

The Lit Review Funnel



(intro)

Start with explaining how the approach to the lit review and its structure.

→ Locate ←

Entry to the top funnel, what you will cover
Start drilling down, the field, broad theories.

Cover significant aspects of main thinking/trends you are plugging in to.

Gap(s)

Ideally bring the discussion towards a point that you identify gaps in research or areas that need further investigation.

targeted gap

Of the various gaps identified indicate which one(s) you will focus on in this project (for BSc/MSc probably just one gap).

focus of approach

Get into the more specific issues, techniques that will be used to solve the problem and review these theories/methods/tools.

At the same time you may cover a few 'alternate approaches' that could inspire your approach or what you are learning from to refine the approach you have chosen, learning from past attempts or similar types of investigation (they obviously don't need to be trying to do the same thing but some relation/relevance to your project).

selection /
details

At this part you get into more specifics of potential development tool or library you planning to use and why.

This can be handled fairly easily, e.g. doing brief literature surveys, e.g. web searches, on what are the most popular tools. Could expanded by describing a methodology to use for selecting these tools, the result of this could be tables showing the tool/library options, their pros and cons*. The tool rated best could be the one to choose in the project.

argue

Nice-to-haves (emphasising 'the researcher' and research benefits)

Broaden out with argument, identifying new knowledge needed, how this research investigation will contribute new understanding. This part depends on space availability*.

conclude

Conclusion/summary

Definitely, try to close in some elegant way. Could be done with a short summary of key observations/gaps and useful theories/methods you'll build on. For an e.g. PhD proposal in particular you could end it by justifying (reaffirming the need for) this research.

* This is more necessary for PhD level, more a nice-to-have for a BSc/MSc dissertation.