**Activity:  Dissecting a typical journal article.**

   In this activity you will learn how to analyze a typical journal article.

   The following tutorials should be reviewed before doing this activity:
[Phases of research](http://faculty.frostburg.edu/mbradley/phases.html)
[Understanding Journal Articles](http://faculty.frostburg.edu/mbradley/journalarticles.html)
[Conducting on-line searches](http://faculty.frostburg.edu/mbradley/onlinesearch.html)

Note:  Students doing this activity must have access to Wilson Select Plus Full Text article for Part A but not for Part B.

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| --- |
|    I.  Research Question(s) / Purpose of the article   II.  Hypothesis  III.  Variables        A.  Independent Variable        B.  Dependent Variable   IV.  Methodology        A.  Who participated?        B.  What did they do?    V.  Major Findings |

Part A.
   First let's find an article that is available on-line and in full text.
1.  Log in to your school's search program and enter into either the Wilson Select Plus database or the Academic Search Elite database.
2.  In the advanced search box type in:

            gifted and perfectionism  (as keywords)

   This will yield a handful of articles on gifted children and their perfectionistic tendencies.
3.  Find the Carol Orange article titled "Gifted Students and Perfectionism".  Click on it.
4.  This first page contains the article's abstract.  You may want to print it out.
5.  Next, click on the 'full text' button which will take you to a new screen that shows the full article.  Read through the article with me as we fill out our outline.
6.  The Outline:

**I.  Research Question(s) / Purpose of the article**
           Every article has a purpose or a main research question to guide it.  Sometimes this is formally stated while other times the reader must glean this information.  You can find this information in the article's Introduction and, sometimes, the abstract.
           For the Orange article, it begins by reviewing past research on the topic of perfectionism - generally and then specifically involving gifted students.  These first few paragraphs provide a background for you to understand the purpose behind this research.  In the 4th paragraph that begins with "According to...", the author states the purpose of the article.  Did you find it?  Filling out our outline we write for (I.):
         The purpose of the study is to give participants a Perfectionism Quiz in order to refine our understanding of the construct of perfectionism.

  **II.  Hypothesis**
            You can usually find the hypothesis (or hypotheses) in the introduction and, sometimes, the abstract.  Sometimes the hypothesis is formally stated; other times it is phrased as "We believe such and such will happen" or "We think this will happen".
             For the Orange article, the hypothesis is formally stated in the same paragraph as the purpose.  Filling out our outline, we write for (II.):
           It was hypothesized that a significant number gifted students would score high on the Perfectionism Quiz.

**III.  Variables**
            The answers to finding both the independent and dependent variables is usually found in the introduction and method sections (and sometimes the abstract).  You can also figure out these variables from the hypothesis.
            It is usually best to first figure out the main variables or constructs of the study, and then choose which one is the IV and which one is the DV.  For the Orange article, the 2 main variables are "giftedness" and "perfectionism".  We know this from the hypothesis and from the method section.  The IV influences the DV.  Ask yourself:  is giftedness influencing perfectionism?  or is perfectionism influencing giftedness?  Filling out our outline for part III:
           A.  Independent Variable
                      giftedness
            B.  Dependent Variable
                      perfectionism

Why?  Because whether a student is gifted influences their perfectionism, not the other way around.

   **IV.  Method**
           For this part of the outline, you want to read through the Method section to see who participated in the study and what did they have to do.  Under the who participated section, you'll want to briefly state who did the study.  Children?  Ages?  Gender?  Parents?  etc.  Under part (B) you want to describe what the participants were instructed to do.
           For the Orange article, the first paragraph in the method section describes the participants.  Two paragraphs later, what the participants had to do is described under the "procedure" subheading.  Filling out our outline for part IV:
          A.  Who Participated?
                        109 students from 18 different highs chools participated.  Students were
                             either enrolled in Gifted and Talented programs or taking honors classes.
          B.  What did they do?
                         Students completed the 30-item Perfectionism Quiz and then graded
                             their own results.

   **V.  Major Findings**
           Did the results of the experiment support their hypothesis?  What were the major findings of the article?  What happened?  The research article is a story of sorts.  It starts by making a prediction and ends with telling us if they were right.  Usually, if it is a well written article, this answer is at the beginning of the Discussion section.  But you may have to look around the Discussion section for it.
           For the Orange article, did gifted students score high on the Perfectionism Quiz?  The first sentence in the Discussion section answers this question.  We may want to add more information when completing our outline.  Thus, filling out the outline for part V:
           Gifted students tended to score high on the Perfectionism Quiz, supporting the author's hypothesis.  Specifically, 89% of the sample scored high in the 2 highest perfectionism categories.  This contradicts another study that found only 15-20% of gifted students were perfectionistic.

Now that we've practiced with one article, it's time for you to try one on your own.

Part B.
   In this section, you will outline an article on your own.  There are 2 versions of this activity:  a directed version where you outline a specific article and a free form version where you choose your own article to outline.

**Directed Version**
1.  Log back in to Wilson Select Plus.
2.  Do a keyword search for alcohol use and drunk driving.
3.  Find the article by Elena Parent & Denise Newman titled "The Role of Sensation-seeking in Alcohol Use and Risk-taking Behavior among College Women", from the Journal of Alcohol and Drug Education, v. 44, no.2, 1999.
4.  Complete the outline below for this article.

   I.  Research Question(s) / Purpose of the article
  II.  Hypothesis
 III.  Variables
       A.  Independent Variable
       B.  Dependent Variable
  IV.  Methodology
       A.  Who participated?
       B.  What did they do?
   V.  Major Findings

**Free Form Version**
1.  Log on to your school's search program and use the PsychINFO database.
2.  Search for a journal article that is in an area of interest to you.  Once you find the article, get it from your library or see if it is available on-line at Wilson Select Plus or Academic Search Elite.
3.  Outline the article:

   I.  Research Question(s) / Purpose of the article
  II.  Hypothesis
 III.  Variables
       A.  Independent Variable
       B.  Dependent Variable
  IV.  Methodology
       A.  Who participated?
       B.  What did they do?
   V.  Major Findings

Sources: Cyberlab