PRESENTATION PRACTICE:
Meet Your Expert (example)

1. Greet your mentor in a friendly way and thank him or her for meeting with you.
   
   *Hello, Mr. Lowery! I'm so grateful to you for meeting with me. I know you're busy, and I really appreciate your taking the time to talk to me. I've heard about your important work in technology and ethics from my neighbor, Mrs. Hernandez. I hope we can talk today for about thirty minutes. Is that okay with you?*

2. Begin by describing the thesis assignment.
   
   *Thirty-second explanation of the assignment: I'm meeting with you today as part of the senior thesis project at my school. Every senior is supposed to choose an important, controversial topic and research it over the next few months. In the end, I will take a side and deliver my thesis publicly in front of my school. After the presentation, which should last about twenty minutes, I'll answer questions during a Q&A session. It's a big assignment, but I'm excited!*

3. Tell what topic you've chosen and why.
   
   *Two-sentence synopsis of my topic and issue: I've chosen the topic of automation because I believe it will be a battleground in the future. As you know, technology is changing the way we work, and I'm interested in how those changes are going to affect us as humans. The issue I'm interested in is whether humans ought to be selective in the types of technologies we use.*

4. Give your particular take on that issue so far.
   
   *One-sentence draft of thesis statement: My thesis statement right now—though I know it may change as I begin my research—is "Americans should be selective in the automated technologies they choose to use."

5. Ask questions.
   
   *Questions for my mentor:*
     
     a. *What first interested you in this field?*
     
     b. *What new advances are being made in the field of technology and jobs?*
     
     c. *Can you suggest two books and two articles that I should read regarding my topic?*
     
     d. *Who are the two or three most important figures I should know about in this field?*
     
     e. *Are there any ways that come to mind that you think I could improve my thesis statement?*
     
     f. *What other suggestions do you have for me as I start my research?*

   
   *Thank your mentor, and ask if you might be able to send a draft to him or her after you've gotten a little further down the path. Pay attention to cues: Is your expert reluctant to commit to any more assistance, or is he or she eager to meet again? Be careful not to ask for too much, but also don't decline extra help if your mentor offers it.*
   
   *I don't want to take up too much of your time, so I'd better finish up so that you can get back to your work. Thank you for meeting with me! Would you mind if I checked in with you again in about two months, after I have done some research and have a working draft, so that you could look at it and offer me suggestions? I think it would require about half an hour of your time.*