

Primary articles serve as a firsthand account from a researcher about their own original data and findings on a particular research topic. A researcher may conduct a study, gather and interpret their data, and then display this information through a primary article. Most primary articles follow the “IMRaD” structure, which stands for introduction, methods, results, and discussion. These are the key features necessary for a comprehensive primary article. The introduction is useful for providing context for the research, pointing out that this specific research has not occurred previously, and lays out the goals for the study. The methods section relays precisely how the researcher conducted the study, elaborating thoroughly on the materials and procedures used to the point that would enable another researcher to replicate the study. In the results section the researcher includes their raw data, including graphs, tables, and statistics without elaborating on the data. The researcher then interprets the data in the discussion section, as well as any notes on research limitations and tries to relate the study to any earlier research that other scientists have conducted.

Review articles are quite different from primary articles. These are instead secondhand accounts by those who have read and analyzed primary articles. Review articles do not present any new findings or information and are instead made to evaluate and interpret primary research. These articles may also note trends, debates, or gaps in research of a given field, pointing out how different studies may relate to one another. Additionally, these articles typically have an extensive list of sources that they have referenced. Review articles are useful for researchers to stay up to date on recent studies without having to read several individually published primary articles.

The peer review process is an essential and oftentimes trivial part of having a scholarly article published. The process begins with a researcher who wants to share their findings and thus collects their data into a draft article. They then submit the draft article to a journal for potential publication. The editor of the journal decides whether their article is a decent fit for the journal, and if they decide yes, it is- then it moves on to the peer reviewers. The peer reviewers are other experts within the field of study related to the topic of research conducted in the given article. They then ask many questions related to the research to decide the worthiness of the article's publication- questions like "is it important," "is it interesting," etc. Depending on the answers to these questions, they then make their decision on if they believe the journal should publish the article. If they do decide to recommend its publication to the journal, they may still want the article to be revised further. In the end, an article may pass the peer review test, but the final decision of publication lies with the journal's editor. Because prestigious journals are incredibly selective with their publications, at least 90% of article submissions end up rejected. Once an article is published, it is then available to the subscribers of the journal, typically scholarly libraries. The entire peer review process can take months or even years to complete.