Conducting the Literature Review

In *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*, John W. Creswell, writes:

Reviewing and organizing the literature does more than put it in physical order. It helps you to establish a conceptual picture of the information. Having a conceptual picture allows you to organize the literature in your mind, identify where the study fits into this literature, and convince others of the importance of your study.¹

Creswell, suggests constructing a “literature map” to organize the literature. Starting with broad keywords for your topic, place the articles into “related topical areas.”

1. “School Uniforms” & “Dress Codes”
2. “School Uniforms” & Behavior
3. “School Uniforms” AND “Self-Esteem”
4. “School Uniforms” AND Achievement
5. “School Uniforms” AND Violence
6. “School Uniforms” AND Achievement AND Gender

### 1. Broad Keywords
### 2. Break into narrower categories
### 3. Should be able to break into even more narrow/specific groups

**Example of a Literature Review**

See the following article which is an example of an extensive literature review. Note how the authors have *synthesized* the literature into topical areas.


(Available online)

**Criteria for Completing a Good Literature Review**

See the “Literature Review Scoring Rubric” in the following article for evaluating your literature review:


(Available online)

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