HOW TO READ
A SCHOLARLY ARTICLE

Scholarly articles can require different reading strategies. Check out these tips for success in reading and analyzing articles!

VERIFY

Before reading, verify that the article is scholarly and peer-reviewed.

Does the article come from a scholarly journal? Is there an extended list of references?

Is the author affiliated with a university, research organization, or think tank?

SKIM

Based on your first skim, answer the following questions:

1. What is the article about?

2. What point are the authors trying to make? What is their argument?

Read these first:

1. Abstract
2. Introduction
3. Discussion/Conclusions

After skimming, thoroughly read the entire article.
Take Notes

In the margin, summarize each paragraph using only a few words. Question what you read and think critically. Ask yourself, does this seem right? Who or what did the researchers study? Did they learn anything meaningful? Is the argument strong or weak?

At the top of the article, write:
1. What is useful or important about this article?
2. What are the article’s biases, limitations, or weaknesses?

Mark Up

Circle jargon, unusual phrases, technical terms, etc. You can search these or use them to look up more articles later.

Put a check mark next to references in the bibliography that relate to your project. You can look those up later for additional sources.

Highlight only quotations that you cannot paraphrase yourself. These may be the cited quotations you use in your own paper.