Oral Defense of the Research Question

The Oral Defense is a chance for you to take a step back from your preliminary research and pull your ideas together before embarking on the extensive and more focused research you'll do to answer your RQ. This is you sifting, focusing and organizing your thoughts so you can present them to your supervisor in a detailed and organized manner. It is you PROVING that you have a well thought-out question and plan of attack for the rest of your study.

This is NOT a summary of your essay--you're not that far yet! It IS a considered “plan of attack” to guide you through the rest of your research process. The outline and time-frame below is just a suggestion; you and your supervisor can determine what works best for your and your essay. It is, however, a required meeting with your supervisor, so not doing it isn’t an option! Having said that, it can be as formal or informal as you want. If preparing a Keynote or Prezi will help, go for it! If you just want to talk through it, thinking out loud, that’s good too, as long as you prepare and don’t just “wing it.” That’s a waste of both your and your supervisor’s time.

The defense and the discussion will probably take a fair amount of time, so be sure to make an appointment and schedule accordingly. When you’ve finished, write it up in your RPP, sign it with your supervisor, make a photocopy and bring it to Ms. Hurd.

Suggested Outline

Defense: 10-20 minutes

**Focus of Investigation:** Summarize your preliminary research and background findings, putting your RQ in its context. Make note of significant findings, data, etc. How did all of this lead to your...

**Research Question:** What is your RQ? What is its scope, and why is it worth investigating? What is YOUR interest/connection?

**Methodology:** How will you continue your research? What approaches will you take? Why did you choose these? What problems do you anticipate?

**Literature Review:** What are some of the key sources you’ve found, why are they relevant and reliable? What other information do you need to find?

**Discussion:** 10- ??? minutes

You and your supervisor examine and explore your findings, approach and sources, modifying and adjusting as needed.