

Research Paper Oral Presentations

- **How much time do you have for your presentation?** 4-6 Minutes

It's important to figure out how much material you actually need to have.

It's better to have too much material and to cut it down during your "rehearsal" sessions than to find yourself standing there with nothing to say. BUT don't prepare a full-length essay. Remember that the good delivery of an oral presentation takes time. You want to speak slowly and clearly.

- **What do I talk about?**

- X Tell us about your thesis

- X Inform us of the sources you read to create your paper

- X Teach us about the important information you learned

- X Let us know the interesting bits

- **Can I read from notecards?** The written work is for the eye, not the ear. Your audience wants to hear you talk, not listen to you read. You may have notecards but under *no circumstances should you read word for word* from them. Use them as guidelines for what you want to say. Use outline format or bullet points rather than sentences. This will help prevent you from being tempted to read. Organize your talk as you would an essay. Clear and logical organization is important.

- **Are you allowed to use various media to illustrate points you are making?**

Definitely, you must! You should have some type of visual/auditory material: overhead, video, pages from your paper, etc. The use of visual or auditory material to highlight points in your presentation will encourage your audience to attend to and remember what you are saying. It will also divert a roomful of staring eyes from *looking at you* to looking at something (anything!) *else* for some of the time. Find interesting, unexpected and unusual material--but be sure that it does have direct relevance to your topic. Be sure, too, that you have the mechanics of your media worked out in advance--don't waste time trying to figure out how to use a slide projector or putting slides or overheads in upside down!

- **Will people be allowed to ask questions?** Yes. Handle questions with confidence. Don't panic when you're asked a question. Give it careful--but quick--consideration and answer it to the best of your ability. It's acceptable to tell someone that you don't understand his or her questions. (This is also a good way to stall for time!) Ask them to rephrase or clarify it--or rephrase it yourself and ask them if that is what they meant. It's also all right to admit that you're not sure about the answer to a question--sometimes a lively discussion can ensue if you turn the question over to the class. Try to give everyone who wants to ask a question a turn. Don't just "call on" friends.