Guidelines for reading a scientific article and writing a summary

Students should be able to:

- Read and understand the main points in an article
- Analyze the findings or argument of the article
- Decide the appropriate criteria by which to evaluate the article
- Provide a critical evaluation of the article based on the criteria selected.

What steps should you take in reading an article?

Step 1. Take a quick overview of the article to determine the topic by reading:

- the title
- the abstract
- the introduction
- the conclusions

(*are the authors trying to answer a specific question, explain observations, present theoretical model of a process, or something else?*)

Step 2. Read the article analytically
Make brief notes and highlight important ideas by reading:

1. The Introduction
   (why did the authors carry out this work? what are the main hypotheses? what was previously known about the topic? what are the objective of the current work?)

2. The Results
   (look first at the subheadings and scan the topic sentence and figures of each paragraph, try to understand what are the main findings)

3. The Discussion and Conclusion
   (the authors typically present their conclusions and describe how results of the study support these conclusions: were the hypotheses supported? what were the important findings?)

4. Mat & Met
   (are the material and methods well explained?)

Read the article several times….each time you read the article you will understand a little more

Step 3. Check your Notes to ensure that they include:

- the main aim of the article
- the methodological approach
- the main findings/conclusions

Step 4. Use your notes to write a summary (max 300 words)

Your summary must be original, do not plagiarize the author's words and be creative. You can add an original graphical scheme related to the whole study or to a specific aspect of the study (e.g. an experiment, a technique, main concepts).