

Your Literature Review

- Purpose: to summarise & assess the current work on a given academic question.
- Aim for between 5-10 resources.
- You don't need to give comprehensive coverage.
- You don't need to give equal coverage to each resource: prioritise.
- Make skilful use of inspectional reading and other resources like book reviews. You can search for these in the library's catalogue.
- Use Google Books and Google Scholar to search on particular resources to see how they have been used by other scholars.



Building your Literature Review

- Think of yourself as a reporter: where is the “drama”?
- Tell the story of the research.
- Intro: Define and introduce the topic.
- Anticipate possible assumptions of the reader and:
 - What are common misconceptions about the topic?
 - What is something surprising or interesting you learned in surveying the literature?



Building your Literature Review

- Body: Organise your literature review by:
 - Key topics.
 - Critical questions.
 - Methodological approach.
 - Phases of research.
- Once you've determined a structure, group the literature under different subheadings. Some literature might appear more than once under any given topic/subheading.
- Highlight the contributions and/or weaknesses of each publication and what it contributes to the overall picture of the research.
- Conclusion: Identify areas that are well-covered across the field, and those in need of further research or analysis.

