

Student Worksheet: Analyzing a Journal Article

Please read the assigned journal article and answer the following questions. Review the “Paraphrasing” module as needed to help you understand how to paraphrase to avoid plagiarism.

Your name: _____ Date: _____

Journal article title: _____

Step 1. What is the purpose/hypothesis/aim/objective of the study?

a. Write down the exact statement in which the authors describe what they were testing. (Hint: This information may be provided in the article as a purpose statement or as a hypothesis). Include quotation marks around the exact wording, and indicate page number(s).

b. Now describe the purpose of the study (as you understand it) in your own words.

c. What was the “gap” in the research that the authors were trying to fill by doing their study?

Step 2. What is/are the major finding(s) of the study?

a. Make some notes about the authors' major conclusions or findings as written in the article. Include quotation marks whenever you use their exact wording, and indicate page number(s).

b. Now write those conclusions (as you understand them) in your own words.

Step 3. How did the authors test their hypothesis?

a. Briefly summarize the main steps or measurements that the authors used in their methods. Try to explain in your own words as much as possible.

b. Do the authors suggest any problems or limitations with their methodology? Do you see any problems or limitations with their methodology?

c. How did the authors analyse their data? What test/s did they use?

Step 4. How reliable are the results?

a. Do the authors suggest any problems with the study that could lead to unreliable results?

Step 5. Based on your analysis, are the claims made in this journal article accurate?

a. Do the conclusions made (about the results) by the author make sense to you? Are the conclusions too broad or too narrow based on what was actually done in the study?

b. Based on the accuracy of the methodology and the reliability of the results as described in Steps 3 and 4, do you think the conclusions can be believed?

Step 6. What is the importance of this scientific work?

a. Write (in your own words) the significant contributions of the experimental work in this journal article as reported by the authors.

b. Re-read your notes and explain why you think this is

- a strong or weak scientific article
- a strong or weak scientific study

Resources for students:

1. If you are struggling with plagiarism and paraphrasing, then refer to our online "[Paraphrasing](#)" module.
2. If you are struggling with figuring out how to read the information, then refer to the section on active reading in the "Learning from Textbooks" section of [A Guide for University Learning](#).
3. If you want to learn how to find more academic information on other science topics, then refer to our online "[Searching for Scientific Journal Articles](#)" module.