Week 6: The Scholarly Conversation

Welcome to Week 6!

A Scholarly Party

Directions: For this activity, imagine that you and your group are organizing a party, specifically a scholarly party around a theme. You and your group will invite other scholars who will have interesting things to say to each other. You will invite some who know each other and have some variety, so that everyone isn’t just saying the same thing. It’s okay to have different perspectives and even a little disagreement too. Although you will invite many guests to join the discussion, your group gets to direct the conversation.

Step 1: Invite the guest of honor.

Start with the article provided. Links and citations for the articles are provided in the LibGuide (https://libguides.colostate.edu/bridge). Your article’s author(s) is the guest of honor.

Skim the article as a group to find information and come to an understanding of the basics of the article. See the “Tips & Tricks” section for suggestions about reading a scholarly article. Your first task is to figure out author credentials and the main ideas/findings.

Article Title:
Author(s) and credentials:
Audience:
Main Ideas/findings:

Step 2: What is the theme of your party?

From an aspect of the starting article, pick a theme of your own. Your theme should be narrow and specific.

Your Theme:

What would the starting article’s author(s) add to the discussion about your research question?
Step 3: Invite an old friend of the guest of honor.

From the **starting article’s cited references**, identify a source that seems relevant to your own theme. From your article link in Web of Science, click on the “Cited References” number on the right-hand side (the lower option under “Citation Network”). You can also find these articles by reviewing the cited references at the end of the full-text of the article. Note that all cited references will be older than the original article.

**Title:**
**Author:**
**Publication Title:**

What would this author(s) add to the discussion?

Step 4: Who are two new authors who know the guest of honor?

Use Web of Science to find newer articles that have cited your article. In your article link, click on the “Times Cited” number (the upper option under “Citation Network”). Review this list to find articles relevant to your theme. If you want, you can use the “Search within these results” box on the left to try searches for your theme. You can also identify articles that have cited your author in Google Scholar, where the number is listed under the information. Note that all times cited will be newer than the original article.

**Title:**
**Author:**
**Publication Title:**

What would this author(s) add to the discussion?
Step 5: Discussion Questions

**Discussion Questions:**

- What perspective did each source add? How did it help you develop a conversation?
- What is the value and usefulness of using the bibliography and “cited by”?
- How do sources suggest areas for more research?
- How is the scholarly conversation the same/different from a spoken conversation?

**Tips and Tricks**

**Reading a Scholarly/Peer-Reviewed Article**

Scholarly/peer-reviewed articles can be difficult to approach, since they tend to fairly long and contain very specific research findings. Here are some tips for breaking them down:

- **Definition:** Scholarly/peer-reviewed journal articles are articles written and reviewed by experts in the field. “Peer-review” refers to a process where other experts (peers of the author) review the article for things like quality and contribution and recommend whether or not it should be published.

- **Know the sections and what information you find in them.** This can help you figure out where to go for specific information.
  - The **abstract** is a short summary of the article, found at the very top of the article (and also in the article information in library databases). Reading the abstract never replaces reading the article, but can save you a lot of time if you are trying to figure out if an article is relevant. Read it before reading or locating the full article.
- The **introduction** and/or **literature review** gives you background information on the current research. It’s a good place to find an overview of research that’s been done.
- The **methods**, **materials**, and/or **results** sections describe new research, including what was done, what they used, and what they found. These are not found in every article because not every article describes an experiment or original study.
- The **discussion** and/or **conclusion** discusses the implications and gives directions for future research.
- The **references** or **works cited** lists the sources that the article used. This section is very important for crediting other research and allowing readers to find the original. It is always at the end of every scholarly/peer-reviewed article.

- A lot of scholarly articles are written at the expert level. Some may not be relevant to you because they are aimed at experts in specific areas. Ex. If you saw the article, “Detection by real-time PCR and pyrosequencing of the cry 1Ab and cry 1Ac genes introduced in genetically modified (GM) constructs” (real article title), it would probably be fine to move on (unless you really wanted to read that).
- Some instructors require you to use scholarly/peer-reviewed articles. You can’t always tell if an article is scholarly/peer reviewed just by looking at it, since the qualification is how it was reviewed. Use the options in the library databases (ex. the “Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals” option in Academic Search Premier) if you need to make sure and article is peer-reviewed.

**Reflection**

What perspectives are present in the information you found? Are any missing? What would you add to the conversation?