

PO479: WRITING A LITERATURE REVIEW

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JAN 2019



WHAT IS IT & WHAT DOES IT DO?

- **Shows you know about your topic**
- **Demonstrates your skills in**
 - locating key resources
 - critically appraising them
- **Puts your work in context & justifies it**
 - What has/hasn't been done
 - Key debates & perspectives
 - Identifies gap

FORMAT & STRUCTURE

Good:

- **Thematic:** synthesize into themes/patterns
- **Analysis:** critical evaluation
- **Focused:** directly relates to your topic/question

Bad:

- **Sequential:** annotated bibliography or list
- **Description:** summary
- **Vague:** on your general topic

PROCESS & STEPS

- 1. Topic/research question**
- 2. Literature search**
- 3. Analytical reading**
- 4. Synthesis & themes**
- 5. Organization**
- 6. Writing**

TOPIC/RESEARCH QUESTION

- **Choose & focus your topic**
- **Create a research question**
- **Affects entire research project**
- **Can't do lit review before question**

LITERATURE SEARCH

- **Search systematically**
- **Construct a search strategy**
- **Decide where to search**
- **Repeat your strategies across databases**
- **Note results and modify strategies**

SEARCH TERMS

- **Experiment**
- **Find commonly used terms & variations**
- **Example: Indigenous self-governance**
 - Indigenous OR Aboriginal OR native
 - self-governance OR self-determination OR self-rule

ASK YOUR LIBRARIAN

[HOME](#) / [SERVICES](#) / [SUBJECT](#)

Political Science

Articles

Dictionaries & encyclopedias

Websites

Start here

Database	Description
Political Science @ ProQuest	Comprehensive search through major Political Science databases. View Full Description
Political Science @EBSCOhost	Search here after you try Political Science @ ProQuest. View Full Description

Subject Librarian

[Hélène LeBlanc](#)

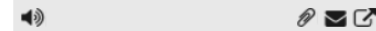
Locations: [Waterloo](#)

Office: [L3-311](#)

519-884-0710 x3743

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Ask Us



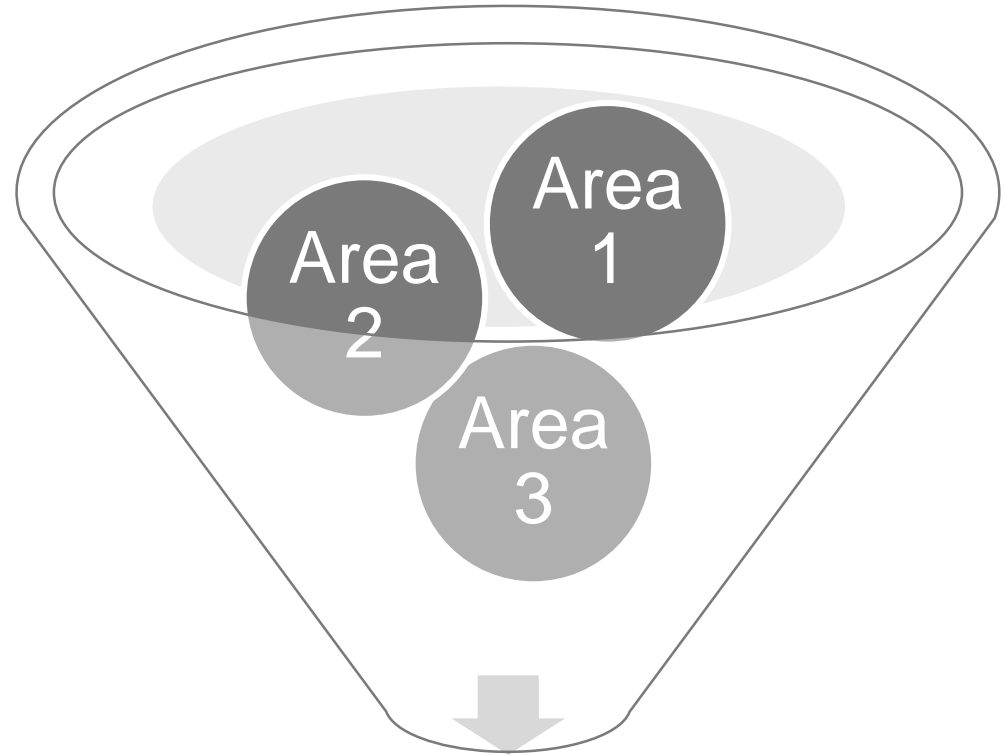
Type here to chat. Press ENTER to send.

📞 Call us: 519-884-0710 x3222

✉️ [E-mail us](#)

THERE'S NOTHING ON MY TOPIC

**Equal pay
for female
vs male
politicians**



**Your
topic/question**

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

- **Depends on your topic & requirements**
- **Selective: choose the best**
- **Include the key people/studies**
- **Works cited/bibliographies**
- **Stop when you keep seeing the same references**

TRACK YOUR SOURCES

- **Keep track as you go along**
- **Saves lots of time later**
- **Use a citation management/research organization tool**

MENDELEY: RESEARCH ORGANIZATION TOOL

The screenshot displays the Mendely Desktop application window. The title bar reads "Mendely Desktop". The menu bar includes "File", "Edit", "View", "Tools", and "Help". The toolbar contains icons for "Add Files", "Folders", "Related", "Share", and "Sync". A search bar is located in the top right corner with the text "Search...".

The main window is divided into several sections:

- Left Panel (My Library):** A tree view showing folders such as "All Documents", "Recently Added", "Favorites", "Needs Review", "My Publications", "Unsorted", "customer service", "Public Services Review", "SI article", "collaboration", "intro", "learning commons", "library & peer instruction", "library & students", "peer & collab learning", and "SI". A "Filter by Authors" dropdown is visible at the bottom of this panel, listing authors like "All", "Adams, W", "Astin, AW", and "Bridges, Brian".
- Central Panel (peer & collab learning):** A table listing documents. The table has columns for "Authors", "Title", "Year", "Published", and "Added". One document is selected and highlighted in grey.
- Right Panel (Details):** A detailed view of the selected document, showing its type, title, authors, journal information, and abstract.

Table of Documents:

Star	Authors	Title	Year	Published	Added
☆	Astin, AW	Student involvement: A developmental theory for high...	1984	Journal of college st...	Jan 6
☆	Chickering, B...	Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Educ...	1987	AAHE Buletting	Jan 14
☆	Cortright, RN...	Peer instruction enhanced meaningful learning: ability to s...	2005	Advances in physiol...	Jan 10
☆	Damon, William	Peer Education : The Untapped Potential *	1984	Journal of Applied D...	Jan 10
☆	Falchikov, Nan...	Learning Together: Peer Tutoring in Higher Education	2001		Jan 10
☆	Kuh, George; ...	Piecing together the student success puzzle: research, propo...	2007	ASHE Higher Ed...	Jan 10
☆	Kuh, George; ...	Student Success in College: Creating Conditions that Matter	2010		Jan 9
☆	Lasry, Nathani...	Peer instruction: From Harvard to the two-year college	2008	American Journal o...	Jan 10
☆	National Surv...	Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice			Jan 9
☆	Prince, Michael	Does Active Learning Work ? A Review of the Research	2004	Journal of Engineeri...	Jan 14

Details Panel:

- Type: Journal Article
- Title: **Piecing together the student success puzzle: research, propositions, and recommendations**
- Authors: G. Kuh, J. Kinzie, J. Buckley et al.
- Journal: *ASHE Higher Education Report*
- Year: 2007
- Volume: 32
- Issue: 5
- Pages: 1-182
- Abstract:
- Tags:

At the bottom of the window, a status bar indicates "1 of 13 documents selected".

TOOLS AND INFORMATION



Waterloo
8:15am - midnight

Library **Services** ▾ Research materials ▾ Locations ▾ About ▾ Help ▾

- Course guides
- Subject guides
- Course readings (reserves)
- Manage citations**
- Request from other libraries
- Scholarly communication
- Scholars Commons @ Laurier
- Video booking (faculty)
- Research assistance »
- Instruction
- Research Data Management

Books & e

Databases

Journal tit

Subject &

Laurier Arc

Site search

Primo search

Search books, articles, [and more.](#)

[Primo advanced search](#)

ANALYTICAL READING

Read strategically:

- How does this relate to my topic/question?
- How does it relate to other studies?
- How is it useful?
- What are the main findings, arguments, etc?
- What is the theory & framework?
- What are the strengths & weaknesses?

Keep notes

SYNTHESIS & ANALYSIS

Group into themes, patterns

Code or annotate

Think about:

- Most significant findings, themes
- What areas have researchers focused on (or not)?
- What theories/methods are used?
- Changes/developments over time?

SYNTHESIS STRATEGIES

- **Note cards or sticky notes**
- **Searchable notes (e.g. Mendeley)**
 - Use controlled vocabulary
- **Synthesis matrix**
- **Concept map**

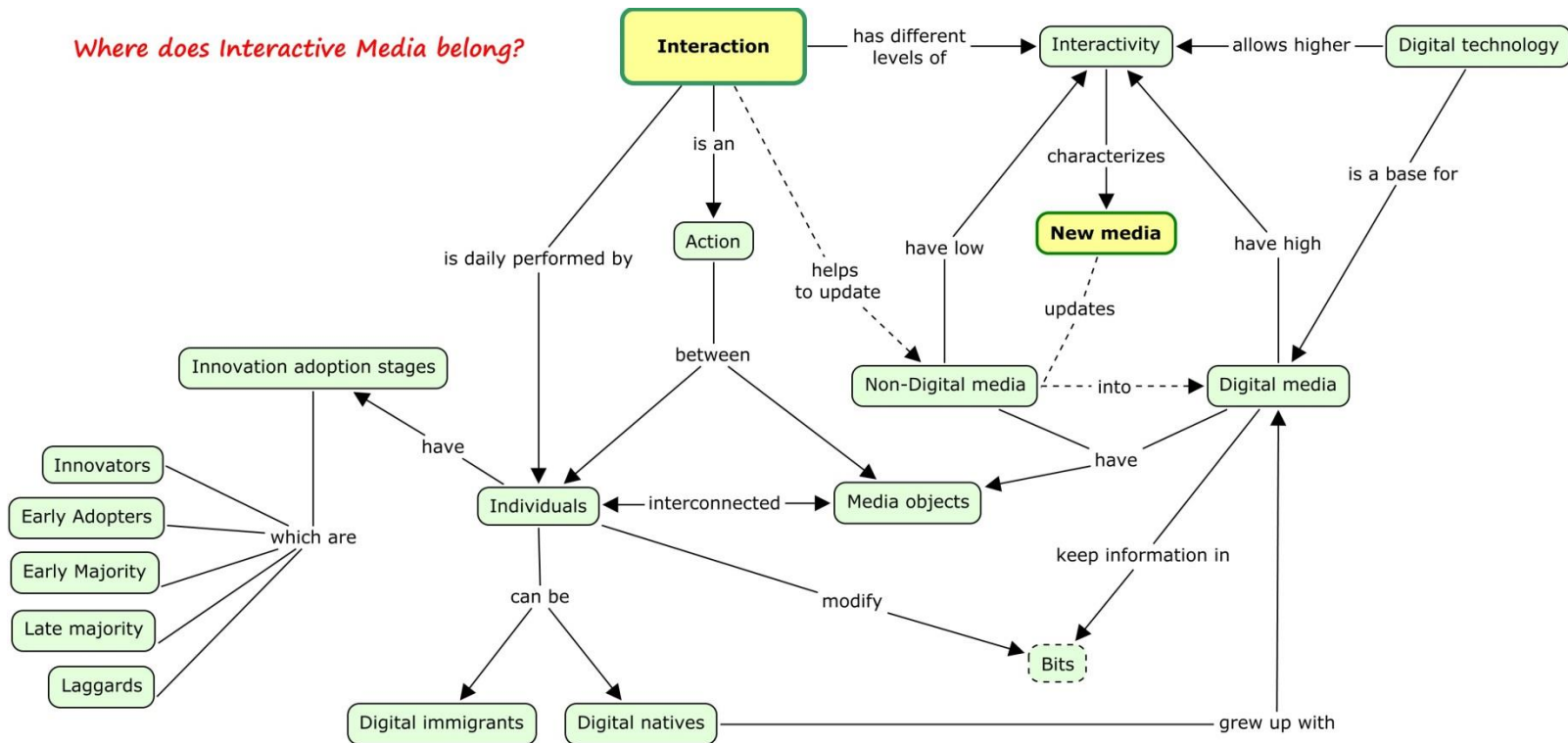
SYNTHESIS MATRIX

Example: Education reform

	<i>Source 1</i> Stewart (2011)	<i>Source 2</i> Potts (2002)	<i>Source 3</i> Watts (2004)	<i>Source 4</i> Gable (2010)
<i>Theme A</i> Role of out-of-school factors	"Schools cannot be reformed without reforming the community." (p.35)	Students do not care about their neighborhoods as much as they care about quality teaching. (p.39)	"Without ensuring that their most basic needs are taken care of in the home, a student cannot succeed while in school." (p. 2)	While out-of-school factors may play a role in a child's academic achievement, it ultimately depends on a parent's involvement. (p.45)
<i>Theme B</i> View of standardized testing	Standardized testing only serves to harm students in the long run. (p. 40-42)	Standardized testing holds teachers to high standards. (p. 12-29).	Standardized testing is inherently discriminatory and harmful. (p. 6)	n/a

CONCEPT MAP

Where does Interactive Media belong?



ORGANIZE & WRITE

- **Structured around research question**
- **Provides rationale for your study**
- **How do you build on/depart from existing work?**

Purpose: situate/justify your work

TYPICAL ORGANIZATION

- **Intro**
 - Introduce your topic/question & mention main trends
- **Body**
 - Thematic discussion related to your question: what there is & where the gaps are
 - Individual studies if important
- **Conclusion**
 - Summarize most important points
 - Connect to your research explicitly, show gap

COURSE PAGE



Waterloo
8:00am - midnight

Library **Services** **Research materials** **Locations** **About** **Help**

- Course guides
- Subject guides
- Course readings (reserves)
- Manage citations
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- Scholars Commons @ Laurier
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- Research assistance
- Instruction
- Research Data Management

View

Books & e-books **Primo search**

Databases

Journal titles

Subject & research guides

Laurier Archives

Site search

Search Primo

books, articles, and more.

advanced search

QUESTIONS?

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library.wlu.ca/about/staff/joud