

American Studies
Exam Study Tips
Some Questions for Critically Analyzing Research

Answer the following questions for each article, book, or source material that you are using to prepare for your exams. Use them in your exam preparation to make linkages and critical connections between the works included on your reading lists. Keep these sheets handy as a form of summary and evaluative work during the exam.

What is the full citation?

What is the problem or objective?

What kind of article is it? Theoretical or empirical? If theoretical, critical or supportive? Or theoretical background?

For an empirical article, identify the subjects for study, key variables, sampling procedures, and data collection methods.

For a theory article, identify the conceptions and analytic categories.

For an empirical article, summarize the methods and analysis procedures. Is it quantitative or qualitative? Is it longitudinal or cross-sectional?

What are the findings? (Summarize the main point article in a few sentences.)

How does this compare to other readings in the same area of research?

What are areas for further research? What would you do differently if it were your study?

What are the policy implications?