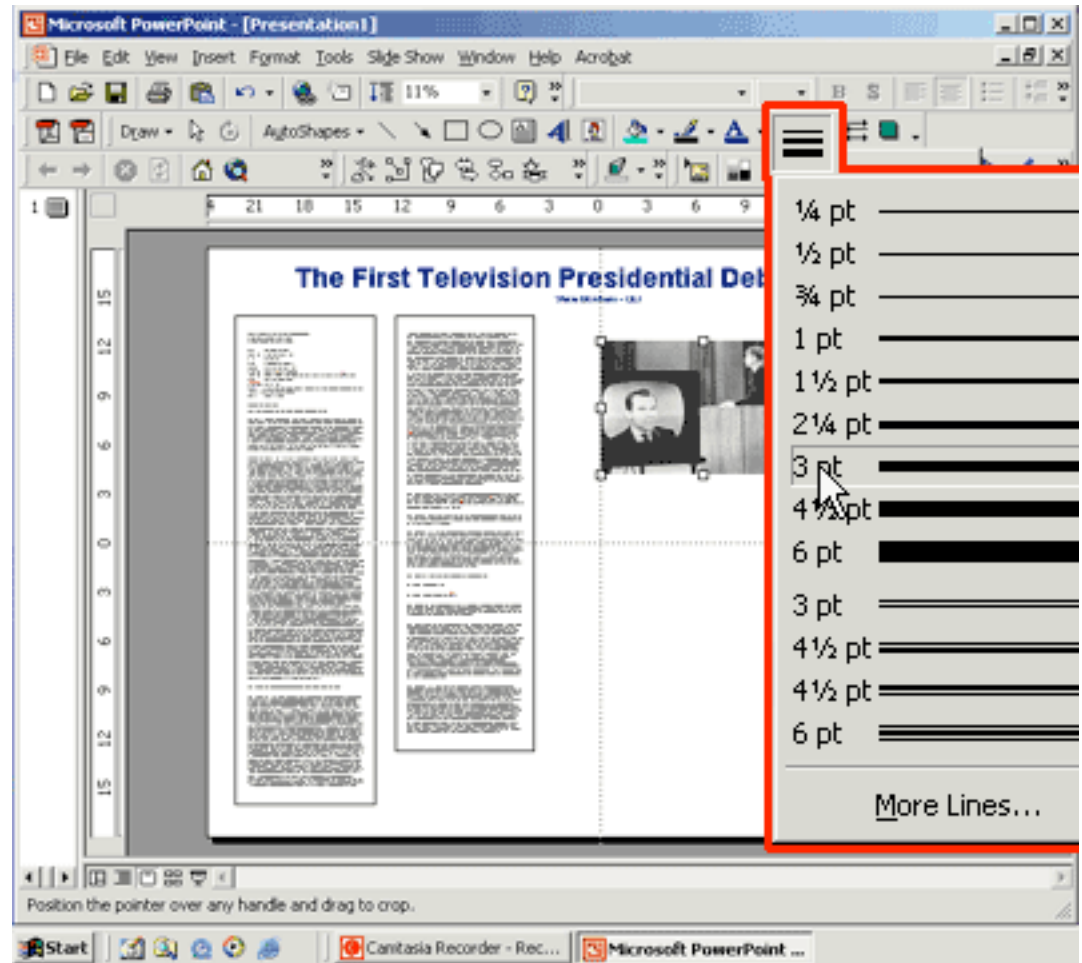
35. Select the cropping tool (circled in red at right) in the Picture Toolbar. The pointer will become the cropping pointer icon. Click-hold atop an anchor on the border of the image and crop the image so that the bottom of the image is just below the bottom of the television screen (about where the blue line is).

Don't worry-- you are not modifying the original image and you can un-crop it if desired later.



36. Now let's place a solid border around the image. With the now-cropped image selected, select a line thickness option from the button bar pulldown. I'm selecting a 3 pixel border. The border's color will be black by default.

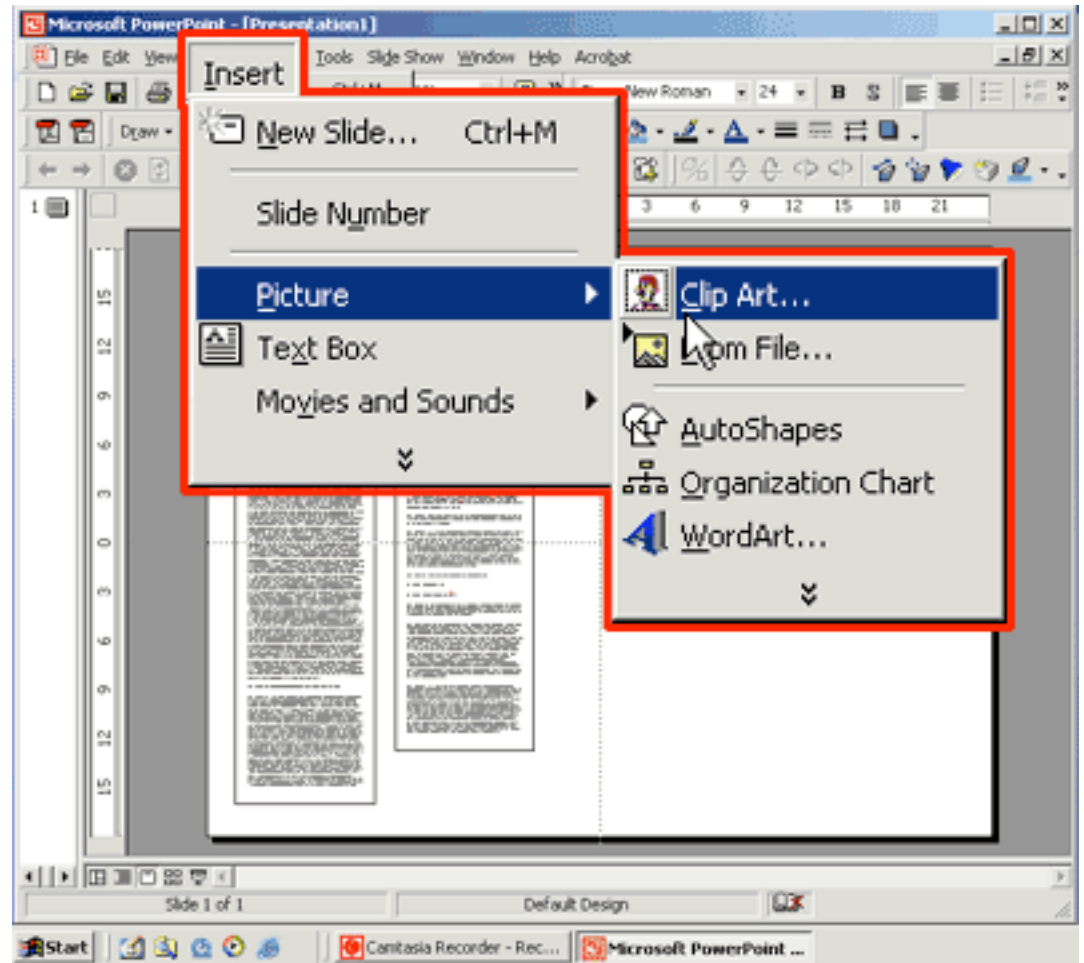
Of course, you can resize or relocate the image after adding a border.



37. Now let's insert another type of image...

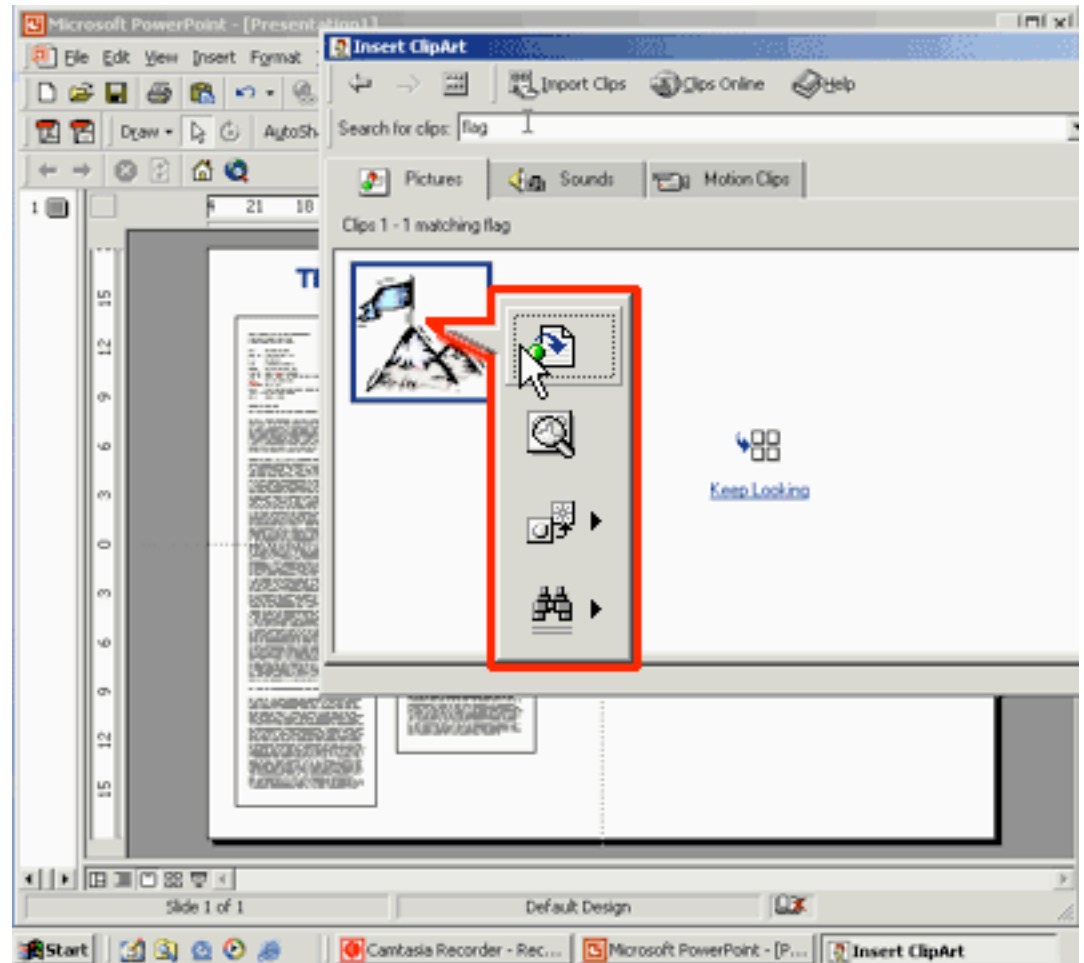
One from the Microsoft Clipart Gallery.

Select: Insert > Picture > Clip Art...



38. Browse the gallery - or search by keyword. I'm looking for a US flag so I'm searching for "flag." If you find an image that is appropriate you can insert it on your slide by clicking the top-most item from the pop-up menu.

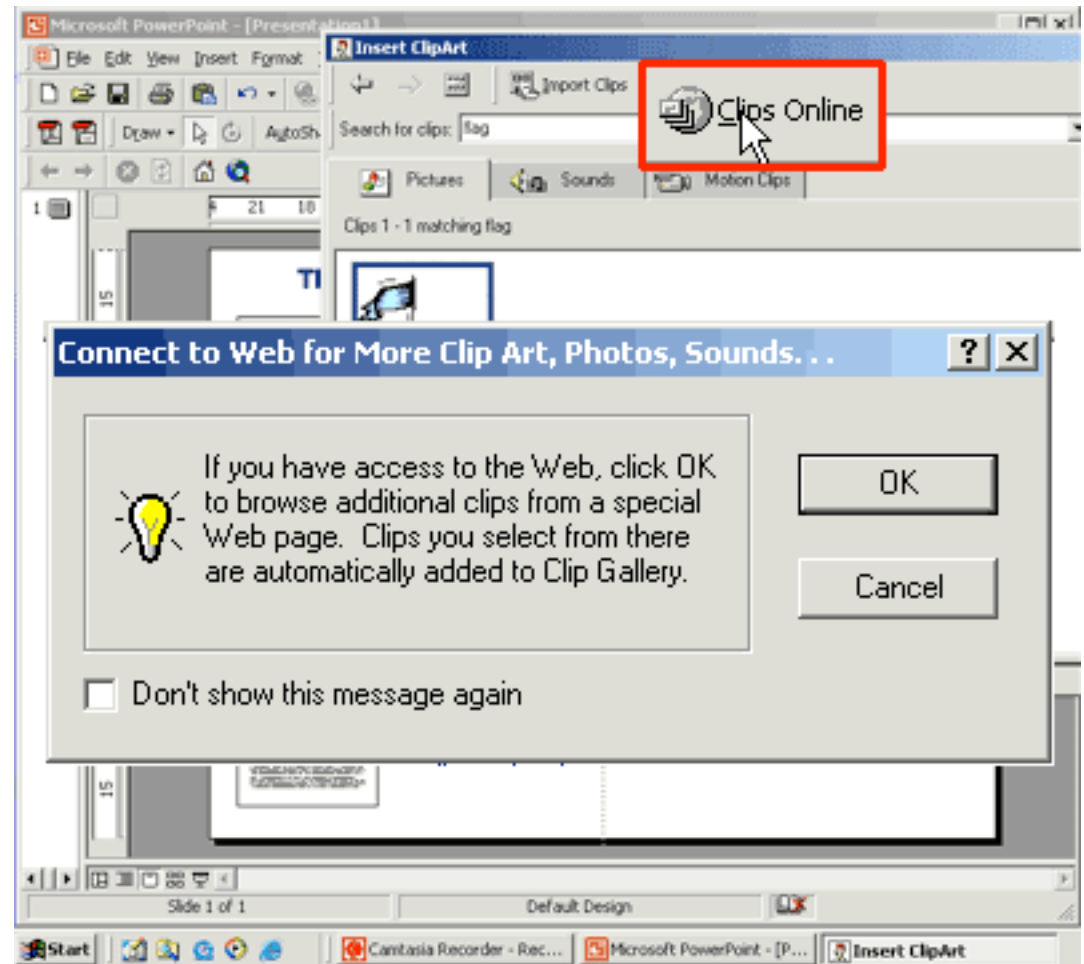
However, this is not what I am looking for so I'm going to show you a really useful Microsoft web link in the next step.



39. With the ClipArt Gallery open, click the "Clips Online" button- then click "OK." You'll need an active Internet connection.

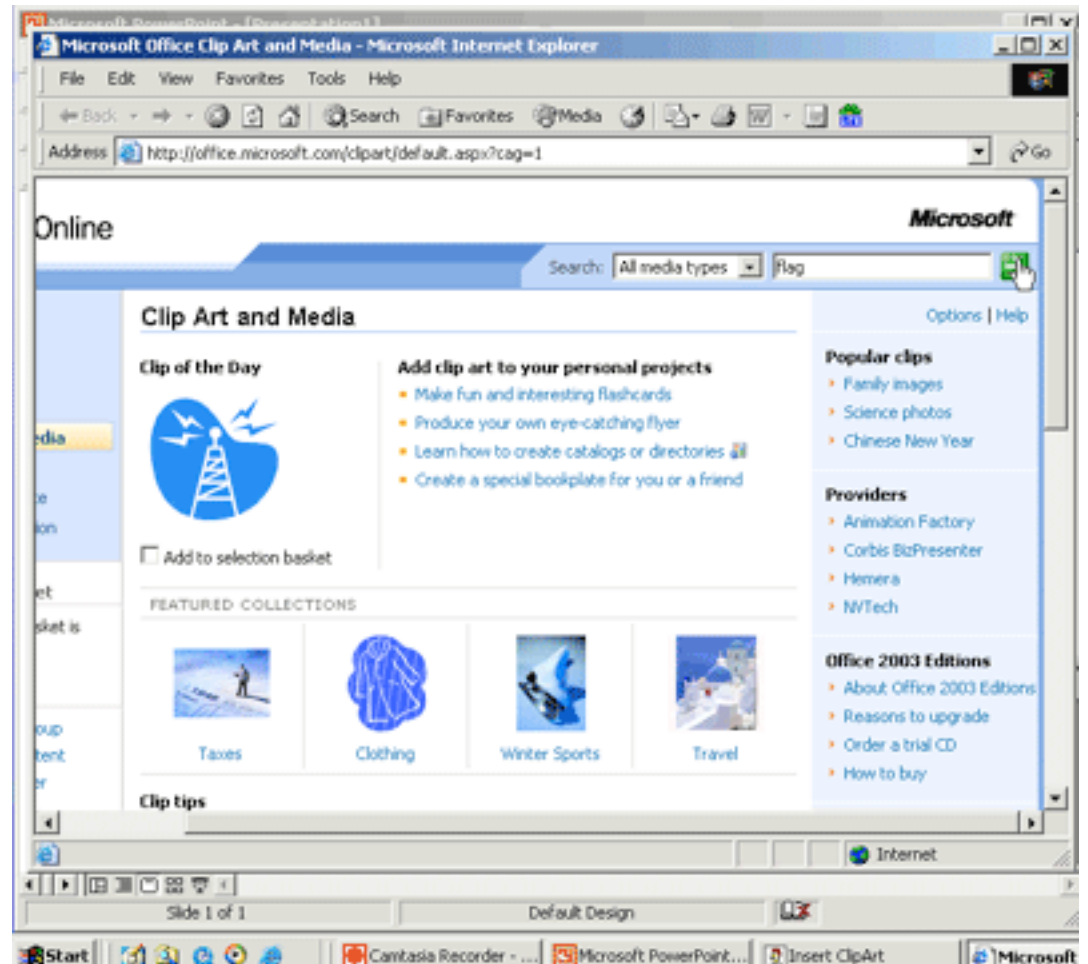
The URL for the Design Gallery live is:

<http://office.microsoft.com/clipart/default.aspx>

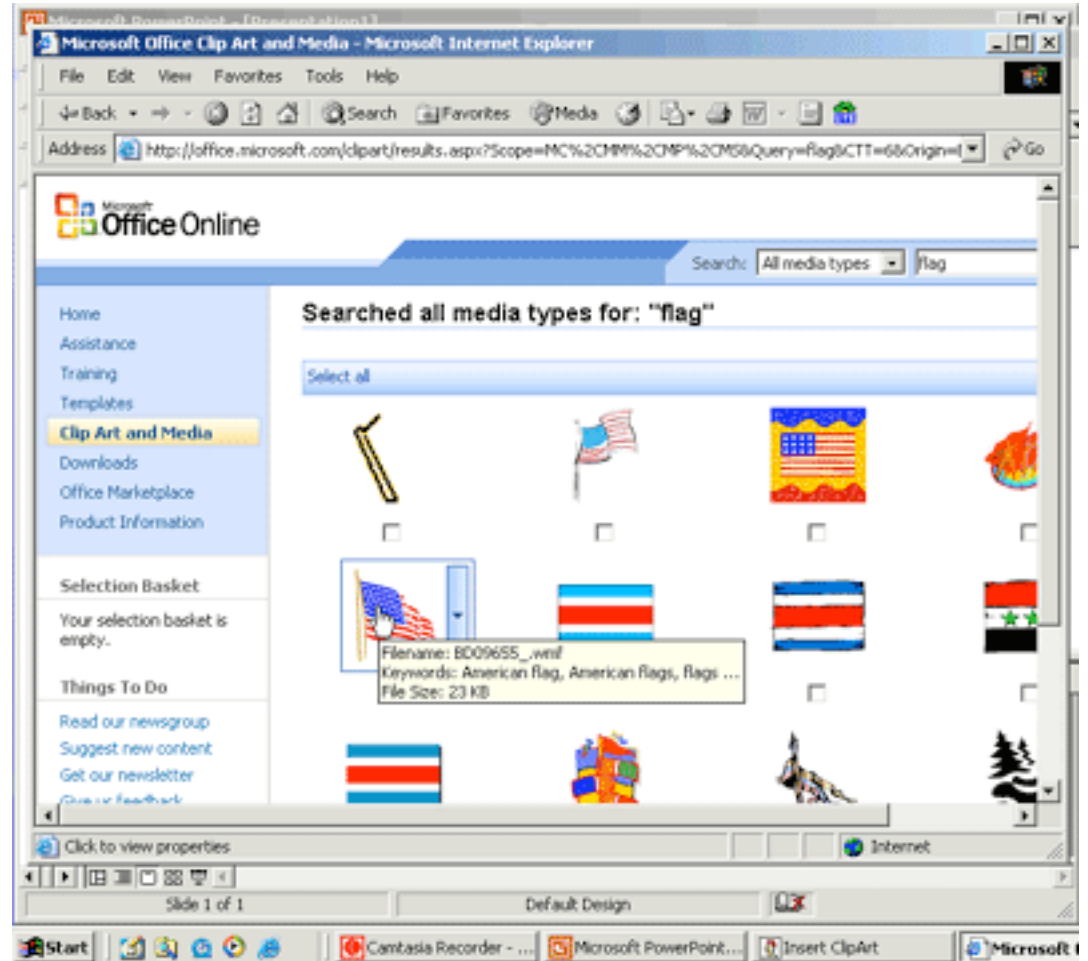


40. Your web browser will open to the web site shown at right where you can search by keyword and download all kinds of cool stuff to add to the Clipart Gallery.

I'm searching for "flag" again.



41. Here's what I'm looking for! Click the checkbox beneath the image to mark it for download.

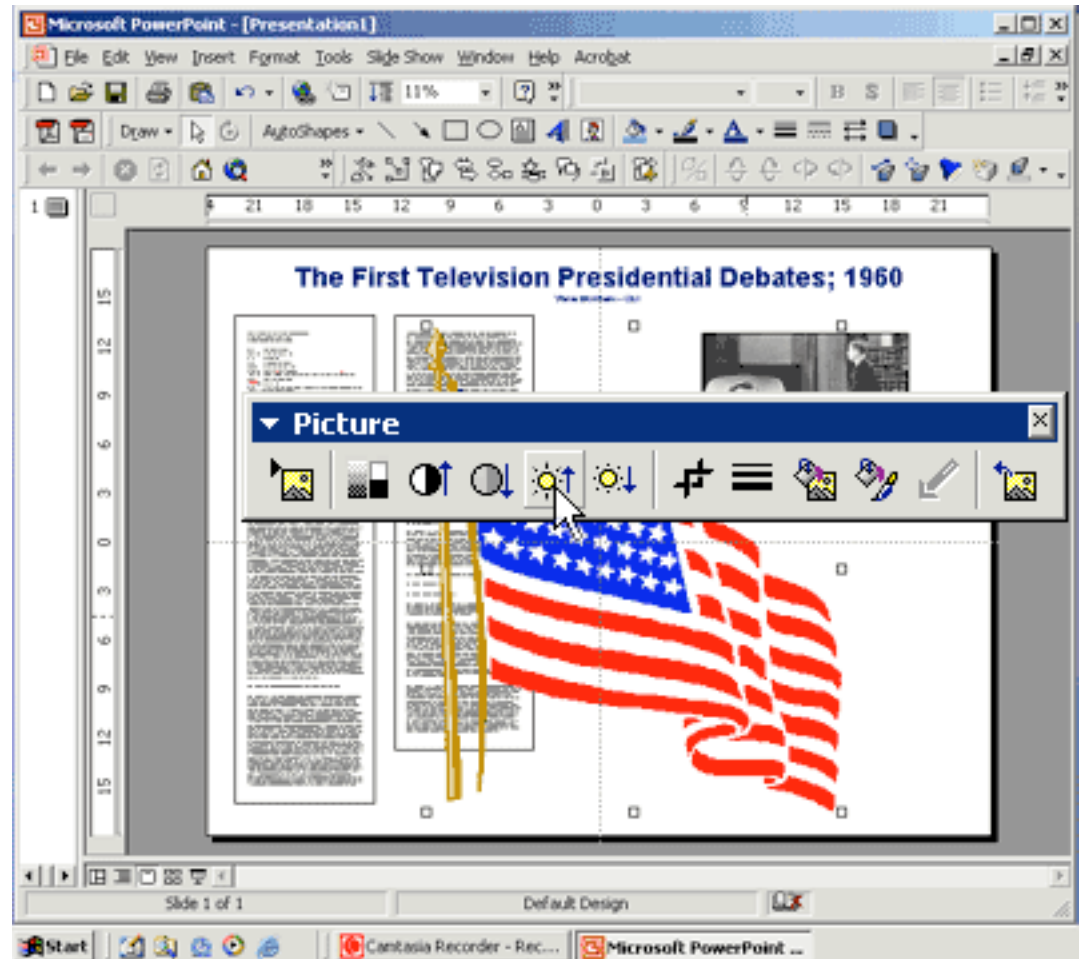


42. Then download it and select: Insert> Picture > Clip Art...

This time the search keyword "flag" should turn up the image you just added to the ClipArt Gallery.

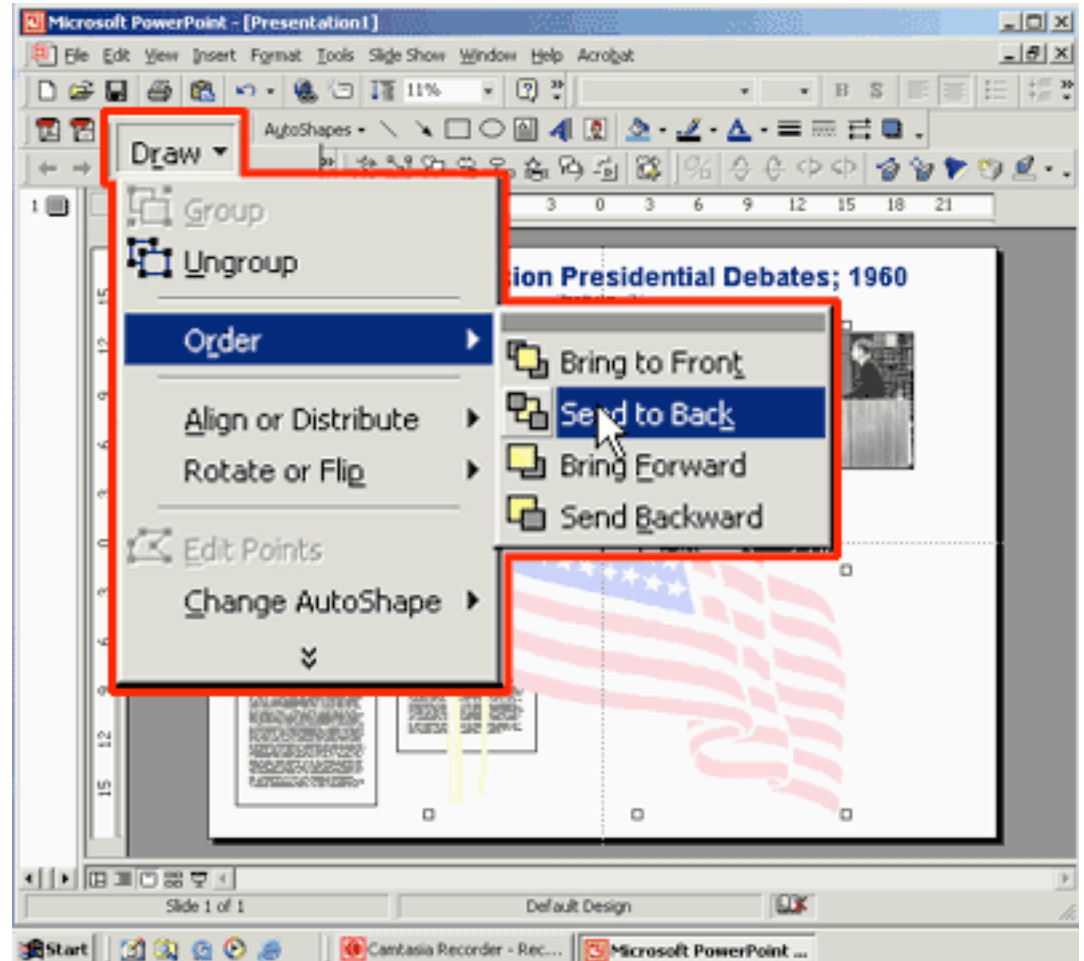
I'm planning on using this image as a background so I'm going to enlarge it and I'll need to brighten it so that it will blend into the background better.

You can brighten an image via the Picture Toolbar-look for the sunshine with the UP arrow beside it. Brighten it so much that it looks "washed out."



43. That looks pretty good. Now let's "send it to the back" behind all the other objects we've created.

From the Draw menu (which is on the button bar)
Select: Order > Send to Back



44. Great! Getting close now. Rearrange &/or modify objects to your desire.

I've stretched the flag to fill the background width and added a white fill color to the two text areas that contain the transcript of the Kennedy-Nixon debate. See step 22 above if you are interested in doing that. I also enlarged the photo a good bit more- It's almost 20" wide and 15" tall now.

I also cut some of the lead-in text (date, debate located, etc.) from the first text box, created a new text box and put that information on the poster in a more prominent (larger [32 point]-bolder) fashion.

Okay. That's enough information to get you started. If I can help further contact me at the Center for Excellence in Teaching:

Phone: 681.0067

E-mail: sbonham@georgiasouthern.edu

Steve Bonham

