

Ready to
play?

VIVA CARD GAME

80
QUESTIONS



INTRODUCTION



Why is the problem you
have tackled worth tackling?

LITERATURE REVIEW



How did you review the
literature in your field
of research?

METHODOLOGY



Please explain your
research design.

FINDINGS



DISCUSSION



CONCLUSION



Instructions

- ☐ Start your preparations at least two weeks before your viva defence.
- ☐ Read your work and highlight important sections to help you find your way around.
- ☐ Cut out this pack of cards.
- ☐ Shuffle the cards and draw at least 11-12 cards every day for 7 days. Speak the answers out loud.
- ☐ Start again after 7 days for another round.
- ☐ Do a mock viva with your supervisors or peers. This helps you prepare for unexpected questions.

Shuffle 80 cards, draw, answer, improve Daily.

VIVA VICTORY IS COMING!

FIND OUT MORE:



GENERAL QUESTIONS



Please start by summarising your thesis in 3 minutes*.

*You may replace for 1 or 5 minutes.

GENERAL QUESTIONS



What would be the one sentence you would use to summarise your thesis?

GENERAL QUESTIONS



What is the idea that binds your thesis together?

GENERAL QUESTIONS



What motivated and/or inspired you to carry out this research?

GENERAL QUESTIONS



Have there been any key decisions that have shaped your research?

GENERAL QUESTIONS



What are the strongest/weakest parts of your work?

GENERAL QUESTIONS



What would have improved your work?

GENERAL QUESTIONS



What have you learned from the process of doing your doctoral study?

GENERAL QUESTIONS



How has this doctoral journey changed you as a researcher?

GENERAL QUESTIONS



Did the research process go as planned, or were there any unexpected circumstances that you had to deal with?

GENERAL QUESTIONS



What advice would you give to a doctoral student entering this area?

INTRODUCTION



How did you choose the title of your thesis?

INTRODUCTION



Which problems does your research address?

INTRODUCTION



Why is the problem you have tackled worth tackling?

INTRODUCTION



How did you develop your research questions and/or hypotheses?

INTRODUCTION



What is the reason for selecting the research questions and/or hypotheses?

INTRODUCTION



What are your research questions and/or hypotheses?

INTRODUCTION



What is your study about and why did you choose this?

INTRODUCTION



What are the main practical outcomes of your research?

INTRODUCTION



What are the main theoretical achievements of your research?

INTRODUCTION



How did you further develop the methodology used for the research?

Only if applicable.

LITERATURE REVIEW



How did you review the literature in your field of research?

LITERATURE REVIEW



What are the main issues relevant to your research?

LITERATURE REVIEW



What are the main debates in your research area?

LITERATURE REVIEW



What developments have you witnessed in this field since you began your doctorate?

LITERATURE REVIEW



How have the developments in your field of research changed the context of your work?

LITERATURE REVIEW



Who had the strongest influence in the development of your subject area in theory and practice?

LITERATURE REVIEW



Which are the three most important publications that relate to your thesis?

LITERATURE REVIEW



What published work is closest to yours?
How is your work different?

LITERATURE REVIEW



What are the earliest known roots of your research and what have been the key milestones in developing it?

LITERATURE REVIEW



How does your work relate to xxx*?

*Insert important publications.

LITERATURE REVIEW



What are the most recent major developments in your area?

METHODOLOGY



Why did you choose this research methodology?

METHODOLOGY



What did you gain from your research paradigm?

METHODOLOGY



Please explain your research design.

METHODOLOGY



What alternatives were there to your methodology?

METHODOLOGY



What would you have gained if you had used a different methodological approach?

METHODOLOGY



How did you balance objectivity and reflexivity in your research approach?

METHODOLOGY



Which method did you use to collect data?

METHODOLOGY



What challenges did you encounter during data collection, and how did you address them?

METHODOLOGY



Which analysis method did you choose and why?

METHODOLOGY



In what ways did you validate your results to enhance their credibility?

METHODOLOGY



Was there any other way in which you could have assimilated the data?
If yes, then how?

METHODOLOGY



What sampling strategy have you applied?

METHODOLOGY



How did you deal with the ethical implications of your work?

METHODOLOGY



How did you establish methodological rigour in your study?

METHODOLOGY



How did your methodology align with the theoretical framework of your study?

METHODOLOGY



How does your methodological approach contribute to the originality of your research?

METHODOLOGY



What role did pilot testing play in refining your methodology?

FINDINGS



Please summarise your findings in a few sentences.

FINDINGS



How do you know that your findings are accurate?

FINDINGS



Apart from the topic, you selected, in what other applications can your research findings be used?

FINDINGS



Were there any surprises in your findings, and how did you interpret them?

FINDINGS



How do your findings address the research questions or hypotheses you formulated?

FINDINGS



Is there anything you found that was not part of the results you presented?
If so, why?

FINDINGS



How do your findings align with or differ from previous studies in the literature?

FINDINGS



How might your findings evolve if the study were replicated in a different setting or with a different sample?

FINDINGS



Which results do you find most interesting and why?

DISCUSSION



Please explain in more detail the most important points of your discussion.

DISCUSSION



How has the discussion had an impact on your view of your research area?

DISCUSSION



Who agrees/disagrees with your discussion and why?

DISCUSSION



In what ways do your findings challenge or support existing theories or models?

DISCUSSION



How did you address potential biases or limitations when interpreting your findings?

DISCUSSION



Were there any contradictions in your findings, and how did you explain them in your discussion?

DISCUSSION



If you had to revisit your research, how would you refine your discussion section to strengthen its impact?

DISCUSSION



To what extent can your research be applied beyond its original context?

DISCUSSION



What are the broader implications of your findings for policy, practice, or academia?

CONCLUSION



Who will be most interested in your work?

CONCLUSION



What contributions have you made through your research that justify the awarding of a doctorate?

CONCLUSION



What is the relevance of your work to other researchers?

CONCLUSION



What practical recommendations emerge from your research, and how can they be applied by practitioners?

CONCLUSION



How long term are your contributions?

CONCLUSION



Which aspects of your work do you intend to publish – and where?

CONCLUSION



If you were to start your research again, what would you do differently?

CONCLUSION



Please elaborate on the limitations of your research.

CONCLUSION



You propose future research. How would you start this? What would be the difficulties?

BONUS QUESTION



What's the first thing you'll do after your viva?

BONUS QUESTION



If your thesis was turned into a movie, what would be its title?

BONUS QUESTION



If you had to explain your research to a 6-year-old, how would you do it?

BONUS QUESTION



In hindsight, pick three words that describe your personal doctoral journey.

Please share your story with me:



You're warmly encouraged to use the Viva Card Game for your personal viva preparation or small group sessions. If you wish to use it more formally in workshops, please kindly get in touch first. Commercial use (selling, distributing, publishing) is not permitted.

**You're prepped,
you're ready,
you're done -
now pass the card
game on!**

THANK YOU



Big thanks to Prof Lynn Nichol, Dr Joshua Haist, and Christian Rebehn, who kindly helped with the final review for pilot phase 2. Their feedback made the game smarter, sharper, and even more practical. Artwork and Visuals – Created with a blend of Canva creativity and AI wizardry.

This project is currently in its second pilot phase. It's been tested and improved, but there's always room for fresh insights. As the lucky owner of this free copy, **please give me some feedback** - your experience could influence future versions!

