

Use a Literature Matrix to Summarize and Synthesize Research

Author, date	Research question; rationale	Theoretical framework	Methods: sample, study type, etc.	Major Findings	Limitations, gaps	Conclusions	Implications for future research & practice	Themes that emerge	Other important issues

For ease of use, set up your matrix as a spreadsheet. For tips on Summary and Synthesis, see below.

Summarize each article across the row → → →

Author, date	Research question; rationale	Theoretical foundation	Methods: sample, study type, etc.	Findings	Conclusions	Limitations, gaps	Implications for future research & practice	Themes that emerge	Other issues	
			S y n t h e s i z e			S y n t h e s i z e				

- There are many ways to approach a research topic.
- Summarize each study across the row
- **Synthesize** “the body” of literature in columns
- **Purposely look for differences and commonalities in the literature**
- Analyze differences, strengths, weaknesses, controversies, themes that emerge.
- What are the implications of your analysis?
- What would you suggest for future research? For practice? What is missing? Where are the gaps in the literature? What new questions should be asked?

