Research articles follow a particular format. Look for: A brief introduction will often include a review of the existing literature on the topic studied, and explain the rationale of the author's study. This is important because it demonstrates that the authors are aware of exisiting studies, and are planning to contribute to this existing body of research in a meaningful way (that is, they're not just doing what others have already done). A methods section, where authors desribe how they collected and analyzed data. Statistical analyses are included. This section is quite detailed, as it's important that other researchers be able to verify and/or replicate these methods. A results section describes the outcomes of the data analysis. Charts and graphs illustrating the results are typically included. In the discussion, authors will explain their interpretation of their results and theorize on their importance to existing and future research. References or works cited are always included. These are the articles and books that the authors drew upon to plan their study and to support their discussion. A review article is a secondary source…it is written about other articles, and does not report original research of its own. Review articles are very important, as they draw upon the articles that they review to suggest new research directions, to strengthen support for existing theories and/or identify patterns among exising research studies. For student researchers, review articles provide a great overview of the exisiting literature on a topic. If you find a literature review that fits your topic, take a look at its references/works cited list for leads on other relevant articles and books!

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