

Literature Review Checklist

Choosing Sources

1. Is it clear what is being synthesized? (i.e. did you list all your sources and cite them correctly?)
2. Is the literature you have selected relevant?

Introduction to the Review

1. Is the area of interest explained? Is sufficient background given?
2. Is the purpose of the review made evident to the reader?
3. If terminology or concepts are being introduced as part of the review, are these defined or clarified?
4. Is the organization of the review made evident to the reader?

Organization and Writing Qualities of the Review

1. What is the organizational structure of your paper? Does it work?
2. How is each paragraph structured?
3. Are headings used to group the literature according to themes?
4. If there are sections within the review are these logically ordered and explained to the reader?
5. Does the author provide clearly articulated transitions between sections? (Is the storyline easy to follow?)
6. Is each item in the literature review cited appropriately?

Presentation of Studies Being Reviewed

1. Does the presentation of the studies within sections include a storyline, that is, is the connection between each piece of literature made explicit for the reader?
2. Is it always clear which source you are talking about at any given moment?
3. Are the arguments of each of your sources clear? Have you summarized them well? Have you failed to talk about any key points?
4. Can you tell exactly what each paragraph is about and how it relates to the main topic? Read the lead sentence in 5 or 6 successive paragraphs. If this were all that was written would the storyline in this literature review still be evident (it should be!)?

Evidence of Analysis, Synthesis, Critique Taking Place Within the Review

1. Does the author go beyond summarizing the studies? Is there evidence of analysis and critique of individual studies?
2. Is there evidence of analysis and synthesis across the studies? Are the messages that emerge from the literature made evident? (This may involve comparing results, identifying differences among a number of studies).
3. Are the gaps, problems, or issues unresolved by the literature clearly identified?
4. Does the author provide evidence to support the arguments, analysis, and

- criticism being made? Is the evidence sufficient and convincing?
5. Is the author's voice separate and distinct from that of the authors they are summarizing, critiquing, and reviewing?

Conclusion to the Review

1. Does the author provide some summary and conclusion that pulls together their entire review?
2. Does the author identify the contribution made by their review efforts?
3. Does the author make suggestions for research that needs to be conducted in the future?