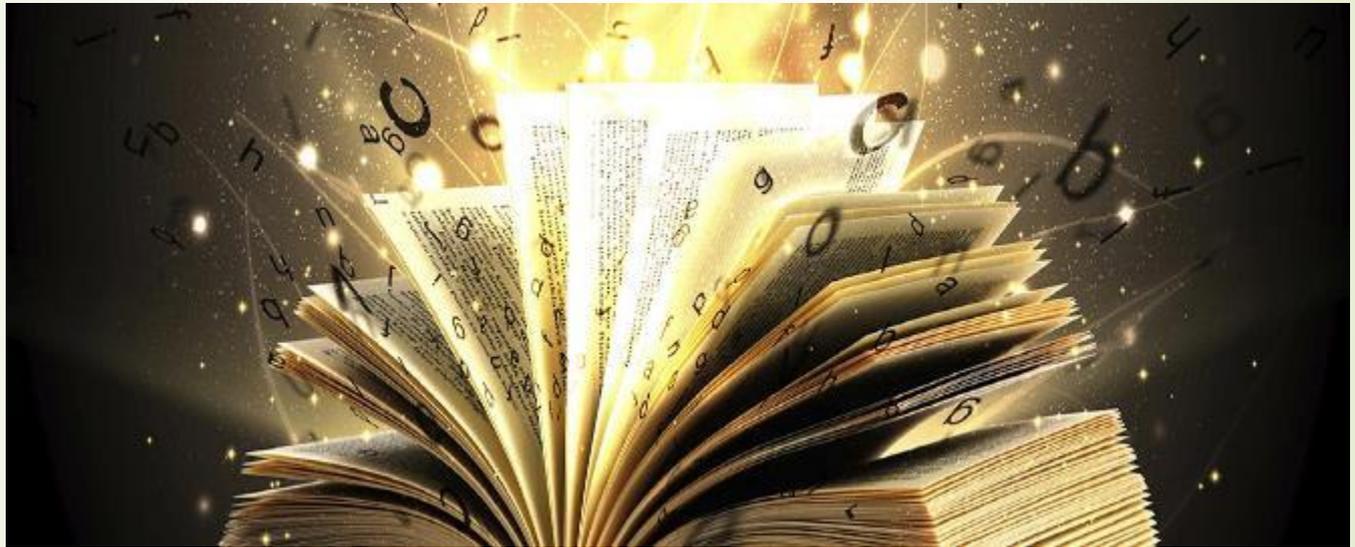


# What To Do With Sources



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# Authors Tasks In Literature Review



- ▶ “Protecting Unauthorized Immigrant Mothers Improves Their Children’s Mental Health.”
- ▶ The authors ask their research question in the first paragraph: They want to know the impact of a parent’s unauthorized status on a child’s well-being. The last sentence of the first paragraph begins the literature review section of the article, as the authors note that their study is filling a gap in existing literature.
- ▶ The literature review continues for the next 3 paragraphs, as the authors note relevant studies that connect parental immigration status to child development and note the methodological issues that have prevented a full understanding of this question.
- ▶ They then outline the nature of their study—the subjects, sources of data, specific variables used, method of analysis—before turning to their results.
- ▶ They close with the implications of their results and possible steps for future research.

# Utilizing Your Resources

- It's important to take notes during this process so you can find your way back later to any sources you found and any important ideas that occurred to you along the way.
- First, before you write down the source's research findings, note its bibliographical information as well as the page or paragraph number of any material that interests you.
- If you want to save yourself time later, upload the information into a citation manager system—now included in many word processing programs. That will create a bibliography with a single click.
- Make sure you know exactly where each idea and finding come from, so you don't have to go back and look it up again later.



# Book Sources

- Next, for each article or book, take notes on its claims, research design, and implications.
- Note exactly what the authors claim to contribute as well as the details of their research methodology used to evaluate those claims.
- Try to paraphrase whenever possible. As you read, you may question the process or results, particularly as you comb through multiple articles on the subject. Note those issues, too. Also note any connections or contradictions to other articles you've read.
- At this stage, it is really important to clearly distinguish between what the authors are saying and *what you think about* what the authors are saying.



# Articles

- ▶ With the science articles, you would note the full citation and then mark the research question, if you have any questions, ideas, comments, but use a different color, highlight them, or bowl them to make it clear that it is your analysis and commentary and not what's found in the article itself.



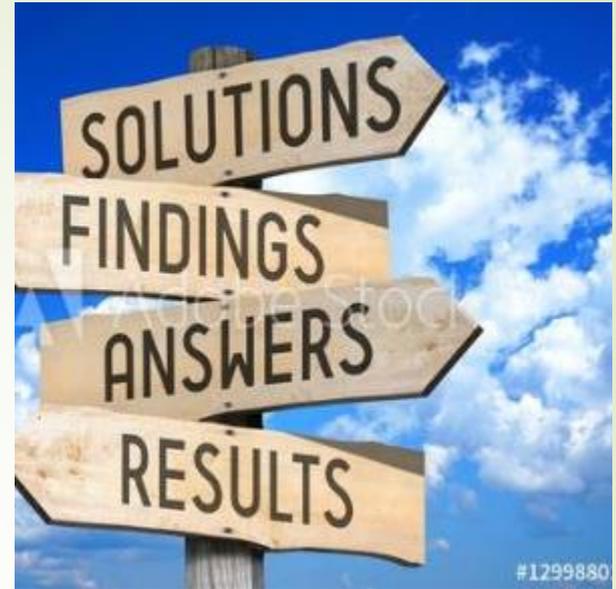
# Citing Your Sources

- Repeat this process with all of your sources.
- Depending on the size of your project, you may consult 15, 50, or hundred or more sources.
- You want to be comprehensive and use the sources you are reading as a guide.
- If they have a citing and average of 25 sources—that's a good number to aim for.



# Drawing & Presenting Your Conclusions

- The final step is to draw and eventually present your conclusions about the literature.
- Remember that the literature tells you about the state of knowledge on your chosen topic. That means the point is not simply to report that scholar X said this and scholar Y said that.
- A list of sources and their contribution and findings—the notes you just took—is called an annotated bibliography. It is a source-by-source list of the important characteristics and findings of each book or article.
- It is an initial first step to writing a literature review, but the literature review itself requires you to go further.

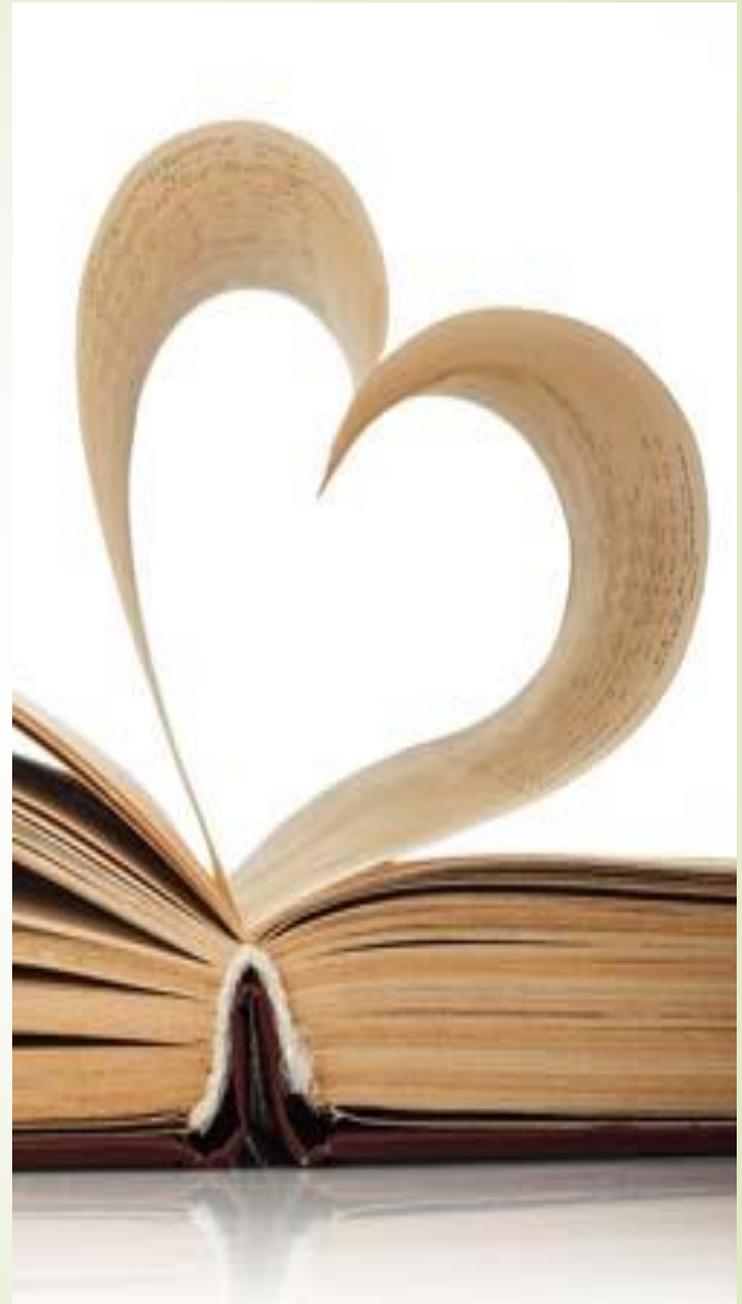






# Writing Your Literature Review & Organizing Your Thoughts

- There are a lot of comparisons to make as you synthesize your sources and write your literature review.
- You might look for common themes across the sources that keep popping up, or you might look for gaps—issues or ideas that the authors seem to miss but that you think are very relevant and perhaps worth exploring in your own project.
- Another way to organize your thoughts is to look for debates between authors. Where do they disagree, and is there room for you to enter the debate with your own contribution? Are the different theoretical perspectives you encounter in contradiction to each other? If so, that might be a way to organize your review of the literature.





# Discovering the Methodology

- One last thing to look for are methodological choices and debates.
- You might note that the dominant methodology used to study similar questions to yours is quantitative—which means that a qualitative approach might provide new insights. This means that a literature review is not simply a paragraph about what each author has to say.
- Instead, you should focus your writing by one of those methods, using themes, gaps, debates, or methodology to organize your thoughts.
- You cite sources as a type of evidence to support your argument that this theme, gap, debate, or methodology is a useful way of understanding the current scholarly approach to your topic.



**Thank  
You 😊**

Questions  
and  
Comments

