Peer-Reviewed Articles

Save yourself a lot of time by learning how to quickly find, read, and organize information from peer-reviewed articles.

Using Peer-Reviewed Articles to Your Advantage

Peer-reviewed articles are scholarly articles that were reviewed by research experts before they were published. They save you time because they were already evaluated by an expert, so you can spend less time evaluating them yourself.

Using peer-reviewed articles in your research assignments helps you:
- establish credibility;
- provide evidence for your arguments;
- contribute to the quality of your assignments.

Finding Peer-Reviewed Articles

To find peer-reviewed articles, select the *Peer-Reviewed Articles* checkbox from the left sidebar of your SuperSearch results page.

If SuperSearch does not have your article, you can check the journal's website for information on their peer review or editing process. To do so, search the title in Google Scholar along with the phrase peer review (e.g., "Journal of the American Medical Association" AND "peer review").

Reading Peer-Reviewed Articles Quickly

Structure of Peer-Reviewed Articles

Peer-reviewed articles are broken up into sections, which are listed in the following order: abstract, introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, conclusion, and references.

When to Read the Entire Article

Only read the entire article if:
- you are conducting original research;
- your assignment requires you to evaluate the research methods used;
- your article is a literature review or meta-analysis.

Recommended Reading Sequence

Avoid wasting time reading irrelevant articles by skimming them in the following order:

1. **Abstract**

   Read the Abstract to determine if the article is relevant to your research topic. The abstract is a summary of the article, and it highlights the research's key findings and population studied.

2. **Discussion**

   Read the Discussion section to find the researchers' interpretations of the results and the answers to the research questions.

3. **Conclusion**

   Read the Conclusion to learn about the significance of the research results in a larger context and the gaps that need to be filled by future research.

4. **Introduction**

   Skim the Introduction to find the research questions and researchers' rationale for conducting the study.

5. **Literature Review**

   Skim the Literature Review, which outlines previous research on the topic and puts the researchers' work in context.

6. **Methodology**

   Skip the Methodology section unless you need to know how the research was conducted or determine the credibility of the research method.

7. **Results**

   Skip the Results section unless you need to examine uninterpreted or raw results of the research.

8. **References**

   Skim this section to find additional relevant resources on your topic.

Organizing Information from Peer-Reviewed Articles

A literature matrix will save you a lot of time as you start writing your paper because it helps you examine how your articles relate to and differ from one another. Synthesizing information from multiple sources is much easier when you can compare the themes and conclusions side by side.

Learn more about taking notes with a literature matrix by watching the Writing Center's *Working with Research* tutorial: **http://bit.ly/working-with-research**

Download a blank literature matrix: **http://bit.ly/literature-review-matrix**