

Content Charting for Review of the Literature

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(You may find that the handout on evaluating your 510 articles for the ROL will provide a good companion to this description.)

The idea is to tell the story of the RESEARCH-- Most articles have these features:

- 1.) Statement of a research question;
- 2.) Usually a literature review of previous research;
- 3.) Statement of theories used in the research (Bates' berry picking? Belkin's ASK? Kuhlthau's ISP);
- 4.) Description of the specific research being done-- the sample and sample size; setting of the research; methods used;
- 5.) Specifics of the methods (interview, survey, focus group, observations, review of computer logs from searching, etc.);
- 6.) Conclusions of the research;
- 7.) Suggestions for further research.

Why chart these features? Because you can see the progress of the research! Because you can **compare** the settings (school, university, retirement home); characteristics of the sample and sample size (10 or 100 art historians; 20 or 200 6th graders; 5000 engineers); the research methods (focus groups, interviews, unobtrusive observations, surveys); conclusions of the research experiment (Building upon other research? Learning something new? Limitations of the research?); suggestions for further research by this person or by others.

- 1.) Research question
- 2.) Literature review
- 3.) Theory
- 4.) Sample size, characteristics, setting
- 5.) Methods/Activities
- 6.) Conclusions
- 7.) Further research.

Very few articles will conform to all of these specifics, but seeing as much as you can on paper will give you the content of your paper.