

Reading Scholarly Articles Tutorial: Tips & Tricks

OU Libraries | Last Updated December 2018

Kinds of Information You'll Encounter

Scholarly Articles	Popular Articles
Structured format <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Author credentials• Detailed visuals (figures, tables, charts, images) with captions• References to other scholarly publications	No specific format
Presents new ideas, findings or results (can include data)	Reports information without presenting new ideas, findings, or results
Discipline-specific language	Language understood by general public

Remember! Different kinds of disciplinary articles may have slightly different features

Dissecting Scholarly Articles

Section	What Will I Find in This Section?
Article Citation	Information about the article, including where it was published and how it can be accessed
Title, Authors & Abstract	Use this information as clues to determine if the article is worth investigating further <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The abstract is a summary of the whole article and may be structured to represent research methods, results, and conclusions
Introduction	Background information and context about research, as well as the goal of research
Literature Review or Background	Provides an overview of the previous research related to the researchers' work <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May be weaved throughout the Introduction section, or a freestanding section• Look for citations in text

Questions? Contact Amanda Hess (nichols@oakland.edu) or Joanna Thielen (jthielen@oakland.edu).

Methods or Methodology	Information about how research was conducted
Findings, Results & Discussion	Information on what the researchers found, and what it means
Conclusions	States the conclusions of the research, often connecting back to the Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some disciplines present ideas for future study on their topic
List of References	Citations to scholarly sources the researchers used in informing their research
Supplementary Information or Appendices (sometimes included)	Information that's important to understanding the research, but doesn't fit into the article itself -- such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey instruments or questionnaires • Additional methods or results • Additional figures or visuals • Additional references

Reading Scholarly Articles Efficiently

Suggestions for effectively reading scholarly articles:

- Don't read from start to finish!
 - Look at the information about the article (title, author, abstract, citation)
 - Skim the Introduction
 - Glance at section headings
 - Review Discussion/Conclusions sections
 - Read through the other sections
 - After reading each of these sections, ask yourself "Is this article still relevant to me?" If yes, continue reading. If no, stop!
- Read articles several times
- Markup the text as you read with questions, notes, etc.
- Discuss scholarly articles with others -- classmates, professors, etc.
- Look up unfamiliar terms -- and write down the definitions on the article itself!

Suggestions for concentration and focus:

- Minimize electronics
- Find a quiet place to read (3rd floor of the Kresge Library!)
- Remember to take care of yourself!
- Know your distractors
- Set attainable goals
- Build in breaks
- Use temptation bundling (1 article read = 1 piece of chocolate!)

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