

Oral Defense Questions

AP Research

2019-07-21

You can find details pertaining to the oral defense in pages 52–53 of the AP Research Course and Exam Description. The questions are reproduced below so you can fill out responses in preparation for the oral defense. During the oral defense, you will be asked one question in each of the three sections below.

Research/Inquiry Process

- After you chose your research question/project goal, which information guided your choice of a research method/artistic process?
- How is the method/process you chose aligned with the purpose of your research? Which methods did you consider and reject?
- What were the strategies you used to conduct a review of the literature or gather information from the discipline-specific field? Why did you select those strategies? Which strategies did you consider and reject?
- How did you evaluate the sources you collected to make sure they would be credible, valid, and reliable? Which sources did you discard, and why?
- What was one obstacle or challenge you encountered while implementing your research method, and how did you address it?
- What was the most important source of information you found while conducting your research, and why was it important to your research process?

Depth of Understanding

- What was the fundamental argument/idea in your research? How does this argument/idea relate to the primary purpose of your research?
- Which of the various perspectives you explored was the most difficult for you to incorporate into your research inquiry, and why?
- What criteria did you use to discriminate among the perspectives in order to reach a conclusion?
- How might your conclusions/findings/product relate(s) to the current body of work in the community or field?
- What might be the real-world implications or consequences (influence on others' behaviors, decision-making processes, or discoveries) related to your findings?
- What additional questions emerged during your research? Based on your recent experience, what advice would you give to other researchers who might choose to investigate those questions?

Reflection Throughout the Inquiry Process

- Which of your sources was the most influential, and in what way is that influence apparent in your final conclusion or result?

- In which specific part of your research process was your expert adviser most helpful, and how was he or she most helpful? What did you learn from the expert adviser about your field of research? Note: do not ask this question if the student did not engage with an expert adviser.
- If you could revisit the research process, what would you do differently? Would you choose a different area of inquiry, and if so, why? If you would choose the same research question/project goal, what different methods or approaches would you use?
- If you had three more months to work on this research question/project goal, what additional research strategies would you put into practice?
- Think about the initial curiosity that led to your inquiry. What other areas of inquiry might that same curiosity lead to?
- What unanticipated turn did you encounter as your research progressed? What were the reasons for this change in direction or focus, and how did you modify your method or approach?