

THEORY, ART, AND ARTISTIC PRACTICES

LITERARY REVIEW

A literature review is a survey of scholarly sources (books, journal articles, films) on a particular topic.

Literary review gives an overview of key findings, concepts and developments in relation to a research problem or question.

This is the first step in understanding the state of knowledge on your topic before you begin your own research.

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LITERARY REVIEW

GOALS OF LITERARY REVIEW

Analyze, interpret and critically evaluate the literature.

Synthesize sources to highlight patterns, themes, conflicts, and gaps.

Show the state of current knowledge in relation to a central research question or problem.

Source: <https://www.scribbr.com/dissertation/literature-review/>

THEORY, ART, AND ARTISTIC PRACTICES

LITERARY REVIEW

STEP 1: Collect, evaluate and select literature.

STEP 2: Find connections and themes.

STEP 3: Plan your literature review's structure.

STEP 4: Write your literature review.

Source: <https://www.scribbr.com/dissertation/literature-review/>

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LITERARY REVIEW

STEP 1: COLLECT, EVALUATE AND SELECT

Start by creating a list of keywords related to your research topic and question.

When you find a useful article, check the reference list to find more relevant sources.

If the same authors, books or articles keep appearing in your reading, make sure to check them out.

You can find out how many times an article has been cited on Google Scholar—high citation counts mean the article has been influential in the field.

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STEP 1: COLLECT, EVALUATE AND SELECT

Some sources:

Aalto Library:

<http://libguides.aalto.fi/c.php?g=410690&p=2796752>

JSTOR: <https://www.jstor.org>

Google Scholar

Project Muse <https://muse.jhu.edu>

FIAF (International Federation Film Archives)

<https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.aalto.fi/fiaf/index>

Yale Film Research Guide

<https://guides.library.yale.edu/c.php?g=295800&p=1975071>

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STEP 1: COLLECT, EVALUATE AND SELECT

Start by reading the abstract as well as first/last paragraphs to determine whether the article is useful.

Make sure you read any landmark studies and major theories in your field of research.

Start the writing process as you read: Take notes that you can later incorporate into the text of your literature review and your dissertation.

Write a paragraph of summary and analysis for each source. This helps you remember what you read and saves time later in the process. Believe me, it will save you a lot of time later!

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LITERARY REVIEW

STEP 1: COLLECT, EVALUATE AND SELECT

For each publication, ask yourself:

- What question or problem is the author addressing?
- What are the key concepts and how are they defined?
- What are its key insights and arguments?
- What are the conclusions of the study?
- How does the publication relate to other literature in the field?
Does it confirm, add to, or challenge established knowledge? *You should try to find who's this author entering a conversation with (responding to, supporting who, challenging who/what?)*
- How does the publication contribute to your understanding of the topic?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the research?

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STEP 2: FIND CONNECTIONS AND THEMES.

You need to identify relationships between the sources you've read.

This will help you to situate the current state of your topic and gives you ideas on how your own research could contribute to it.

Look for:

- Themes: what questions or concepts recur across the literature?
- Pivotal publications: are there any influential theories or studies that changed the direction of the field?
- Trends and patterns (in theory, method or results): do certain approaches become more or less popular over time?
- Debates, conflicts and contradictions: where do sources disagree?
- Gaps: what is missing from the literature? Are there weaknesses that need to be addressed?

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STEP 3: PLAN THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR LIT. REVIEW

CHRONOLOGICAL

Trace the development of the topic over time. Try to analyze patterns, turning points and key debates that have shaped the direction of the field. Give your interpretation of how and why certain developments occurred.

THEMATIC

Have you found some recurring central themes? Organize your literature review into subsections that address different aspects of the topic.

THEORETICAL

You can use it to discuss various theories, models, and definitions of key concepts.

A literature review will help you go find your theoretical framework for your dissertation.

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STEP 4: WRITE YOUR LITERARY REVIEW

Tips as you write your literary review:

Summarize and synthesize: give an overview of the main points of each source.

Analyze and interpret: don't just paraphrase other researchers—add your own interpretations where possible about the significance of the source to the topic.

Critically evaluate: mention the strengths and weaknesses of your sources.