## Three domains of critical reading

### Reviewing the literature and critiquing scholarship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context: discipline/profession, authors, currency, bias</th>
<th>Validity: On its own terms</th>
<th>Synthesis: In relation to others</th>
<th>Relevance: Usefulness to you</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ When was it published?</td>
<td>▪ Have others cited or drawn on this research?</td>
<td>▪ Are these authors coming at the issue from the same discipline perspective as you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Where was it published?</td>
<td>▪ How influential has it been?</td>
<td>▪ What is your overall response to the article?</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ What profession or discipline are the authors?</td>
<td>▪ Is it cutting edge/controversial or mainstream?</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ What else have they published—are they authoritative?</td>
<td>▪ Is this part of a debate and where does it sit?</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Are there any vested interests which might bias research?</td>
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### What are they doing?

#### Research Question/Aims/Hypothesis

| ▪ Are the aims clearly stated? Are they vague? | ▪ Is this a radically new area of research or a tweak or new angle on existing question or topic? | ▪ How similar are their aims to your own? How does that affect your use of it? |
| ▪ Is the research question etc valid or rests on bias/assumptions? | ▪ How long have people been interested in this topic? | ▪ Is it still worth me doing my research? |
| ▪ Is the question interesting/significant? | | | |

### How did they do it?

#### Methods, Models and Materials

| ▪ Are any theories/models appropriate and accurately understood? Do they develop their own? | ▪ Are they developing a completely new method etc? | ▪ Does this help me justify my own choice of approach? |
| ▪ Are the methods used for data gathering/interpretation appropriate? | ▪ Are the methods etc used standard and acceptable practice? | ▪ Can I adapt or improve their method? |
| ▪ Is the data set well chosen? | ▪ Are they adapting or improving previous methods etc? | ▪ Do I agree that this is an appropriate method for research like mine? |

### How do they know?

#### Argument, evidence, logic and reasoning

| ▪ Is their interpretation and analysis flawed or does it make logical sense? | ▪ Do they use other literature appropriately to help interpret their findings? | ▪ Is there anything I should be watching out for when reading my own work critically? |
| ▪ Have they missed anything? | ▪ Do later scholars criticise them? | ▪ Is there anything I can point to in order to save me having to explain it in full? |
| ▪ Do the results mean what they say they mean? | | | |

### What do they say?

#### Findings and conclusions

| ▪ Are the conclusions actually related to their aims and results? | ▪ Are their findings confirmed by other literature? | ▪ Can I rely on their conclusions to build my own argument? |
| ▪ Are the conclusions drawn proportionate to the evidence presented? | ▪ Are their findings significant and novel, compared to other literature? | ▪ Do I disagree with their conclusions to some extent? Does that help justify my research? |
| ▪ How did they do it? | ▪ Any gaps/missed opportunities to help justify my research? | | |

Interrogate the text as you read - on its own terms, in relation to other texts, and its relevance to your work.
## Three domains of critical thinking

### Reviewing the literature and critiquing scholarship

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