

Questions to Ask When Analyzing Scholarly/Academic Journal Articles as a Genre

Setup/Organization

- How long are the articles typically?
- How many sources are cited on the works cited page?
- What kind of citation is used (MLA, APA, other)?
- How are the titles phrased?

Thesis/Argument

- Do the articles have thesis statements? If so, where are they typically found?
- If the article doesn't have a thesis, how does the person explain the main point?
- Are the authors trying to prove a thesis, present information or a combination?
- How does the author prove the argument? What strategies do they use?
- What kind of evidence do authors use to prove his/her idea?
- Do authors use examples? If so, how?

Article Components

- Literary Review: Do authors provide a summary of what other writers have said about the topic? Where is this section found? How is it constructed?
- Methods: Do authors describe his/her methods of collecting data or research? Where is this section found? How is it constructed?

Use of Research

- What is the purpose of the sources in the article?
- How are sources integrated?
- Do the authors use quotes, paraphrases, summaries? Block quotes?
- How are quotes phrased/set up? Are they part of a sentence? If so, what kind of lead in is used?

Language

- How long are the paragraphs?
- How long are the sentences?
- What is the tone of the article? Formal/informal?
- What kind of word choice is common in the articles? Is jargon used?

Outline

- Create an outline for one of the articles with one bullet/line for each paragraph, stating its main point. Make sure to track the hierarchy—your outline will likely categories within categories (using indented bullets or traditional roman numeral, etc).
- Use this outline to track how the person structures their essay, presents information or argues his/her thesis.

Other

- Are there any other things you notice about the article as a genre?

- In the description above that you have created, which of these characteristics will you follow in your essay? Which will you be unable to follow and why?