

Key structural ingredients of good and bad papers

(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214629618307230>)

	Good papers	Bad papers
<i>Title</i>	Describes topic but also key findings, themes, and contributions, and/or cases	Describes only the topic or method
	Identifies the geographic location of the research (if relevant)	Does not mention location or case study (if relevant)
<i>Abstract</i>	Clearly states research objectives or questions, methods, findings, limitations, and future directions	Focuses only on one or two aspects of the manuscript
	Is closely copy edited, is not repeated later in the text	Is full of typos, or repeated in the text itself verbatim
<i>Introduction</i>	Is short and sharp, often with an attention getting device at the start	Has a messy introduction that is too long
	Presents the core argument or question within the first few paragraphs	Presents the core argument too late
	Is well linked with the rest of the paper	Is poorly-linked with the rest of the paper
	Is well linked with the conclusion and findings	Ignores the link between the introduction and conclusion
	Previews the structure of the paper to come	Does not give the structure of the argument
<i>Research Questions, Frameworks, Methods and Designs</i>	Has a clear, answerable, interesting research question or questions	Has an unclear research question or none at all
	If appropriate, engages with a conceptual framework or frameworks	Does not state an appropriate theoretical or conceptual framework
	Is explicit about research design	Does not clarify research design
	Follows or acknowledges codes of practice for its research design	Does not consider codes of practice
	Mentions and pre-empts methodological limitations	Ignores or hides methodological limitations
<i>Results</i>	Actively interprets data	Lets data speak for itself
	Is selective and judicious about data utilized	Presents data not directly linked to the core argument
	Tightly couples data and analysis	Decouples the presentation of data from the analysis
<i>Discussion/ Conclusion</i>	Aims to make the conclusion the best part of the article	Has a thin conclusion
	Does not start a new argument in the conclusion	Starts a new argument in the conclusion
	Does not present new data in the conclusion	Presents new data in the conclusion
	Uses the conclusion to discuss findings as well as future research directions	Lets the conclusion be a summary and nothing else
	Cautiously discusses limitations and generalizability of findings (or lack thereof)	Ignores limitations and/or inappropriately presents findings as fully universal or generalizable
<i>General structure</i>	Tells a compelling story for the reader	Lets the reader wonder what the results mean
	Has coherent, logical structure with clear headings and subheadings	Has jumbled structure and no headings or subheadings
	Strong paragraph unity	Lacks paragraph unity
	Is well signposted	Forgets signposts