

Written Assignments Guide  
COGS 156  
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**Research Question:** *What are the researchers interested in?*

Note that there is a difference between *how* they study the question of interest and *what* they are actually interested in. In this section you should **only** mention *what* the authors are interested in.

**Hypothesis:** *What are the authors' predictions regarding the results of their study?*

This does **not** include explaining what the different possible results mean or how they should be interpreted. (e.g., The authors predict that children will be able to identify concrete words before abstract words.)

**Methods:** *What does the experiment look like, what does it involve?*

This includes things like:

- Participants (how many, what kind of background are they from (do they all speak English), etc.)
- What are the different conditions they used
- What paradigm do they use (e.g., head turn, high amplitude sucking paradigm)

**Results:** *What did they find?*

This should be directly related to the research question and hypothesis. You do not need to include statistical values--if the reader of the summary wants specific values then they should refer back to the paper. Additionally, you do not want to include any interpretation of the finding here, explanations and interpretations belong in the conclusions.

**Conclusions:** *Based on the results, what can we conclude about language development and what does it mean?*

This is where you want to provide a bigger picture of what, in general, we can say about some aspect of language development based on the findings. This can include an interpretation of the findings, explanations, etc.

**Critical Assessment:** *What was good, bad, unanswered in the paper?*

Research isn't perfect; the critical assessment should be your personal critical evaluation of the article. Point out what can be improved in the study, possible limitations, questions that remain unanswered, and/or what would be good follow-up studies. You don't have to include all of these in the critical assessment--they are just ideas of what could be included in the summary (don't limit yourself to only these). This section is for you to show that you have thought about the paper more in-depth and taken some of the things you have learned in class to evaluate what you have read.