

LITERATURE REVIEWS: PART 2

Literature reviews are based on scholarly sources. You will use **current** sources for a science literature review; however, you may use **older literature** for a humanities, history, or social sciences literature review to demonstrate how the arguments and scholarship have developed.

Tip: Choose authors with **established credentials** in the subject area.

CRAFTING THE REVIEW

- Select a diverse group of credible authors; then, think about how the scholarly arguments relate to each other. **Abstracts** and **introductions** will be especially helpful for you since those sections of scholarly works often explain the work's relationship to the other literature.
- Use the following questions as you survey the literature and compose your review:
 - Which of the sources is the most and the least convincing?
 - How does one scholar's approach and findings supplement or contradict those of another scholar?
 - What is the primary contribution of each scholar to the subject matter? How do their findings contribute to our understanding of a topic?
- Try to situate the authors in relation to each other. **Think of it almost like a dialogue between scholars who are trying to get to the bottom of their subject matter.**

PUTTING THE AUTHORS IN A DIALOGUE WITH EACH OTHER

- To do this effectively, look for the key **patterns, conflicts, and themes** in the literature.
- **Display the ways that one scholar's interpretation challenges another's** and perhaps **explain how they came to different conclusions.**
- Later, **explain the relation of the works to each other** and **point out the gaps in the literature** that the scholars have missed.

PRACTICE NOW