

Building the literature review

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Overview

- Purposes
- Literature searches
- Active reading
- Annotated bibliography
- Memoing
- Research Questions
- ‘Joining the dots’
- ‘Thinking outside the box’

Purposes

- Demonstrates scholarship
 - Knowledge and understanding
 - ‘Paying your dues’ – citing and referencing
- Situating/ positioning your research in a field
- Providing a precedent for your Research Questions
 - Are these good questions? Relevant? Timely?
 - Can you identify a ‘hot’ topic?

Literature searches

- Manual (particularly older material)
 - Journals, books, magazines, newspapers
 - Using call numbers (eg. 613.17)
- Electronic
 - Data bases, eg. Sport Discus, Physical Education Index
 - Web resources
 - Key words, delimiting the search

Active Reading

- How do I know if a paper is relevant to my research/ worth reading?
- The title – a ‘hot topic’?
- Abstracts
- Headers and sub-headers (what’s the storyline?)
- Introduction and conclusion (entry and exit)
- Opening and closing paragraphs of sections (entry and exit)

Annotated Bibliography

- Full bibliographic details and date of entry
- Exposition/ Summary
 - In your own words
 - Provide enough detail
 - Include additional information in parenthesis, eg. page numbers of quotable text
- Critique/ Commentary
 - Strengths and weaknesses
 - Points of particular interest to you

Memoing

- Notes to self
 - Include date and topic
 - Reflections, ideas, concerns
- Length?
- Making connections, seeing links, noting gaps
- Unresolved issues
- Blogging – sharing ideas under construction

Research Questions

- Literature review provides a precedent for asking the questions
- Begin to align annotated bibliography with RQs
- Use the RQs as a means of checking back on the relevance of sections of literature

‘Joining the dots’

- Preparations for beginning to write
 - Identify topics, sub-topics and organise the annotated bibliography into clusters
 - Draw a conceptual map
- Writing strategies – constructing a narrative
 - List highlights/ main points
 - Write a (mini) storyline
 - Note discontinuities
- Drafting and redrafting
 - Incorporate new reading and new insights
 - Resolve discontinuities

'Thinking outside the box'

- Is there a place for creativity in writing a literature review?
- Uses of memoing and blogging
- Sharing drafts and the role of critical friends
- The importance of thinking aloud and conversation