How to Read a Scholarly Article

What Does a Scholarly Article Look Like?

ANATOMY OF A SCHOLARLY ARTICLE

TITLE AND AUTHORS

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

METHODS

RESULTS

CHARTS, GRAPHS, EQUATIONS

DISCUSSION

CONCLUSIONS

REFERENCES

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What is an Abstract?

The abstract, generally written by the author(s) of the article, provides *a concise summary* of the whole article. Usually it highlights the focus, study results and conclusion(s) of the article.

Read the abstract first as it covers basics of the article. Questions to consider:

- What is this article about? What is the working hypothesis or thesis?
- Is this related to my question or area of research?

What is a DOI?

A Digital Object Identifier (usually written as DOI) is an identification number or source link for a document or file. It's a system that is widely used by journals today. The DOI is comprised of symbols, numbers, and letters.

Example: doi:10.1038/s41586-019-1805-z

This unique number system is very beneficial to readers and authors since it can be used to immediately locate an exact document, even if a host web page or database has altered an article's URL.

How do I find an article's DOI?

If in print or PDF form, the first place to check is the front page of the article. If it is an online article, look for the DOI near the top of the article, at the very end of the article, or wherever citation information is located. Here are a few examples:

Here is an example from *The New England Journal of Medicine:*

CLINICAL PROBLEM-SOLVING (FREE PREVIEW)

Facing Uncertainty

Cristina Thomas, M.D., Ruth Ann Vleugels, M.D., M.P.H., David J. Kwiatkowski, M.D., Ph.D., Bruce Levy, M.D., and Joseph Loscalzo, M.D., Ph.D.

A 57-year-old woman presented with a 1-year history of an itchy facial rash, which was unresponsive 3-month course of prednisone and hydroxychloroquine. Redness had spread from her face to her scalp and neck. She reported a productive cough and progressive dyspnea for the preceding 2 weeks.

Continue reading this article

Editors

Caren G. Solomon, M.D., M.P.H., Editor

About this article

Check for updates

Cite this article

Lambo, S., Gröbner, S.N., Rausch, T. *et al*. The molecular landscape of ETMR at diagnosis and relapse. *Nature* (2019) doi:10.1038/s41586-019-1815-x

Download citation ⬇

Subjects

Cancer genetics   Cancer genomics   CNS cancer

Genomic instability   miRNAs

If a DOI for an article exists, place it at the end of the citation (instead of a URL). Here's an example for the *New England Journal of Medicine* article previously shown:

Thomas, Cristina, et al. "Facing Uncertainty." *New England Journal of Medicine*, vol. 381, no. 23, 2019, pp. 2253–2259., doi:10.1056/nejmcps1906037.

Why are Article References Helpful? These give credit to other scientists and researchers and show you the basis the authors used to develop their research. They allow you to:

- o draw on any of the millions of ideas, insights and arguments published by other writers, many of whom have spent years researching and writing.
- o identify additional sources of information on the topic. Questions to ask:

  - What other articles should I read?
  - What other authors are respected in this field?
  - What other research should I explore?

Where to find Bibliograph/Citation Information

The list of references, or works cited, should include all of the materials the authors used in the article.

It is found at the end of the journal article as Notes, References (APA), or Works Cited (MLA).