

Writing 109HP: Assignment #3

Analytical Assignment

Introduction

Medical progress is driven by research and health professionals must be accustomed to scanning and reading the medical literature devoted to research. Because the spectrum of medical literature varies from the wildly speculative to the scientifically rigorous, readers must be able to quickly evaluate an article when they read it. Are the experiments used during research well designed? Have the investigators reached logical conclusions based upon the data, or have they overstepped the data and forced their own conclusions? What kinds of statistical analysis were employed during the research? Were biases and errors avoided? This assignment will give you practice at reading and analyzing a medical research article.

Tasks

Select an article from a professionally reputable and peer-refereed medical journal. Some typical examples might include:

- *New England Journal of Medicine*
- *Journal of the American Medical Association*
- *The Lancet*
- *Canadian Medical Association Journal*

Read and analyze your selected article, noting its content and organization. Most medical journal articles are organized using the so-called IMRAD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion) approach. Notice that each article also contains a title and author(s). Many articles also employ keywords to aid in library and browser searches.

Using separate paragraphs, identify and summarize each of the underlined components above in the order they occur. Use subheadings (e.g., “Introduction,” “Methods,” “Interpretation,” “Conclusion,” etc.) for each paragraph. (You can merely list the title, author and keywords.) Each paragraph should identify what was contained in that section of the article. For statistical data, it is not necessary to list all the data separately; merely identify and summarize the key trends and correlates.

Finish your assignment with a 2-3 page section entitled “Article Analysis,” using questions from “Reading the Medical Literature: Assessing Reports on Clinical Intervention Studies,” available in our course reader. Select any seven (7) of the twenty-three questions discussed in the article to lead your analysis. Write the questions in *italics*, then provide your analysis in normal type.

Please double-space your assignment and attach a copy of your article.

Due: See class schedule on course website.