

# HOW TO START WRITING A LITERATURE REVIEW

*Guide to writing a literature review. Why do we write literature reviews? Take notes as you read and start to organise your review around.*

What are the results and conclusions of the study? For instance, you might explain that your review includes only peer-reviewed articles and journals. What are the major relationships, trends and patterns? Move around the slips of paper until you come up with a way of organizing the codes that makes sense. Note down all your initial thoughts on the topic. You should have a rough idea of your strategy before you start writing. Summarize and synthesize Remember to summarize and synthesize your sources within each paragraph as well as throughout the review. By publication: Order your sources by publication chronology, then, only if the order demonstrates a more important trend. You can use our free citation software to quickly create correct and consistent APA citations or MLA format citations. Or the review might focus on the economic impact of whaling on a community. Disagreement about the constructs you are investigating When you find any of these five things, type the relevant excerpt directly into a Word document. A thematic review would have subtopics based upon factors that relate to the theme or issue. An extensive review of relevant material will include "books, journal articles, reports, government documents, conference proceedings and web resources. Divide outside works into categories and concepts in support or against a particular position. A raging debate? Is this article helpful? Use evidence In the example above, the writers refer to several other sources when making their point. Where might the discussion proceed? I would be more motivated to write it, and my colleagues could read through it without falling asleep. The mere fact of having a system can make the literature review seem much less daunting, so I recommend this system for anyone who feels overwhelmed by the prospect of writing a literature review. A good first draft should always be messy. These are very useful for identifying relevant sources - but do go back to the original texts and develop your own critical analysis if possible. How do I get started? Make sure each note goes into a pile. Here are a couple of examples: The current trend in treatment for congestive heart failure combines surgery and medicine. Thematic If you have found some recurring central themes, you can organize your literature review into subsections that address different aspects of the topic. Troyka, Lynn Quitman. So, when my supervisor asked me to see him a few days later, I was prepared to re-write my literature review. A better idea is to use databases. However, progression of time may still be an important factor in a thematic review.