TED TALKS TUESDAY

"Dance vs. Powerpoint, A Modest Proposal"
by John Bohannon

Sample Outline:

Goal of Talk: Persuasive talk showing the value of using dance vs. powerpoint to explain scientific topics, and also showing the value of dancers

Scientific Example: Using a laser to cool down matter?
- Light makes things hotter (Photons move randomly, all over)
- A laser focuses photons, in a beam
- Experiment:
    - 1. Trap atoms, which isolates them.
        - They are violent, but with a laser, the atom slows down and gets colder
    - 2. They are in a super-fluid state (not individuals)
        - This slows photons down
        - Flows with no velocity or friction

The Speaker's Background
- He has a PhD in molecular biology
- He is interested in: How can scientists communicate better? Fewer words = better
- He started "Dancer PhD": challenging PhD candidates to explain their concept in dance
    - U of Minnesota works with dancers to understand how cells move

The Proposal
- Bad powerpoint presentations are a serious threat to global economy
    - Lose time
    - Illusion of competence and understanding
- National Debt wants to consider reducing public funding for arts
    - Would this eliminate debt? Artists unemployed, drug use, etc
- Proposal: Use American Dancers to explain many things, including politics
    - Maybe even enjoy just watching them as an art

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Comprehension Questions:

Yes/No
1. Did the speaker give a scientific example about electrons? (no)
2. Do photons in a super-fluid state slow down? (yes)
3. Did the speaker create a program called "Dancer PhD"? (yes)
4. Did the speaker feel that less people would understand information presented with dance as opposed to powerpoint? (no)
5. Did the speaker feel that cutting public funding of arts would help with reducing national debt? (no)

Open-Ended
1. What was the topic of the scientific example that the speaker used to illustrate his point?
2. What is the speaker's background?
3. Name 2 topics the speaker is trying to persuade the audience about.
4. How does the speaker relate dancers and national debt?
5. What do you think the speaker's goal is for a take-away message?