Workshop # 2
Reading a Scholarly Article

July 16, 2015
Types of Literature

• Popular Literature
• Trade Publications
• Scholarly Literature

http://newarkwww.rutgers.edu/ecollege/popular.htm
Popular Literature

**Purpose:** Informs and entertains the general public

**Audience:** General public

**Covers:** Wide array of topics (of public interest)

**Writers:** Professional writers of the publication

**Examples:** *New York Times, US News & World Report,* *Wired* magazine

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Characteristics

Of popular literature:

• General summary of background information
• Little technical jargon or discipline-specific language
• Few, or no, cited references
• May contain advertisements
• Often shorter in length (1-7 pages)

http://newarkwww.rutgers.edu/ecollege/popular.htm
Trade Literature

**Purpose:** To apply information and provide professional support

**Audience:** Professionals in the field

**Covers:** Information relevant to the field

**Writers:** Members of the profession, journalists, scholars

**Examples:** Institute of Transportation Engineers Journal

http://newarkwww.rutgers.edu/ecollege/popular.htm
Characteristics

Of trade literature:

• Application of new technology to the field
• Technical language (expectation of knowledge level of audience)
• Practitioners’ viewpoint
• Interpretation of research trends and issues as relevant to the field
• May contain advertisements
• Often shorter in length (1-7 pages)
Scholarly Literature

Purpose: To communicate research and scholarly ideas

Audience: Other scholars, students

Covers: Very narrow and specific subjects

Writers: Scholars, experts, researchers (with institutional affiliation)

Examples: JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association

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Characteristics

Of scholarly literature:

- Little background information provided (expectation of audience to have a certain level of knowledge about topic)
- Technical language/discipline-specific jargon
- Peer reviewed
- Includes bibliography and sources
- Methods often described in detail
- Often of significant length (5+ pages)

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Truvia and the Fruit Fly

Look at the *PLOS One* article and describe:

- The intended audience
- The purpose
- The conclusion
Uses of the Literature

Research is only productive insofar as it can be effectively communicated to others.

You can only productively consume scholarly literature if you know where to find it and how to read it.
Using the article you brought with you, identify the main sections of the article. Under each heading, write one sentence describing the following:

• The **purpose** of that section in the structure of the scholarly article
• The **main point** (key sentence) being made in that section in that specific article
A New Article

Time to find a second article! Dig up a different article on your STAR topic. This article should:

• have different authors ...
• come from a different source ...
• have been published at a different time ...

... than your first article.
Comparisons

Create a **Venn diagram** to compare your two articles about your STAR topic. Be sure to consider differences and similarities in:

- Content
- Structure
- Format
- Source
- Purpose
Next Time...

Workshop # 3: Other Contexts for Research


Please bring:

• Your laptop
• And, as always, your intellectual curiosity