

# Review the Literature

Reviewing the literature on a research topic involves analyzing each contribution you find—major players, articles, events, etc.—to see how they have impacted the conversation as a whole. This kind of analysis lets you deepen your knowledge and develop a sense of what is missing from the discussion, i.e., what you might want to contribute later on. If it is helpful, use the following format to note each source, its message, and its relevance to your topic’s conversation. In addition, think about how the sources might relate to one another, as well as what questions remain to be answered.

1. What events, authors, and articles have contributed to the conversation thus far? And what does each of these sources contribute?

| Who/what is the source (name, qualifications)? | What does the source say? | How did/does the source’s contribution change the conversation? |
|--|---------------------------|---|
|  |                           |   |

2. Has the conversation on this topic developed one event or article at a time (if so, make a timeline), or has it split into subtopics (if so, make a web)? This will help you organize your information by chronology or by subtopic if you are writing a literature review.

3. What compelling question remains unanswered that you would like to explore further?

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