Kirschenbaum’s article “What is Digital Humanities and What’s It Doing in English Departments” raises the question of how a reader views the old and modern English language a text is written in. How and why has the old English language changed to be interpreted with a more modern approach? This question can be answered by studying what influences a person’s mindset. Is it their surroundings or people they associate with on a daily basis? What does a person think of when they hear the name Shakespeare and the popular text, *Romeo and Juliet* or Ruth Hall’s *Fanny Fern*? Digital humanities are such an intriguing word that its meaning will vary depending on the context it is used in. These classic novels can be analyzed in using the digital humanities to determine what love actually means in William Shakespeare’s novels or how females view their changing role as a woman from Ruth Hall’s time period to the present time.

I would like to approach this topic with an open mindset, as there are benefits and cons a definition of a word. Some of these benefits and cons are influenced by one reading a physical book as opposed to using a tablet, laptop, or other digital device. Has society offered a balance between the two types of ways one reads and interprets literature in the world? Can the two even coexist in an English department or is one method of reading more dominant than the other? The purpose of this project will be to see how the stereotypical definition of one learning or reading an English text has changed. Usually in English classes students are taught to close read, but it is also important to distant read. These two different approaches bring about the issue of subjective...
versus objective and why the meaning of a word or theme of a well-known text has changed over time.

To approach this topic I am interested to look at certain time periods in history. Specifically, I think it would be good to analyze the difference in time from the 1590s-1600s, 1850s-1860s, and from 2012-2014.

Using a Google’s N-gram viewer, I could type a certain word relating to a specific text or corpus in a designated time frame. I can also use Wordle to make a diagram of words associated with the main words I am interested in analyzing in Romeo and Juliet and in Ruth Hall. I am also curious if there is a program or way I could determine what people thought the meaning of a particular word is based on the context it is being used in. The key to this project will be statistics.