

Literature Review Outline

- I. Introduction
 - a. Describe the overall topic that you have been investigating, why it is important to the field, and why you are interested in the topic.
 - b. Identify themes and trends in research questions, methodology, and findings. Give a “big picture” of the literature.

- II. Theme A¹
 - a. Overview of characteristics of the theme (commonalities, differences, nuances)
 - b. Sub-theme – narrow but grouped findings related to the theme
 - i. Study 1 (Research question(s), Methods/Participants, Related Findings)
 - ii. Study 2 (Research question(s), Methods/Participants, Related Findings)
 - iii. Study 3 (Research question(s), Methods/Participants, Related Findings)
 - c. Sub-theme – narrow but grouped findings related to the theme
 - i. Study 4 (Research question(s), Methods/Participants, Related Findings)
 - ii. Study 5 (Research question(s), Methods/Participants, Related Findings)
 - iii. Study 6 (Research question(s), Methods/Participants, Related Findings)
 - d. Etc., etc., etc. with other findings that fit Theme A; studies can be repeated if there are multiple findings that fit under more than one theme. However, no need to re-write methods/participants in detail (just enough to remind the reader about the study).

- III. Theme B – follow a, b, c, and so on from above

- IV. Keep repeating with themes

- V. Conclusion: *An evaluation/critique of the existing literature. Write several paragraphs.*
 - a. What are the contributions of this literature to the field?
 - b. What are the overall strengths?
 - c. What are the overall weaknesses?
 - d. What might be missing?
 - e. What are some next steps for research? The next steps should explicitly address how to “correct” for strengths, weaknesses, and gaps.

Use APA level headings 1, 3, & 4. See Creswell (page 112) or APA manual for formatting.

Review of the Literature on Girl Culture (Level 1)

Resistance (Level 3)

Overview of resistance. (Level 4)

Resistance to teachers. (Level 4)

Resistance as strategic. (Level 4)

Resistance as subconscious. (Level 4)

¹ Remember: The theme is a broad word or phrase that synthesizes a more narrow group of related findings. E.g., a theme of “Resistance” would include types of resistance, resistance to whom, resisting what, etc.