

JS 100W: Article Critique Instructions

CRITIQUE OF A SCHOLARLY ARTICLE

Reading assignments in Writing Literature Reviews:

- 1) "Analyzing Quantitative Research Literature," pp. 43-53
- 2) "Guidelines on Style, Mechanics, and Language Usage," pp. 99-106

The process of writing an article critique is designed to improve and test your ability to critically analyze an empirical research study. Clearly, the better written an article is, the more likely it is to be accepted by the intended audience; however, research has varying degrees of quality. This assignment will increase your ability to read professional writing, recognize valid research and understand the results, and it will aid you in identifying weaknesses in research and writing. Learning to recognize flaws in grammar and logic will improve your ability to recognize those flaws in your own writing. In addition, the assignment requires you to utilize your skills in using the Internet to locate a scholarly article.

You will write a total of (4) Article Critiques this semester, based on predetermined scholarly, empirical research studies chosen by the 100W instructors. You will be provided with the basic reference information for each article at the appropriate time throughout the semester (at least one week in advance of the due date), and you will be required to find the article online in the specified database via the MLK Library web site. **Be sure to download the full text PDF version of it.** Once downloaded, read the article carefully, making notes on the strengths and weaknesses of the authors' assertions and the quality of the research. When you feel that you understand the article thoroughly, you are ready to write a critique of the article.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You must submit your Article Critiques to www.turnitin.com before turning them in for grading. Go to www.turnitin.com, and follow the instructions to submit your Article Critique. If required by your instructor, attach a printed copy of the "Originality Report" to a clean copy of your Article Critique when you submit it.

After completing the above stated reading assignments, reviewing the **Article Critique Handout** on the following pages, reviewing the Article Critique Formatting Example, and thoroughly reading the journal article, write an analysis of your article, paying attention to each of the following requirements. Your critique should be no more than three pages (not including the cover page), typed, and double-spaced.

1. Following the Article Critique Formatting Example, format a cover page for each Article Critique (this will be page 1). Your cover page will include an APA style reference for the article, as such, it is not necessary to include a separate reference page at the end of your Article Critique.
2. Use appropriate headings (see **Article Critique Handout**). The headings should be centered and bolded, using headline style capitalization. Do not include the roman numerals.
3. Appropriately address all required sections (see Article Critique Handout).

GRADING:

You will be graded on how closely you follow the APA guidelines and format for an article critique; the clarity and content of your critique; and on your understanding of the article. You will also be graded on correct use of college level writing mechanics. (See scoring guide attached).

JS100W Article Critique I Score Sheet

Student Name:

***NI = Needs Improvement**

**FORMAT
(LO3)**

Possible Format Scoring:

Excellent	Average	*NI
0.90	0.45	0.00

Weight: 15%

- Appropriate to assignment; followed guidelines and instructions
- Double-spaced (2.0 ONLY - No extra space before or after)
- Length as advised
- APA Format (in-text citations and reference)
- Submitted to www.turnitin.com (Originality Report attached if required)

TOTAL

**CONTENT
(LO1; LO2; LO3)**

Possible Content Scoring:

Excellent	Average	*NI
3.00	1.50	0.00

Weight: 50%

- The purpose, theoretical foundation, research questions, and/or hypothesis(hypotheses) are clear
- Methods section demonstrates clear understanding of how the research was conducted and the appropriateness
- Results section demonstrates an understanding of how well the author(s) supported the thesis/hypothesis/hypotheses
- Assessment of the study section appropriately assesses the utility of the study findings in relation to the methods
- Demonstrates a clear understanding of the research and insight into the topic; content clearly and directly fulfills all aspects of the assignment

TOTAL

**MECHANICS/STYLE
(LO1; LO3)**

Possible Mechanics/Style Scoring:

Excellent	Average	*NI
2.10	1.05	0.00

Weight: 35%

- Grammar and spelling are at the college level; punctuation is effective and used appropriately
- Effective word choices; vocabulary is at the college level
- Appropriate use of verb tenses; active verb tense is used when appropriate
- Sentences are clear and complete; not run-on, confusing, or fragmented
- Little to no reliance on personal pronouns

TOTAL

TOTAL SCORE

Total possible points: 30

Percent of Total:

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Article Critique Handout

The sections outlined below need to be addressed for each Article Critique you write this semester. The body of your Article Critiques should use the appropriate specified headings. Article Critiques must be written in APA style, including: (1) proper in-text citations, (2) sparing use of direct quotes only when absolutely necessary, (3) avoidance of personal statements (e.g., “I” statements and “My” statements); (4) avoidance of contractions (e.g., can’t); and (5) the proper use of numbers (see Writing Literature Reviews, p. 103, Guideline 11). Critiques of scholarly research are intended to be written in an objective and analytical manner.

I. Introduction and Statement of Purpose

- Briefly describe what the study was about in about one paragraph; however, avoid getting into too much detail. Subsequent sections will be used to address further details about the study.
- What was the author’s or authors’ general purpose for carrying out this study? Keep in mind there may be more than one purpose.

II. Theoretical Assumptions and Thesis/Hypothesis

- Briefly describe the theoretical assumption(s) associated with the proposed thesis/hypothesis (or hypotheses). Be very clear if there are multiple hypotheses, and utilize appropriate subheadings if needed.
- What is the thesis provided (hint: look for the proposed hypothesis)? Please note, there may be more than one hypothesis (i.e., multiple hypotheses).

III. Methods

- Relatively briefly, but thoroughly, describe the main aspects of the study methodology.
- Be sure to include information regarding: the study design, participants (e.g., who were they, how were they recruited, how many were there?), variables of interest (i.e., independent, dependent, and other showcased variables), data collection process (i.e., what was the timeframe of the data collection, what data collection instruments were used, were the instruments reliable and valid, what was done with the data?), and operational definitions of key terms if necessary.

IV. Results

- What were the major findings of the study, especially in relation to the thesis/hypothesis?
- Was the hypothesis supported or not supported? (If there were multiple hypotheses, be sure to address each one).
- What other important statistical relationships were found?

V. Assessment of the Study and Limitations

- What was your impression of how the author(s) conducted the study?
- Did the methodology seem appropriate? Whether your answer is “yes” or “no”; be sure to justify your answer (a simple yes or no answer will not suffice). Could the study design have been improved? Is there anything you would have done differently?
- What were the stated limitations of the study?

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Article Critique Requirements:

1. Properly formatted cover page (this will be the first page) – see example
2. Proper page numbering (i.e., the page numbers should appear in the upper right-hand corner of your assignment in the header of the document, not in the body of the document).
3. The entire assignment should be strictly double-spaced, with no additional space before or after each line (check your paragraph settings).
4. Proper use of specified headings in APA format (i.e., each heading should be centered, with sentence-style capitalization).
5. The entire assignment must be written in 12 pt. font, with 1" margins on all sides.
6. The assignment is not to exceed 3 pages (not including the cover page).
7. The assignment is to be written in proper English, with college-level writing mechanics (e.g., spelling, verb usage and tense, grammar, vocabulary, sentence formation, and paragraph formation)

Alternatives to "I" and "My" statements:

- It is the belief of this researcher/student that...
 - It is the opinion of this researcher/student that...
 - Keep in mind that oftentimes straight forward declarative statements work just as well as statements qualified by ownership.
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Article Critique I of:

Gaines, L. K., & Falkenberg, S. (1998). An evaluation of the written selection test: Effectiveness and alternatives. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 26(3), 175-183. Retrieved from online.sagepub.com

Student Name

JS100W, Section ___

Instructor: Instructor Name

San Jose State University

Date of submission

