

## The Literature Review/Primary Research Report Assignment

To learn and understand how research professionals work, you will conduct both primary and secondary research on educational, cultural, environment, economic, technological, social, political, or ethical issues. You will summarize and synthesize the arguments and ideas of the research sources alongside the data you collect. Then you will design a project and engage in the research process. The end result will be an 8-10 page literature review and primary research report based on a combination of the primary research data and the secondary sources. (Not including cover page, references, and appendices with graphs and images.)

A literature review/primary research report is more than a simple summary of sources. It has an organizational pattern that combines summary and synthesis. A summary is a recap of the important information of the source, but a synthesis is a re-organization, or a reshuffling, of that information so that it helps you address your specific research questions. A synthesis links your sources to one another and to your research questions. This document also evaluates the sources in terms of which are most relevant to the research questions and which are the most credible. Although you designed your primary research specifically to answer your questions, you'll also want to address your own data's relevance and its credibility.

**Compose:** There are hundreds or even thousands of articles and books on most areas of study. The narrower your research questions, the easier it will be to limit the number of sources you need to answer those questions. You will not be expected to read everything available on the topic, but you'll make your job easier if you first limit your scope with a good set of research questions (see pages 147-149 in *Compose, Design, Advocate* textbook). Your instructor may require that your research questions be approved before you begin your research.

- As you read widely but selectively in your topic area, consider what themes or issues connect your sources together—which ones are most relevant to the questions you are asking?
- Also consider if there is an involved debate on your issue? If so, this might provide you with the focus you need.
- How is the subject discussed? How do different genres discuss the issue differently (or similarly)?
- Have you located one solution or multiple solutions? What are their differences?
- Is there an aspect of the issue that is missing or not discussed?

**Design:** As you begin, read Chapters 5 and 6, pages 109-175 in your textbook: *Compose, Design, Advocate*. As you are formulating your research questions, do some preliminary library research to see what other researchers have to say about your question. Good databases to start with are LexisNexis (non-scholarly sources) and Academic Search Complete (scholarly sources) because these two databases index more articles than any other databases. Check the Statistical Abstract of the United States and US Almanac for statistics as well (see pages 151-155 & 159 in *Compose, Design, Advocate* textbook). Avoid sources that you randomly found through the Web. You will need 7-10 sources for your paper. Your instructor will give you guidelines about number and kind of sources permitted.

You will also need to conduct primary research, which is the collection of data or information that does not already exist in a library or website. This is original research that you design yourself in response to one or more of your research questions. You can collect data through surveys, observation, and/or interviews that answer your research question. The more data points (answers) you have, the more robust are your findings. The easier it is for respondents to answer, the better your results will be. You can enrich survey and statistical research by

including some longer interview-type questions (see pages 150-154 and 161 in *Compose, Design, Advocate* textbook). Your instructor will give you specific instructions about finding and analyzing sources, working together in research teams, and how to handle your data.

Here is a suggestion to ensure you have the sources needed to meet the variety, number, and quality criteria in the rubric. Depending on your topic, you could have:

- At least 2 scholarly journal articles;
- At least 1 statistical resource, such as data from an official government resource or reputable organization (EPA, DOT, Census, CDC, NIH, UN, Statistical Abstract of the United States, etc.);
- 3 or 4 magazine or newspaper articles from high quality sources such as *Business Week*, *National Geographic*, *NY Times*, *Chicago Tribune*;
- 1 or 2 Broadcast media such as NPR, PBS, BBC;
- Specialty dictionaries and handbooks (*Handbook of Chemistry and Physics*, *World Almanac*);
- Your primary research; given a name and correctly cited.

Do NOT cite: Wikipedia, general knowledge encyclopedias, general dictionaries, Opposing Viewpoints, Pro/Con, Current Controversies, etc.

**Design Plan:** The genre norm for this paper is formal academic writing. The final report will be completed using APA manuscript formatting. See the model for more details.

You must maintain third person voice throughout, and the sections of your literature review/primary research report should include:

1. Abstract
  - A short, one or two-paragraph summary of your research questions and your findings (no more than 150 words). You should write this last.
2. Introduction
  - General background information that prompted the research.
  - A clear statement of purpose.
  - Stated research questions (3-4). Remember that more specific questions allow for more specific answers, and this improves the focus immensely. They must be strong enough to push the entire paper forward.
  - A thesis statement.
3. Review of literature (the bulk of your paper). Blend a discussion of your primary and secondary research findings into the Literature Review. Base this blend on a discussion of ideas rather than the individual sources.

Include:

- A discussion of your 3-4 research questions in the order you presented them.
- Your own research as one of the sources.
  - Name your research and cite it as you would any other source.
  - Provide a discussion of your research methods (this includes respondents, sample, and data collection).
  - Provide a discussion of your results and conclusions.
  - Tie your research to your other sources.

- At least one graphic image embedded in the text, including but not limited to, a table, graph, or chart (any type). These can be from your own research or from the literature. Be sure to label this graphic image.

**Product Testing:** You will receive comments on drafts through peer review, the Writing Center, the evaluators, and/or your instructor. If necessary, plan enough time to organize and test the survey, and you might even practice surveying/interviewing each other.

**Advocate:** In this paper, it is vital that you do NOT take sides or show any bias as you discuss all sides of the issue. Submit both your draft and final Literature Review/Primary Research Report through the MY SUBMISSIONS area of the English 1312 website. Be sure to include a Reference Page and use in-text citations in the report itself. Your instructor may require you to turn in drafts, survey or questions (1 copy), abstract/citation pages from the articles cited in your literature review, pre-work with sources, and a copy of your primary research spread sheet if applicable.

**Format:**

The entire project should follow APA format. Pay special attention to the following:

- Standard APA title page requirements.
- References in alpha order, strict APA format.
- Times New Roman, Arial, or Georgia style, 12 pt. font, one inch margins all around
- Write in third person, present, and past tense.
- Every graphic should be labeled as a Figure or a Table and given a consecutive number: Table 1, Table 2, Figure 1, Figure 2, etc. Caption every graphic image.

**Key Elements Checklist:**

- ✓ Informative, NOT argumentative.
- ✓ Provide 3-4 research questions.
- ✓ Include one form of primary research (interview, survey, observational).
- ✓ Include one visual representation of research (chart, graph, table).
- ✓ Answer your research questions with multiple perspectives.

## Assessment Rubric for Literature Review/Primary Research Report

CATEGORY	A	B	C	D	F
<b>Research Questions:</b> Quality and answerability  30 pts.	Very well developed and focused questions that effectively enter the discourse. Questions are strong enough to carry the entire project forward, including the primary research. All questions are unbiased.	Well developed and generally focused questions that effectively enter the discourse. Questions are strong enough to carry the entire project forward, including the primary research. All questions are unbiased.	Questions seem somewhat undeveloped and focus may be too broad or narrow. Some bias may be discernable.	Questions are undeveloped and focus is too broad and/or too narrow. They do not effectively enter the discourse and cannot carry the paper. Bias is clear.	No stated research questions.
<b>Relevance of Information:</b> Does it answer the research question(s)?  20 pts.	Information from research clearly and thoroughly relates to the research question(s). It is well-developed and includes several supporting details and/or examples.	Information from research generally relates to the research question(s). It is somewhat developed and provides sufficient supporting details and/or examples.	Information from research sometimes relates to the research question(s). It is under-developed; a few details and/or examples are given.	Information from research generally does not relate to the research question(s). It is under-developed; no details and/or examples are given.	Information is irrelevant to the research question(s).
<b>Use of sources:</b> woven, fair	Sources are skillfully deployed to	Sources are generally	Sources are somewhat unskillfully	Sources are unskillfully deployed	Sources missing or do not

<p>use</p> <p>30 pts.</p>	<p>answer research questions. They are fairly used and demonstrate a variety of perspectives. Quotes are introduced and skillfully woven with the writer's own words. A very well developed discussion.</p>	<p>skillfully deployed to answer research questions. They are, generally, fairly used and demonstrate more than one perspective. Most quotes are introduced and woven into writer's words. A well developed discussion.</p>	<p>deployed and may not always answer the research questions. Only one perspective may be presented. Sources may be over-used. A few quotes are not introduced, woven, or are floating. Development lacking.</p>	<p>and do not effectively answer the research questions. Only one perspective is presented. Sources used unfairly. Quotes overtake the writer's language. They are not introduced, woven and they float. Poorly developed discussion.</p>	<p>answer the research questions. Only one perspective is presented. Sources, if present, used unfairly. They are strung together, not introduced, woven, or are floating.</p>
<p><b>Required number, good quality, and variety of sources</b></p> <p>20 pts.</p>	<p>Required number of sources exceeds minimum requirement. Sources taken from a wide variety of media. All sources are of excellent quality.</p>	<p>Has required number of sources. Generally taken from a variety of media. Most of excellent quality.</p>	<p>Short 1 source and variety is somewhat limited. Most of good quality.</p>	<p>Short 2 or more sources and variety are limited. Most of poor or questionable quality.</p>	<p>No sources used.</p>
<p><b>Incorporation of primary research data</b></p> <p>30 pts.</p>	<p>Discussion of primary research is exceptional. Purpose, methodology, and results presented. Primary research results are tied to the discussion of other sources and the research question(s).</p>	<p>Discussion of primary research is good. Purpose, methodology, and results are generally explained. Primary research results are generally tied to the discussion of other sources</p>	<p>Discussion of primary research is adequate. Explanation of purpose, methodology, and results has some weaknesses. Primary research results may not always be tied to the discussion of other sources and the</p>	<p>Student makes a minimal attempt to discuss primary research. Explanation of purpose, methodology and results are very weak or missing. Results are not tied to discussion of other</p>	<p>Primary research is missing from the document.</p>

		and the research question(s).	research question(s).	sources or the research question(s).	
Graphic image  10 pts.	Graphic image is appropriate to research question and effectively explained.	Graphic image is appropriate to research question but is explained less effectively.	Graphic image is somewhat appropriate to the research question and is minimally explained.	Graphic image is not appropriate to the research question and/or has no explanation	Graphic image is missing.
<b>Writing Fluency:</b> Academic voice, third person, present/past tense, clarity  40 pts.	Writing is excellent. Academic voice, third person, present/past tense consistent. Almost no grammar or mechanical errors. Writing is clear.	Writing is good. Academic voice, third person, present/past tense mostly consistent. Few grammar or mechanical errors. Writing is clear.	Writing is adequate. Academic voice, third person, present/past tense somewhat consistent. Several grammar or mechanical errors. Writing could be clearer.	Writing is deficient. Academic voice, third person, present/past tense inconsistent. Many grammar or mechanical errors. Writing is unclear in significant areas.	Writing is seriously deficient, lacking academic voice, third person, present/past tense. Grammar or mechanical errors distract from content. Writing is unclear.
<b>General APA format and assignment guidelines</b>  20 pts.	Meets all page format, font, and citation format criteria from assignment guidelines and APA manual. Meets or slightly exceeds length requirement.	Assignment guidelines met, a few minor format errors. Meets or slightly exceeds length requirement.	One or more guidelines or major format criteria not met. Meets length requirement.	Many major guideline or format errors. Page count is deficient.	Format is incorrect.

\*Rubrics are subject to minor changes. Students will be notified if changes occur.