Student Checklist for Literature Review

Name:

Title of Literature Review:

Introduction

1. My topic is sufficiently defined and narrowed, and I have clearly identified the specific area(s) of focus.
   
   ______ Yes   ______ No   ______ Unsure

   1. My introduction states why this topic is relevant now and briefly states what is already known about the topic and what gaps this review intends to address.

   ______ Yes   ______ No   ______ Unsure

   2. My introduction provides a “roadmap” for the reader by identifying the relevant bodies/areas of literature and research that I will be covering in the review.

   ______ Yes   ______ No   ______ Unsure

Body

3. There is a logical connection, moving from the general to the more specific, as I progress through my discussion of the different issues/themes I have identified as being critical to my topic.

   ______ Yes   ______ No   ______ Unsure

4. I have made good use of headings, sub-headings, and transitional sentences in order to develop my argument as I explore my topic.

   ______ Yes   ______ No   ______ Unsure
5. The research studies I reviewed are organized in a clear and coherent way (i.e., chronologically, thematically, methodologically).

______Yes  _______No  _______Unsure

6. When I cite sources, I made it clear whether the information from these sources was based on empirical research, anecdotal sources, clinical experience, theory, popular media sources, etc.

______Yes  _______No  _______Unsure

7. I have reviewed a range of studies that show varied perspectives on my topic.

______Yes  _______No  _______Unsure

8. I have provided adequate description and critique of the methodologies of the studies, including participants, sample size, how data was collected, and strengths and weaknesses of the studies.

______Yes  _______No  _______Unsure

9. The content of my review was drawn from acceptable peer-reviewed journals. I have provided justification for using other sources, e.g., popular press.

______Yes  _______No  _______Unsure

10. I have adequately synthesized the studies I reviewed

______Yes  _______No  _______Unsure

11. My review relied primarily on primary sources. When I used a secondary source, I have conveyed this in a clear way and have not presented myself as having read (and cited) a primary source.

______Yes  _______No  _______Unsure
Summary and Conclusion

12. I have provided a summary of the main findings of my literature review. It restates the topic of review and reminds the reader of the key issues I have covered.

_______Yes                        _______No                       _______Unsure

13. My concluding paragraph includes a discussion of implications for future research.

_______Yes                        _______No                       _______Unsure

Style and Organization

14. It is clearly apparent that I have proofread and edited my literature review. There are no typos and other careless errors.

_______Yes                        _______No                       _______Unsure

15. I have adequately ensured that all of the following are in accordance with the DP/APA style manual:

☐ Page numbers
☐ No running head
☐ Correct margins
☐ Correct font size; consistent font and font size throughout my review
☐ Correct line spacing between paragraphs and after headings and subheadings
☐ Correct use and APA formatting of headings for different sections
☐ Correct citation of individual sources
☐ Correct citation of sources with multiple authors, correct use of et al.
☐ Correct citation of multiple sources
☐ Correct punctuation and layout for quotations, including block quotations
☐ Judicious use of quotations. Do not put facts in quotations.
☐ Correct use of numbers; knowing when to use numerical form and when to use words
☐ Correct formating of references in reference section
☐ Begin references on a new page. Learn how to use the “insert page break function” so that content on the new page is at the very TOP of the page.
☐ Make sure there are no orphan headings (headings that are the last line of a page).

_______Yes                        _______No                       _______Unsure
16. In terms of punctuation and spelling, I have made sure of the following:

☐ Correct spelling
☐ Correct use of apostrophes (e.g., student’s vs. students’)
☐ Consistent inclusion of 2 spaces after a period
☐ Use of past tense when reporting research
☐ Subject-verb agreement in terms of number, i.e., singular/plural
☐ Correct capitalization – only proper nouns are capitalized and not generic nouns or the names of illnesses or theories
☐ Correct use of italics when introducing a new term or using foreign words that are not part of the English language. The first time you introduce a new technical term, put it in italics; afterwards, use normal type.
☐ Do not end sentences with prepositions.

_______Yes                        _______No                       _______Unsure

17. The following is characteristic of my writing:

☐ Writing is clear and concise.
☐ All sentences are complete sentences.
☐ I have used a consistent verb tense throughout a paragraph and use the past tense when citing studies.
☐ I have avoided run on sentences.
☐ I have defined any terms that I needed to define.
☐ Each sentence logically connects to the sentence that precedes it and to the sentence that follows it.
☐ Each paragraph is connected to the one that precedes and follows it.
☐ I have avoided use of the first and second person (I/we/you).
☐ I have been careful and consistent about my use of terms such as one, his/her, their/they.
☐ I have refered to people as who and not as that or which.
☐ I have used which and that correctly (e.g., the studies, which had methodological flaws, were not included” vs. “the studies that had methodological flaws were not included”).
☐ I have not used contractions.
☐ There are sufficient paragraph breaks.

_______Yes                        _______No                       _______Unsure

18. The tone and voice of my writing are appropriate for the context.

☐ My word choice and phrasing are appropriately formal.
☐ My tone is scholarly/academic and nonjudgmental.
☐ I have been careful not to express my own biases and values.
☐ I have been sure to assert my position drawing on accepted research and theory, presenting a well-reasoned and well-supported argument.

_____ Yes  _____ No  _____ Unsure

Self Evaluation

19. Write a brief paragraph about your experience writing this literature review. Include a “critique” of your paper, including what you see strengths and weaknesses.