



Literature review – assessing the usefulness of sources

Criteria – How useful is this source?

- 1 What's in it that gives you **ideas** on which to build your own project?
- 2 Is there anything in it that reveals the **current debate** on that topic? What are the differences between the contributors? Are there any unsolved problems? Map out the **cross-connections** you find in articles. If there are references to another article, jot down on a card where you saw it and record what the first author said about it.
- 3 Does it outline different **perceptions** of what the problem is and different ideas about how it should be tackled? Both will be useful in developing your own proposals.
- 4 Does it indicate how many different **aspects** there are to the problem? If so, analyse it. Then, pick up and discuss each aspect in turn, making clear what there is in the literature on each one. Out of this, develop your own contribution.
- 5 Is there anything in it that reveals the main **theories** and related **concepts** that are used by different contributors? Make clear the differences and similarities between them. Then go on to evaluate each one for their internal consistency. Later you'll be able to assess them for their consistency with the data you collect and the observations you make.
- 6 Are there **omissions** in the article? Has the writer overlooked something? Make this clear and justify your conclusion. Then outline what you will be doing that doesn't overlook the same thing.
- 7 Is the article useful in identifying the different **methodologies**? Review the different ones, identifying their key features, before you then indicate the sort of strategy that would best meet the demands of the topic you have chosen. If the writer has used a methodology similar to yours, point it out as justification.