

## Summarize. Synthesize. Analyze. Evaluate.

**Summarize**

Summary condenses and describes the evidence of information in sources.

- What are sources saying about your topic?
- What are the relevant findings across studies?
- What methods do sources use?

**Synthesize**

Synthesis makes connections, identifies patterns, and reveals themes among sources. Synthesis also compares and contrasts the sources. Consult your Review Matrix to recognize these patterns.

- What relationships exist among the sources?
- What themes have emerged from your sources?
- What is common among sources?
- What differentiates these sources?
- What is the conversation between and among sources?
- What disagreements or divergences exist between sources?
- What methods and approaches are similar or different?

**Analyze**

Analysis breaks the content and ideas of your sources into their fundamental components. It critically examines sources to demonstrate how your research is situated within the current literature. Analysis is the combination of the 'how' and 'why' questions needed to deconstruct the source and its findings in order to understand its conclusions and confounding variables.

- What are the arguments and premises presented in sources and how do they relate to your topic?
- What evidence seems significant? Why?
- How can you explain the patterns you have identified in sources?
- What evidence doesn't seem to fit? Why?
- What else might explain the themes, patterns, and connections that have emerged from the sources?
- Do the author's main arguments logically lead to and support their central finding or thesis? If so, how and why?
- What patterns support or contradict your thesis?
- How do sources work together to influence your thesis statement?
- How does your research fit with what sources are discussing?
- How does your research build upon or contribute to what has already been published on your topic?

**Evaluate**

Evaluation is the application and outcome of analysis. It uses standards to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the ideas presented in sources by critically examining their credibility. Assessing bias, validity, and reliability while highlighting gaps in research are the central features of the evaluation process.

- Does the source present sufficient evidence to support ideas?
- Does the source present findings without bias by considering multiple perspectives?
- How could the problem have been investigated more effectively?
- What limitations does the source have and do they restrict statistical power, significance, or generalizability of findings?
- Does the source omit or confound certain details that restrict its usefulness or applicability?
- Does the source use valid and reliable research methods?
- Have the findings been replicated and do they agree or disagree with current findings?
- What future research needs to be conducted to enhance our understanding of the topic?