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How To Read And Critique A Scientific Research Article: Notes To Guide Students Reading Primary Literature (with Teaching Tips For Faculty Members)



Synopsis

Given the explosion of information and knowledge in the field of Life Sciences, adapting primary literature as materials in course work as part of active learning seems to be more effective in improving scientific literacy among science undergraduates than the pure transmission of content knowledge using traditional textbooks. In addition, students also read research articles as part of undertaking laboratory research projects useful for preparing them for graduate school. As such, a good grasp of reading and analytical skills is needed for students to understand how their research project contributes to the field that they are working in. Such skills are being taught at UK and USA universities. In Asia, this approach in teaching has not yet been as widespread, although similar ideas are beginning to be used in education. Written as a quick guide for undergraduate students and faculty members dealing with scientific research articles as part of a module or research project, this book will be useful, especially in Asia, for students and faculty members as the universities look to incorporating the use of scientific research articles in their undergraduate teaching. For Life Science students, the first time they encounter a primary literature can be rather daunting, though with proper guidance, they can overcome the initial difficulties and become confident in dealing with scientific articles. This guidebook provides a structured approach to reading a research article, guiding the reader step-by-step through each section, with tips on how to look out for key points and how to evaluate each section. Overall, by helping undergraduate students to overcome their anxieties in reading scientific literature, the book will enable the students to appreciate better the process of scientific investigations and how knowledge is derived in science.

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Customer Reviews

I use three books as references for my students to learn how to read, write and critique primary scientific literature. This book is the best one for learning how to critique primary literature. The author begins with a brief overview of how to evaluate a scientific article. The book discusses the anatomy of an article then covers in detail the various sections of the article - e.g. Abstract, Introduction, Methods, etc. There is a chapter on how to find an article and publish an article placed between the chapters on the sections of the article. Their placement seems odd to me. I would place these two chapters before the ones that detail the sections of an article. The two things that I really like about this book are the diagrams of how an article section is organized, and a checklist of how to critique each section. These features could be very useful to students who are not experienced with writing critiques. This is a very good book and I recommend it, but I do have two details to point out. This book is very good at teaching how to critique papers, but I would recommend "Reading Primary Literature ..." by Gillen for the reading and interpretation side. Also, this book and its examples are skewed towards the laboratory and cellular sciences. Students who focus on ecology and other organismal sciences may not understand all of the examples given in the book.

Excellent

Perfect

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