

**Guidelines for writing a paper critique:**

- Aim for a length of 800-1000 words.
- First, begin with a short summary. This should be no longer than 300 words (i.e., much shorter than the summaries you have been writing thus far). It should identify the major question(s) investigated by the paper, the major technique(s), the major result(s), and the paper's significance.
- Identify the major problem(s) with this paper. The instructor may point out a specific major problem, but in other cases you may be asked to develop a critical assessment from scratch. You should explain the problem(s) in enough detail so that the authors could (in principle) write a targeted rebuttal. If you list any minor problem(s), make a clear distinction between these and the major problem(s). Number the problems you list and avoid repetition.
- For each major problem, state the implications of this problem. Does it make the interpretation of specific experiments difficult? Does it weaken your confidence in a major conclusion? Does it diminish the significance of the paper?
- When possible, indicate what solutions are appropriate. Should the authors soften a specific conclusion? Are new analyses required? If new experiments are needed, be specific.
- It may also be appropriate to identify particular strengths of the paper. Avoid vague or flowery language: if you praise the paper, be specific and concrete.