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Chapter 2: Reviewing the Literature

Multiple-Choice Questions

Select the one correct answer to each of the following questions.

1. The main goal in reviewing the literature for a research study is to
A) make sure your topic has not be written about before.
B) discover what is known about your topic.
C) find out if the topic is trendy right now.
D) uncover works that have not yet been published.
E) find out what you already know about the topic.
Ans: B
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Searching the Literature
Subject: Chapter 2
Title: Reviewing the Literature
Feedback: The main goal in reviewing the literature is to find out what is known about your topic. This means that you must find out all of the important, influential works that have been written about your topic. It will involve a very thorough search.

2. At what point should you stop searching the literature?
A) When you find no new references
B) You should never stop searching
C) After you have five to ten good references
D) Once you think you understand the topic clearly
E) When you find unreliable sources
Ans: A
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Searching the Literature
Subject: Chapter 2
Title: Reviewing the Literature
Feedback: When you can no longer find any new references on a topic, it is likely that you have exhausted all sources, and can move on to the next step.

3. When relevant, you should include policy statements to
A) identify the sources of your information.

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B) support the importance of your topic.
C) prove the credibility of your information.
D) support information found in monographs.
E) consult with the staff at a writing center.
Ans: B
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Searching the Literature
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Feedback: Policy statements explain the plan of action for an organization. Including an organization's policy statement will support the importance of your topic.

4. How far back should you go to find original work on your topic?
A) 1 year
B) no more than 5 years
C) depends on the topic
D) 5 or 10 years
E) 15 or 20 years
Ans: E
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Searching the Literature
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Feedback: You should go back 15 to 20 years, and maybe even further back, if necessary, to find the original work on your topic. This is especially true for theoretical work.

5. What is the term for the process in which you "wander through the information forest, changing directions as needed to follow up on various leads and shifts in thinking" (Barroso et al., 2003; Bates, 1989)?
A) Forward scanning
B) Topic searching
C) Tree branching
D) Journal running
E) Berry picking
Ans: E
Complexity: Easy
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Feedback: The term *berry picking* is used to describe a kind of wandering around and changing direction as you go in your research, which is similar to what you would do if you were picking wild berries.

6. Why should you *not* limit your searches to electronic databases?
A) You can find important information in journals and review articles as well.
B) Electronic databases are often filled with misinformation.
C) Electronic databases do not go as far back in time as you will likely need.
D) Your research study might end up biased.
E) Many librarians are not familiar with electronic databases and cannot assist you.
Ans: A
Complexity: Difficult
Ahead: Searching the Literature
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Feedback: Using information only found on electronic databases will simply limit your search. The material there is likely relevant and accurate, but you should not neglect relevant journals, review articles, books, reports, and monographs.

7. What is footnote chasing?
A) Finding out who has cited a particularly relevant article.
B) Searching for the names of authors who have written the most important articles on your topic
C) Looking for notable authors in the recent issues of the most relevant journals
D) Using footnotes to quote sources throughout your research study
E) Checking footnotes at the end of book chapters and articles for more sources
Ans: E
Complexity: Easy
Ahead: Searching the Literature
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Feedback: Footnote chasing is also known as backward chaining, in which you check the footnotes or references at the end of book chapters and articles for promising sources.

8. How should you treat anecdotal reports when searching the literature?
A) Try not to use them unless absolutely necessary
B) Never use them at all
C) Use them in place of secondary sources as needed

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D) Support them with your own research
E) Use them only from monographs or published reports
Ans: A
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Searching the Literature
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Feedback: Anecdotal reports can be used in your work, but only if absolutely necessary. An anecdotal report can serve as a source of information, if that is the only source you have, but they should not be used very often.

9. A researcher finds information on a topic at the library and then looks on the shelf and nearby shelves for other books on the same topic. This is an example of
A) forward chaining.
B) author searching.
C) area scanning.
D) backward chaining.
E) footnote searching.
Ans: C
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Searching the Literature
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Feedback: Area scanning involves going to the library, locating relevant monographs on your subject, and then looking on the shelf and neighboring shelves for other books on your topic. Since books are arranged by topic, you are likely to find some good source material that you might have overlooked in a traditional search.

10. Which of the following is *not* a reputable source to use for research?
A) Government agencies
B) Professional organizations
C) Large private foundations
D) Online journals
E) None of the above
Ans: E
Complexity: Difficult
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Feedback: Government agencies, professional organizations, and large private foundations are all reputable source to use for research. Online journals are also reputable; however, it is essential that these are not predatory publisher sources.

11. If you find a mention of a relevant research study in online or print media, you should
A) use the information you find there and make sure to site it properly.
B) try to find a secondary source that describes the study.
C) look for other examples of it in other online or print media sources.
D) reject the research study in favor of other ones that are original.
E) search for the original study and report that as your source.
Ans: E
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Searching the Literature
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Feedback: It is important that all research is peer reviewed. Therefore, if you find mention of a relevant study in the general media, either print or online, you will need to search for the original study and report that one as your source.

12. How should you approach secondary sources when sorting your research material?
A) Set them aside unless the primary source is unavailable
B) Use them when you are outlining your paper
C) Check with a mentor to determine his/her opinion of them
D) Always use them to back up your primary sources
E) Consider them a starting point for researching primary sources
Ans: A
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Searching the Literature
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Feedback: Secondary sources are not usually a good choice to use in a research paper. They can be used sparingly if it is the only material available. But when sorting through your research material, you should set secondary sources aside at first.

13. Which of the following is *not* likely to be a question you would ask yourself when critically reading your source material?
A) Does this change what I planned to study?
B) Which of these addresses my topic specifically?

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C) How can I organize my review of what is already known on the topic?
D) Are there implications for further research here?
E) Will most people know about this information already?
Ans: E
Complexity: Difficult
Ahead: Read Critically and Take Notes
Subject: Chapter 2
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Feedback: When you are critically reading your source material, it is not really important to consider if people will know about the information you will be discussing. Your work will likely introduce people to new information, which is the point of your research.

14. The end product of writing a narrative from your outlines is known as the
A) final draft.
B) first draft.
C) second outline.
D) source report.
E) edited outline.
Ans: B
Complexity:
Ahead: Writing the Review
Subject: Chapter 2
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Feedback: The first draft is a written narrative based on all the information from your tables (if using) and outlines. The first draft will be read over and corrected and then reviewed by a mentor or colleague for their feedback.

15. Which of the following is a good source for nursing with which to begin your research?
A) PubMed/MEDLINE
B) Books in Print
C) ProQuest Dissertation
D) National Institutes of Health
E) Commonwealth Fund
Ans: A
Complexity: Moderate
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Feedback: For nursing sources, a good place to begin is with PubMed/MEDLINE or CINAHL.

16. When writing the review of the literature, use the comments from a mentor or colleague to
A) find out what studies you still need to research.
B) create a clear and persuasive argument for your research.
C) take notes that you can turn into an outline.
D) judge if the topic you are researching will be interesting to others.
E) find out what better topics you might look into.
Ans: B
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Writing the Review
Subject: Chapter 2
Title: Reviewing the Literature
Feedback: Comments from a mentor or colleague, plus an additional reading, can help polish your work, creating a clear, logical, and persuasive argument for your proposed research study.

17. How should you treat abbreviations when writing your research study?
A) Only use abbreviations for places, but not for organizations.
B) Use as many as possible, as most readers will not want to read long names.
C) Use them liberally, but explain them each time they are used.
D) Avoid using abbreviations as they will confuse your readers.
E) Use only a few common ones and explain them when they are first used.
Ans: E
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Writing the Review
Subject: Chapter 2
Title: Reviewing the Literature
Feedback: Your research study should not include too many abbreviations. Instead, you should only use the few most common abbreviations in your subject area and explain them (spell them out) the first time they are used.

18. Which of the following is *not* one of the questions you should ask yourself about developing a personal writing style?
A) Do I write better by hand or on a computer?
B) Should I put my outline on paper or just keep it in mind?

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C) Can I include more quotes in my material?
D) Can I write in fragments that I can put together later?
E) Should I talk with other people to organize my ideas?
Ans: C
Complexity: Difficult
Ahead: Writing the Review
Subject: Chapter 2
Title: Reviewing the Literature
Feedback: It is a good idea not to include too many quotes or lengthy quotes. Wherever possible, you should paraphrase the material.

19. What does Galvan (2006) suggest as a way to organize "mountains" of information on a topic?
A) Creating tables
B) Writing a first draft
C) Having a colleague review your information
D) Reading your material aloud
E) Summarizing the material
Ans: A
Complexity: Moderate
Ahead: Writing the Review
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Title: Reviewing the Literature
Feedback: Galvan suggests creating tables to organize your information. You can start by listing the most important definitional terms and then adding explanations of their meanings and how they relate to your topic. Once the most important terms are defined, create another table for important theoretical work, and continue building more tables as needed.

20. Which of the following is *not* something you should do when reviewing the literature according to Galvan (2006)?
A) Summarize the literature.
B) Use a large number of headings and subheadings.
C) Add a small amount of your own commentary.
D) Use different terms for the same idea.
E) Connect the review with your proposed study.
Ans: D
Complexity: Difficult
Ahead: Writing the Review
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Title: Reviewing the Literature
Feedback: You should not use different terms for the same idea in scientific writing. You should strive for accuracy and consistency in your word choices.

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