

HOW TO DO A LITERATURE REVIEW

During the course of your tertiary studies, learning to write a research report will become an important core skill as part of your academic journey. A crucial component of the report is the literature review, which poses a challenge as it requires good background research and analysis. This infographic will aid you in understanding and writing an effective literature review.

WHAT IS IT?

The literature review serves as a critical review of published information on a topic by other researchers, including the research methodology used and the findings. It expands your knowledge about the topic, and provides a solid background for your research.

WHERE DOES IT GO?

You can include the literature review as part of the Introduction section, or in a separate section on its own. Either way it must come before your actual research sections.

HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR REVIEW

1. State the focus or central theme of your review. Include information that other researchers have written.
2. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of previous research. Highlight the important ones to determine what to focus on in your research.
3. Identify areas of controversy or opposing viewpoints about the research topic.
4. Conclude how your research topic fits into the existing body of knowledge, such as whether it replicates previous studies, or not.

HELPFUL TIPS

- **Be focused** – Find relevant research studies on the topic. The more recent the study, the better.
- **Summarise and synthesize** – Highlight and discuss how the findings, strengths and weaknesses of the research studies relate to yours
- **Use in-text citation** – Indicate the sources you quoted from or referred to (e.g. MLA or APA citation styles)

For more useful tips on writing a research paper, visit our eLearn Centre on our S.U.R.E. portal at <http://www.nlb.gov.sg/sure/elearn-centre>