

Anatomy of a scientific paper

Start by finding the paper for the first discussion for ecology lecture.

For each section (abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion), note what the authors included in each section. We are considering this as an example, so you don't need to note specifics except as illustrations. Be sure to consider the structure of each section. What comes first, second, etc. Also, make note of the style of each section. Do they use present or past tense? Is the paper written in active or passive voice?

After you have looked at each section, look at the tables and figures in the paper. What is included in the tables and table legends? What is included in the figures and the figure legends?

Finally, take note of how the references are done in the text and in the literature cited.

Now make a bulleted checklist of what should be included in each section. For example,

Abstract

- general summary of entire paper
- 1-2 sentences of intro
- 2-3 sentences of methods
- 2-3 sentences of results
- 2-3 sentences of discussion
- make sure to include broader implications. What does it mean? Why do we care?

Please bring TWO copies of your dissection to class on September 6.