

How to Read an Academic Journal Article

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FIRST TIME | Initial setup



1. Setup your glossary

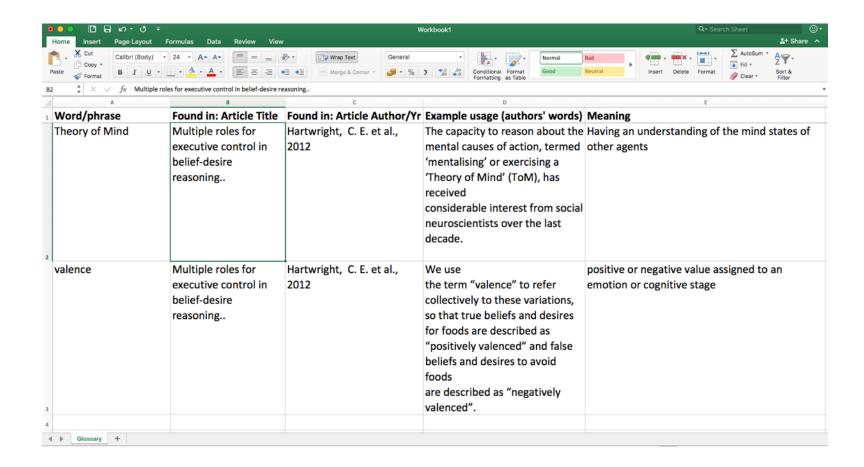


2. <u>Download</u> the blank **journal scrapbook** sheet

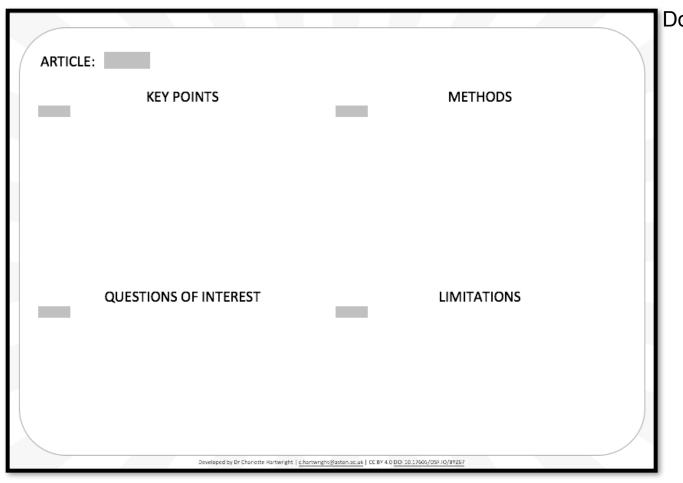
EVERY TIME | Before reading any article

- 1. Populate a new **journal scrapbook** with title/author & keywords
- 2. Sketch out your reading goals

GLOSSARY | record new terminology & revisit later

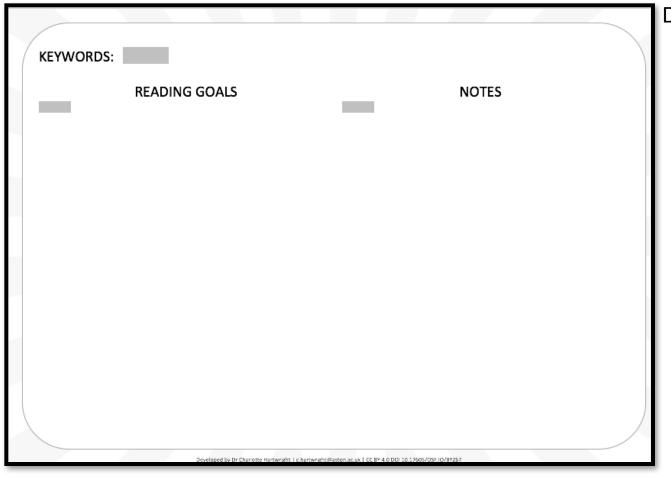


JOURNAL SCRAPBOOK | direct your reading & keep a record of each article



Download this Scrapbook for free from https://osf.io/eqjfh/

READING GOALS & NOTES PAGE | print on the back of the Scrapbook



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STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

STAGE 3 | Methodology

STAGE 4 | Results

STAGE 5 | Discussion

STAGE 6 | Reading Goals

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

STAGE 3 | Methodology

STAGE 4

STAGE 5 | Discussion

STAGE 6 | Reading Goals Skim read the entire article, making no effort to understand the content. As you go, highlight any unfamiliar terminology

Add the terminology to your Glossary

Look up those unfamiliar terms & write out their meaning in *your own words* in your Glossary

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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STAGE 4 |

STAGE 5 | Discussion

STAGE 6 | Reading Goals

Read the article's Discussion section. Take enough time so that you can write what the authors' conclude in 1 or 2 sentences

Add your summary of their conclusions to the Key Points section of your Scrapbook

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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STAGE 4 |

STAGE 5 | Discussion

STAGE 6 | Reading Goals

Read the article's Introduction section. Take enough time so that you can summarise the authors' main research question in 1 or 2 sentences

Add your summary of their core research questions to the Questions of Interest section of your Scrapbook

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

STAGE 3 | Methodology

STAGE 4
Results

STAGE 5 | Discussion

STAGE 6 | Reading Goals Consider how *you* would address the article's research question. Take enough time so that you can state your ideas in 1 or 2 sentences

Add your ideas on how you would address the research question to the **Notes** section of your **Scrapbook**

Make clear that what you are writing here are your ideas, e.g., by opening with "My approach to the Qol would be to..."

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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STAGE 6 | Reading Goals

Read the article's Method section. If the article has made the materials Open Access, you will find it helpful to review these too

Write a paragraph outlining how the research was conducted. Include core information about the design, experimental manipulation and outcome variables

Add your summary of the method to the Methods section of your Scrapbook

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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Revisit your earlier reflection on how you would address the authors' research question (see the Notes section of your Scrapbook)

Consider how the methodology has been formulated to address the research question

Write out in 1 or 2 sentences your thoughts on the authors' approach

Add your thoughts regarding the method to your Scrapbook - note any strengths in the Methods section and any weaknesses in the Limitations section

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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STAGE 6 | Reading Goals Consider the sort of data that their methodology will generate

In bullet points, write what data types you expect to see in the Notes section of your Scrapbook

Make clear that what you are writing here are your ideas, e.g., by opening with "I expect to see these sorts of data: ..."

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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STAGE 4 | Results

STAGE 5 | Discussion

STAGE 6 | Reading Goals

Read the article's Results section. If there are several analyses, read through each section one at a time

For each chunk of results, write 1 or 2 sentences to outline what the data show – use the article's figures and any Open Access data and supplementary material to aid your understanding

Add your summary of the results to the Key Points section of your Scrapbook

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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STAGE 4 | Results

STAGE 5 | Discussion

STAGE 6 | Reading Goals For each chunk of results, write 1 or 2 sentences on what you believe the theoretical meaning of the results are

Add your perspective on the theoretical meaning to the **Notes** section of your **Scrapbook**

Make clear that what you are writing here are your ideas, e.g., by opening with "I believe that the theoretical relevance of result X is..."

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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Revisit your earlier reflection on what types of data you thought would be acquired (see the **Notes** section of your **Scrapbook**)

Work through each chunk of the Results section to compare what is reported with your expectations

Pay attention to whether all of the data you expected to see are reported

Check any supplementary and Open Access materials. Check the Method section to see if the authors report reasons for missing data

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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Write in bullet points your observations regarding missing or unreported data

Add your bullet points regarding omitted data to the Limitations section of your Scrapbook

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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Consider whether these omissions make it more difficult for you to draw conclusions about the research question. Take enough time so that you can state your ideas in 1 or 2 sentences

Add your thoughts regarding omissions and interpretation to the Limitations section of your Scrapbook - make clear any aspects of missing data that the authors have highlighted

STAGE 2 | Authors' perspectives

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Revisit your earlier reflection on your interpretation of the theoretical meaning of the results (see Notes section of your Scrapbook)

Re-read the Discussion section of the article and determine the level of agreement between yourself and the authors

For each sentence you had about the theoretical meaning, examine any contradictions or disagreement

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If, after re-reading the Discussion, you believe that this incongruence reflects your own misinterpretation, summarise in 1 or 2 sentences the authors' perspective

Add your thoughts regarding theoretical implications to the **Key Points** section of your **Scrapbook**

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If, after re-reading the Discussion, you believe that this incongruence reflects the authors' misinterpretation, summarise in 1 or 2 sentences how your perspectives differ

Add your thoughts regarding differing interpretation to the Limitations section of your Scrapbook

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Now you have a good grasp of the article, you can tackle your Reading Goals

You may be able to address these without much in-depth reading, or you may need to reread parts of the article again

Different sections of the article will be more or less relevant for different sorts of Reading Goals – so allow yourself to focus on the parts that are relevant, now that you know the article well

Do you ever feel overwhelmed reading papers, and how do you deal with that?

All the time. If the paper is relevant to a problem I am trying to solve, you can be sure that there are key things in the paper that I do not understand. That confusion is not a threat; it is an opportunity. I am ignorant; I need to become less ignorant. This paper may help me.

Prof Brian Nosek

Cited in Pain (2016)