COMP320: Research Practice

2: Conducting a literature review and forming the research question

Learning outcomes

- **Explain** what makes a good research question
- **Formulate** research questions in the area of your chosen project
- **Conduct** a scholarly literature review

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- Don't neglect any part of the rubric — all are important!

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Literature review

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  - Is your research question one that others have asked, and possibly tried to answer?

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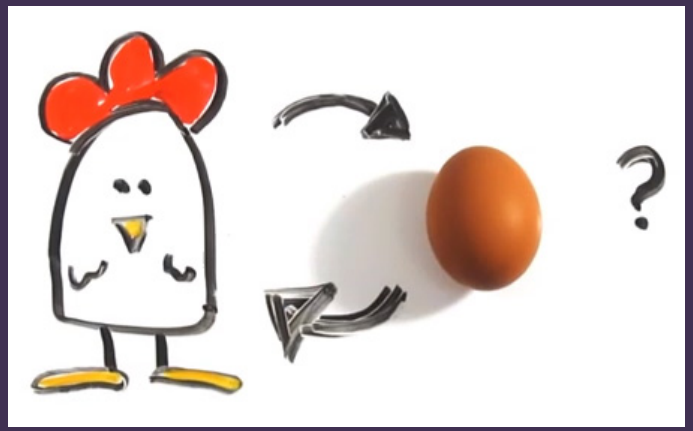

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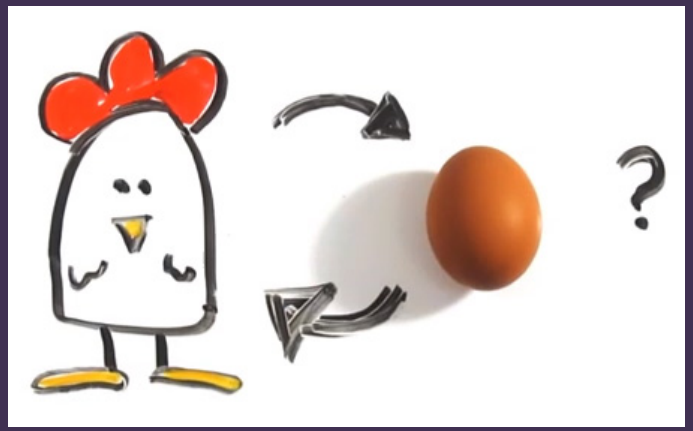

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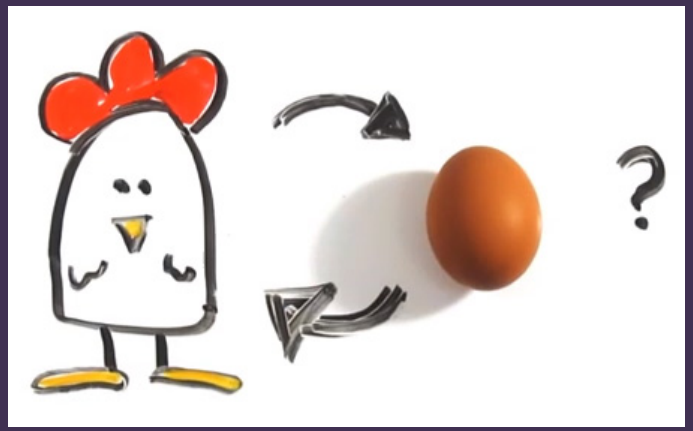

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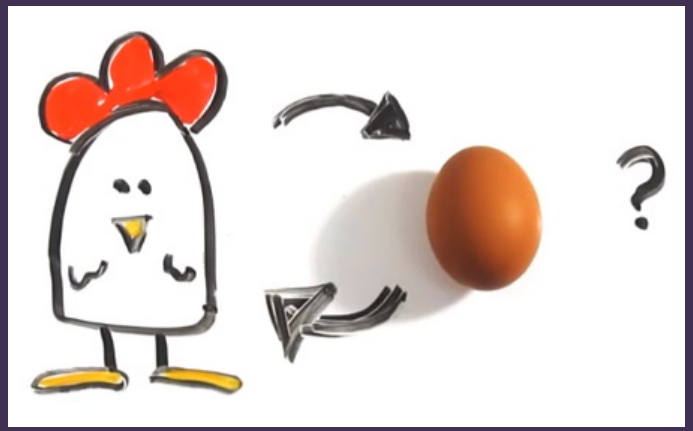

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- Be prepared to **refine** your research question

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Recommended reading

D. Boote and P. Beile. "Scholars before researchers: on the centrality of the disseration literature review in research preparation," *Educational Researcher* Vol. 34 No. 6, pp. 3–15, 2005.

Examples

Some examples of good literature reviews from last year's students are on LearningSpace

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Formulating the research question

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- Is **interesting** and addresses a **need**

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- Too narrow, not interesting:
  - How many children in Cornwall play Overwatch?
- Better:
  - What effect does regular videogame playing have on the academic attainment of children ages 11–14?

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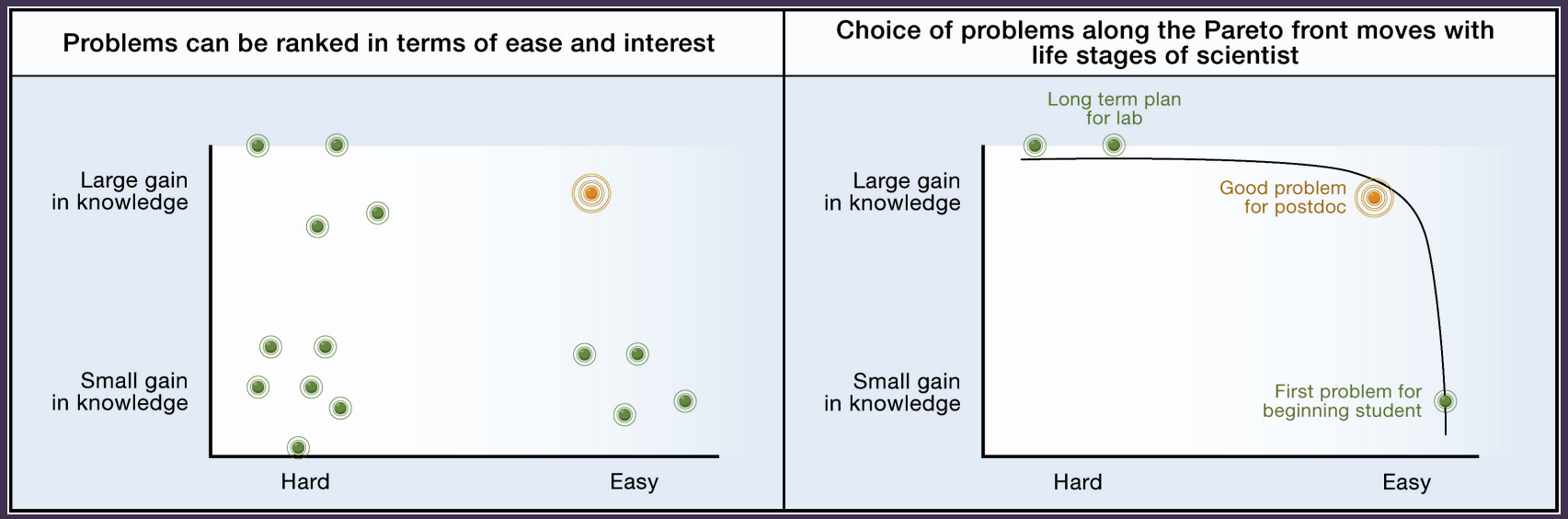
- A good research question leads to several hypotheses

Choosing a research problem



U. Alon, "How to choose a good scientific problem," *Molecular Cell* 35, pp. 726–728, 2009.

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- What are the **research questions** behind them?

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  - In 1 sentence: why is this interesting and/or important?

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- Refine your proposal into a well-defined research question, to discuss with your supervisor after this