Now You Try[[1]](#footnote-1)

Frank Herbert once wrote that, *truth suffers from too much analysis*; but it’s important now more than ever to answer these kinds of questions as you are reading. Make sure that you are questioning everything as you read.

This will be a good opportunity for you to practice something that you will be expected to do later in this course a little more in-depth. This guide will help you walk through the process of reading an academic article. It’s good practice for what’s to come. Use the resource 04 - Lesson: A Guide to Reading and Analyzing Academic Articles for more information about each of these questions. (Hopefully you just finished reading it.)

Suggestion: Select an article from one of the electronic databases offered at the [Electronic Library of MN](http://www.elm4you.org/). Otherwise, your local county library may provide access to electronic databases for you.

# Step 1 – Consider the article as a whole

1. Who is writing the article?
2. What are the author’s qualifications?
3. What audience is the author addressing?
4. What is the article about?
5. What sources does the author use?

# Step 2 – Determine the purpose, structure and direction of the article

1. What is the author’s main point, or thesis?
2. What evidence has the author used?
3. What limits did the author place on the study?
4. What is the author’s point of view?

# Step 3 – Read the article; pay attention to writing and presentation

1. How is the author’s message being delivered?

# Step 4 – Criticism and evaluation of the article

1. Was there anything that was left unfinished? Did the author raise questions or make points that were left orphaned in the paper?
2. Did it make its case?
3. What does the point made by the argument mean in or to the larger context of the discipline and of contemporary society?
4. Is the organization of the article clear? Does it reflect the organization of the thesis statement?
5. Does the author’s disciplinary focus lead her or him to ignore other ideas?
6. Were there any problems with grammar, sentence structure, or word usage?
7. What did you learn? What are you going to do with this information?

1. Based on the work: *A Guide to Reading and Analyzing Academic Articles,* by Amanda Graham, 1997-2012, is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)