

## Two Sample Literature Review Outlines

### Outline 1

**Introduction** [Broad discussion and thesis.]

**Topic 1**—One main point.

Paragraphs outlining the authors' similar and contrasting viewpoints on this topic.

**Topic 2**—Another main point.

Paragraphs outlining the authors' similar and contrasting viewpoints on this topic.

**Topic 3**—Another main point.

Paragraphs outlining the authors' similar and contrasting viewpoints on this topic.

**Conclusion** [Main points and final ideas.]

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### Outline 2

**Introduction** [Broad discussion and thesis.]

**Source 1**

Summarize one source and mention similarities and differences with other sources.

**Source 2**

Summarize one source and mention similarities and differences with other sources.

**Source 3**

Summarize one source and mention similarities and differences with other sources.

**Conclusion** [Main points and final ideas.]

## Come in for a Peer Tutoring Session

Tutors at the Writing Center are glad to work with you at any stage of the writing process, whether you're trying to summarize accurately, trying to identify discussion threads and make connections between authors and topics, or working on final edits or proofreading.

**Examples of Literature Reviews you can read** are printed in each year's edition of *Weber Writes*. You can see copies in the Writing Center, view them online (Google it), or buy one in the WSU Bookstore for about \$6.

### Contact Us

Drop in during our open hours, or make an appointment through Google Calendar.



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## WRITING THE LITERATURE REVIEW

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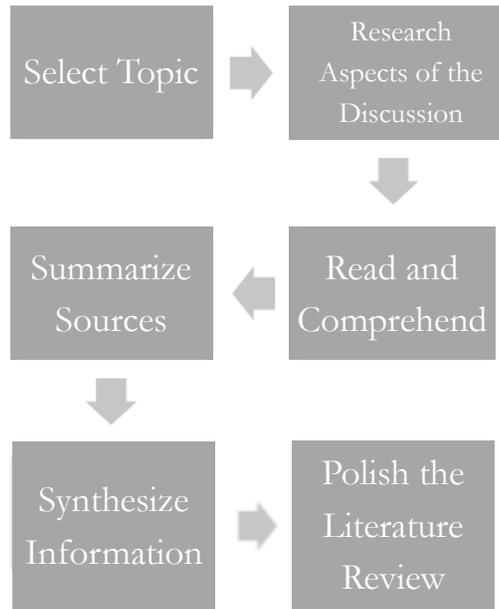
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## What Is a Literature Review?

A literature review is a synthesis assignment that navigates the conversation taking place among a number of texts on a related topic. A literature review should use various sources to construct a narrative that encapsulates the conversations taking place on the topic. Before entering the conversation, research and write about the discussions surrounding a topic, not the topic itself. In the process, gaps in the discussion may emerge that will give you a sense of what else should be addressed, and you can point that out.

## Why the Literature Review?

- ◇ Having a thorough understanding of many perspectives of a topic allows for thoughtful, unbiased, and effective argumentation.
- ◇ Picking out a text's thesis, identifying its supporting points, and understanding its connections to other works lead to a greater grasp of a topic.
- ◇ "Research writing" trains writers to express opposing arguments without relying on bias, misunderstood information, or personal attacks.



### Lit. Review Steps

Select a topic that fits your instructor's guidelines.

Research discussions surrounding your topic. Scholarly articles and peer reviewed journals are valuable, credible sources.

Read and organize varied discussions on the topic, taking note of which author/article makes which claims. Make notes about connections you see that you can refer to in your paper.

Construct paragraphs about the information that include summaries of authors' opinions and the correlations between two or more authors' viewpoints.

## Choosing a Topic for Your Literature Review

Usually, research will show either that a seemingly benign topic has been surrounded by controversy, however subtle, or that the topic and its research have evolved over time. Both of these provide fodder for literature review discussions in academic writing.

You will want to examine and demonstrate 2 main areas:

1. The topic's significance and the reasons people have opinions about it.
2. What those opinions are and/or what the research or experiments have shown.



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## Your Voice in the Conversation

While you should make observations about the conversation, resist the urge to state your opinion about the issue. Instead discuss, describe, and categorize the published opinions you discover in your research. Any claims that you make should be about the conversation taking place, not the issue or topic itself. Your personal connection to a topic may be meaningful for demonstrating the relevance or salience of a topic, and that is one good way for your voice to emerge, typically in the introduction or conclusion.