

# Literature Review

- What is a literature review?
- Thesis and antithesis

## Basics



- Choosing your topic
- Collecting material
- Read/skim articles
- How to group articles
- Using citation databases
- Finding support / disagreement

## Steps

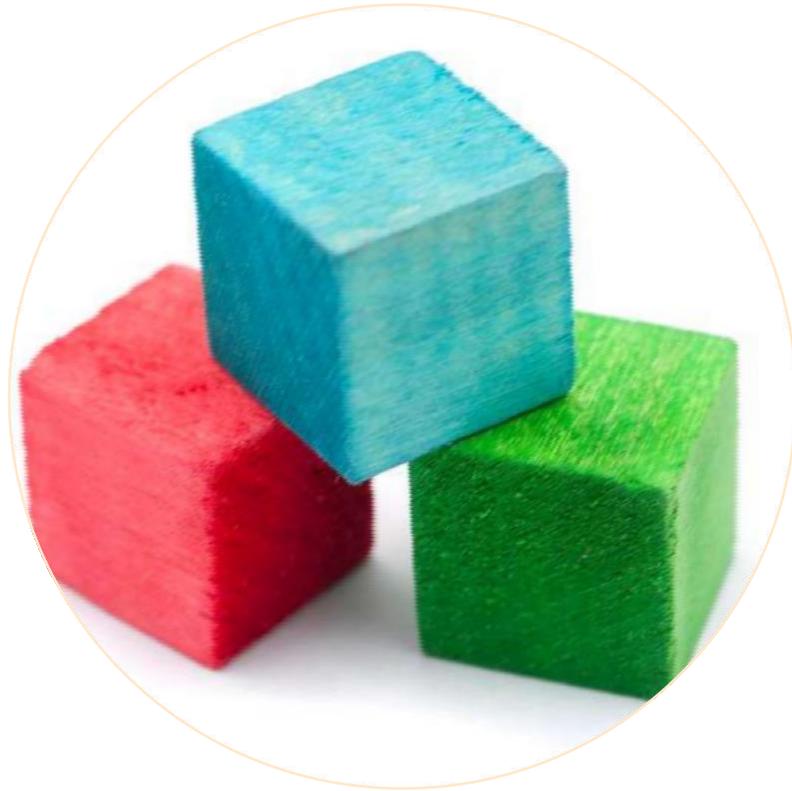


- Tips to remember for writing
- Reference managers
- Referencing techniques

## Writing and Referencing



# The Basics



# What is a literature review?

A literature review is a **list of books and journal articles** on a **specific topic** grouped by **theme** and **evaluated** with regard to your **research**.

# What is a literature review?

- The literature review identifies connections, contradictions and gaps in the literature.
  - The connections let you get a feel for the agreed academic opinion on the topic
  - The contradictions showcase the disagreements on the topic
  - The gaps give you an opportunity to develop and express your own opinions
- The gaps also identify the areas that need further research

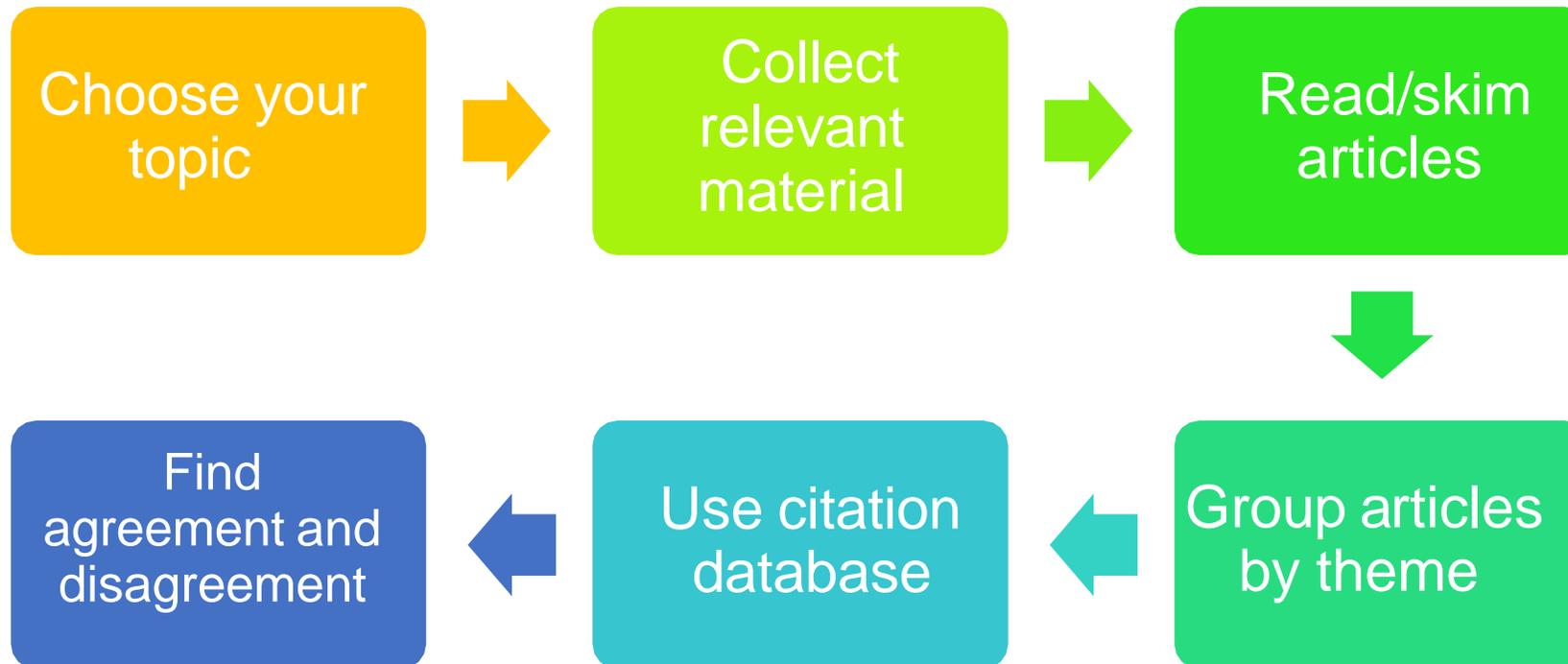
# What is a literature review?

- The literature review therefore also is an account of what has been published in relation to your research objective
  - The review is organised around your research question and subquestions
    - This lets you identify the connections, contradictions and gaps



# How-to literature review

# Steps of a literature review



# 1. Choose your topic

- Work with your supervisor / lecturer to help define your topic if you are not assigned one
  - Sometimes you may want to research an area, but it is much more complex than you realise
  - Speaking to somebody who is familiar with the field will help to clarify any areas that you are uncertain about

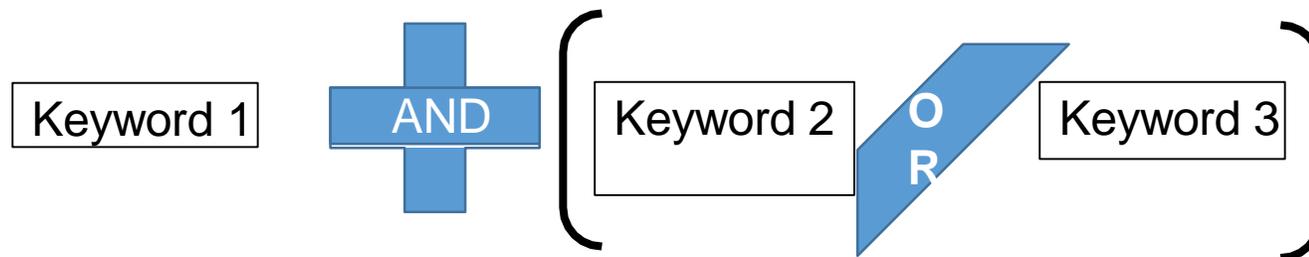
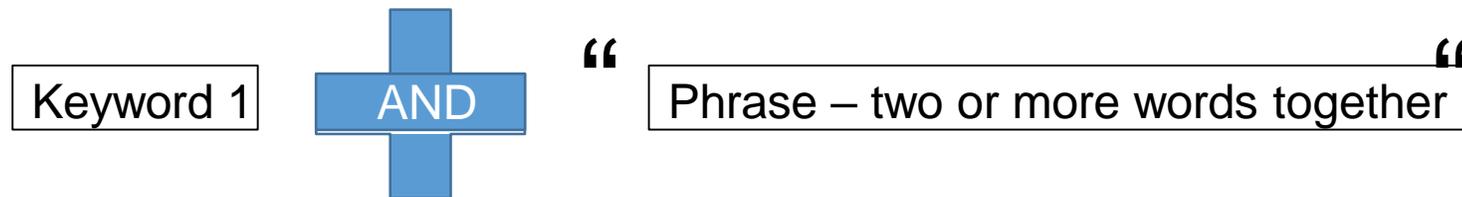
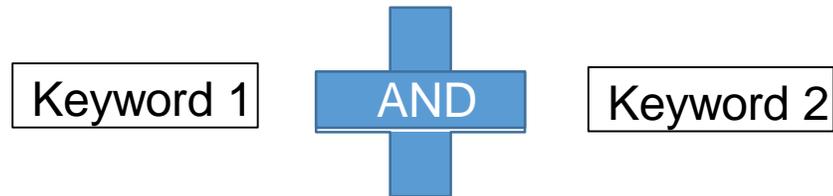
## 2. Collect relevant material

- Before you start searching, think!
  - Look at your topic critically and select the best keywords to use
  - Combine these with search strategies
  - Think about alternative search terms to use as well
- Databases sometimes use more general terms, and sometimes more specific terms, so make sure that you have alternative search words

# Search strategies

- Creating search strategies combines your keywords with using advanced search options or operators that speak directly to the database
- To get tips on how to create search strategies:
  - Use the 'search help' on the database
  - Use the specific advanced searches on the database
  - OR consult a librarian on how to use Boolean operators

# Quick intro to search strategies



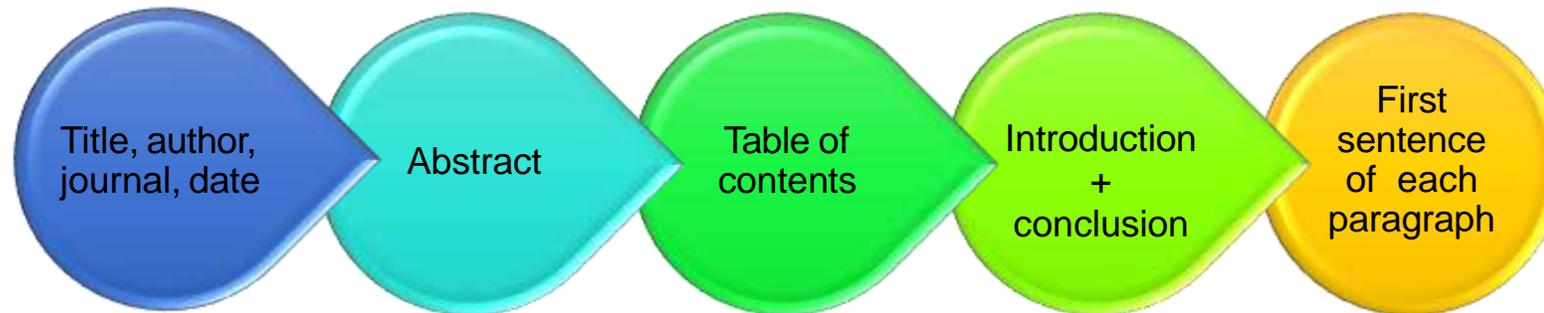
# Types of materials to collect

- Books
  - Often more lengthy around topics, can also be good general introductions to topics
- Journal articles
  - Produced faster and shorter, so usually more up to date and easier to read

# 3. Read / skim articles

- Most articles have abstracts
  - These summarise what the article is about so you know if to include it
- You are not looking for every article ever written
  - Just the seminal ones that convey the main academic opinions about the topic

# How to skim read



## 4. Group articles by theme

- Topics come and go in popularity
  - Sometimes certain topics get 'revived' many years later
- When grouping your articles, group them by the general opinion – often this will also be grouped by years
- Looking at things in date order often tell the story of the topic's development

# Creating the golden thread

AUTHOR (S) (YEAR) TITLE	PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	METHOD	SAMPLE	FINDINGS	THEMES	SIMILARITIES	UNIQUENESS
Cohen, C. I., Ramirez, M., Teresi, J., Gallagher, M. &	Test a model to predict likelihood of older women	Quantitative questionnaire s designed around variables in 10	201 women in New York City; Mean age=59,	Those who were housed at the end of the 2 years (47%) had greater income,	Housing	Mental illness contributed to homelessne	Lack of housing options for older homeless
Sokolovsky, J. (1997) Predictors of becoming redomiciled among older homeless women	leaving homelessne ss based on (1) individual factors; (2) acculturatio n process in which some women more readily adjust to homelessne ss; (3) structural/sy stemic factors	broad predictor categories which made up the proposed model	AA=25%, White=17 %, Hispanic= 5% Other = 2% Psychotic= 40% Separated or divorced=5 3%	more support, perceived support people as more available, higher density social support, more contact with community and institutional facilities. They were less likely to exhibit psychotic symptoms but no difference in depression.		ss (Butler, Washington) . Fractured family systems (Washington ) . Similar to Cohen individual risk factors.	women. Those with psychoses or chronic histories of homelessne ss experience greater difficulty in securing housing.

The literature review synthesis table

# 5. Using citation databases and searches

- Citation databases – or indexes – only contain the details about an article and not the full text
  - An example is the Index to Legal Periodicals and Books (H.W. Wilson) available on EBSCOHost
  - They are useful to find seminal works
- Using “cited by” searches
  - When you find seminal works, you can click on “cited by” to see any other works building on the argument
  - Try this in Google Scholar!

## 6. Find agreement and disagreement

- Don't ignore things presented that you disagree with or that don't fit into your argument
- Present all sides, but look at how the arguments fit into each other
- This way you build the full story around the topic

# Writing and Referencing



# There are two golden rules of writing:

- Write early and write often
  - the more you write, the easier it becomes and it becomes a habit
- Don't get it right, get it written
  - drafting helps you to clarify your thoughts, start by writing the parts you are clear on, this identifies the bits that need more work

# Main points to remember when writing:

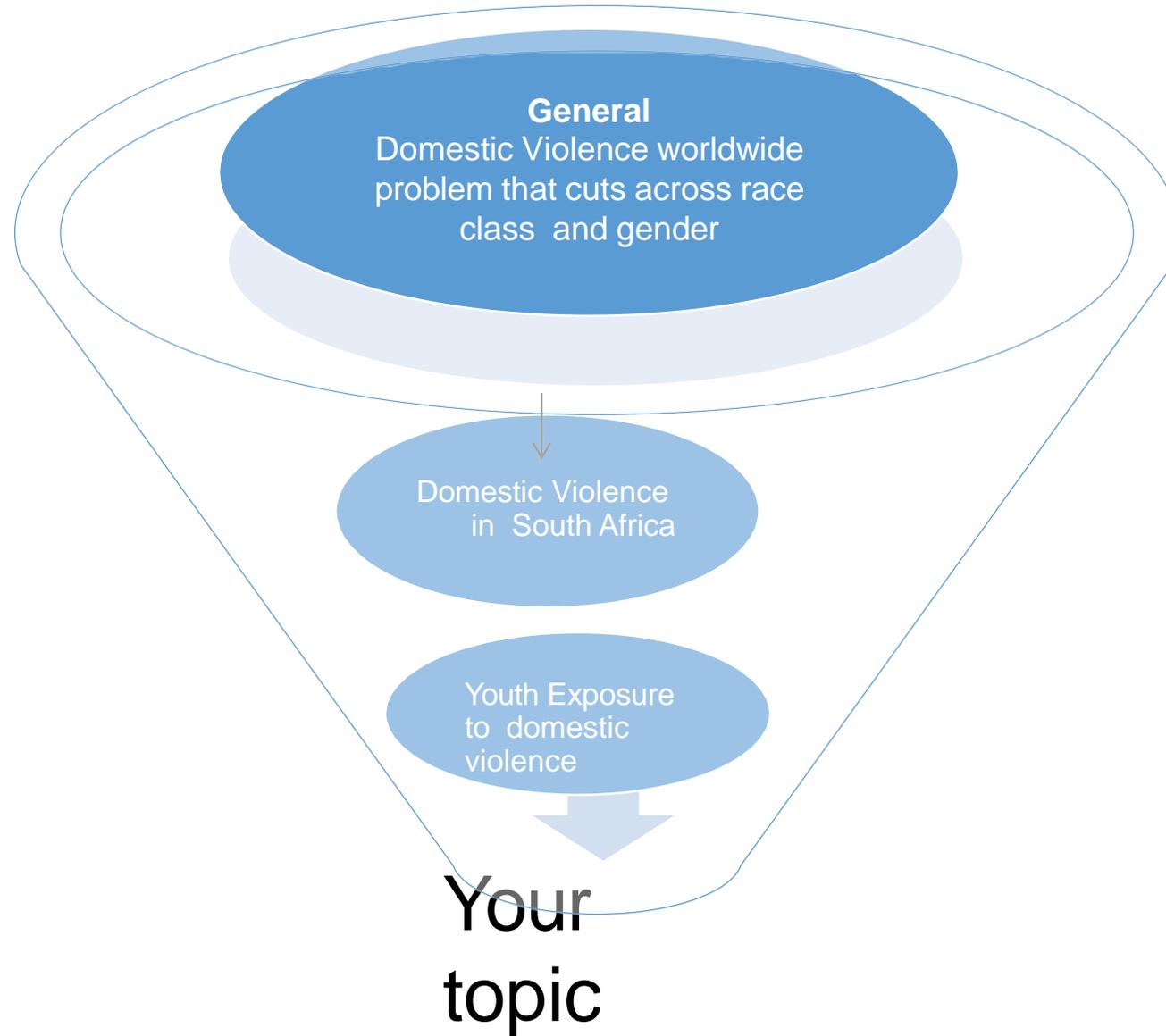
- A 'golden thread'
  - an overall line of argument - running through the paper, holding it together
- 'Sign-posts'
  - crisp titles, sub-titles and headings that identify the direction being followed
- 'Authority'
  - good engagement with existing literature and a comprehensive bibliography - the bibliography is the window to the paper and its author

# Things to avoid

- Avoid long quotations
  - rather paraphrase or break up the quote with your own commentary
- Avoid sloppy and inaccurate presentation and ensure that your references are correct

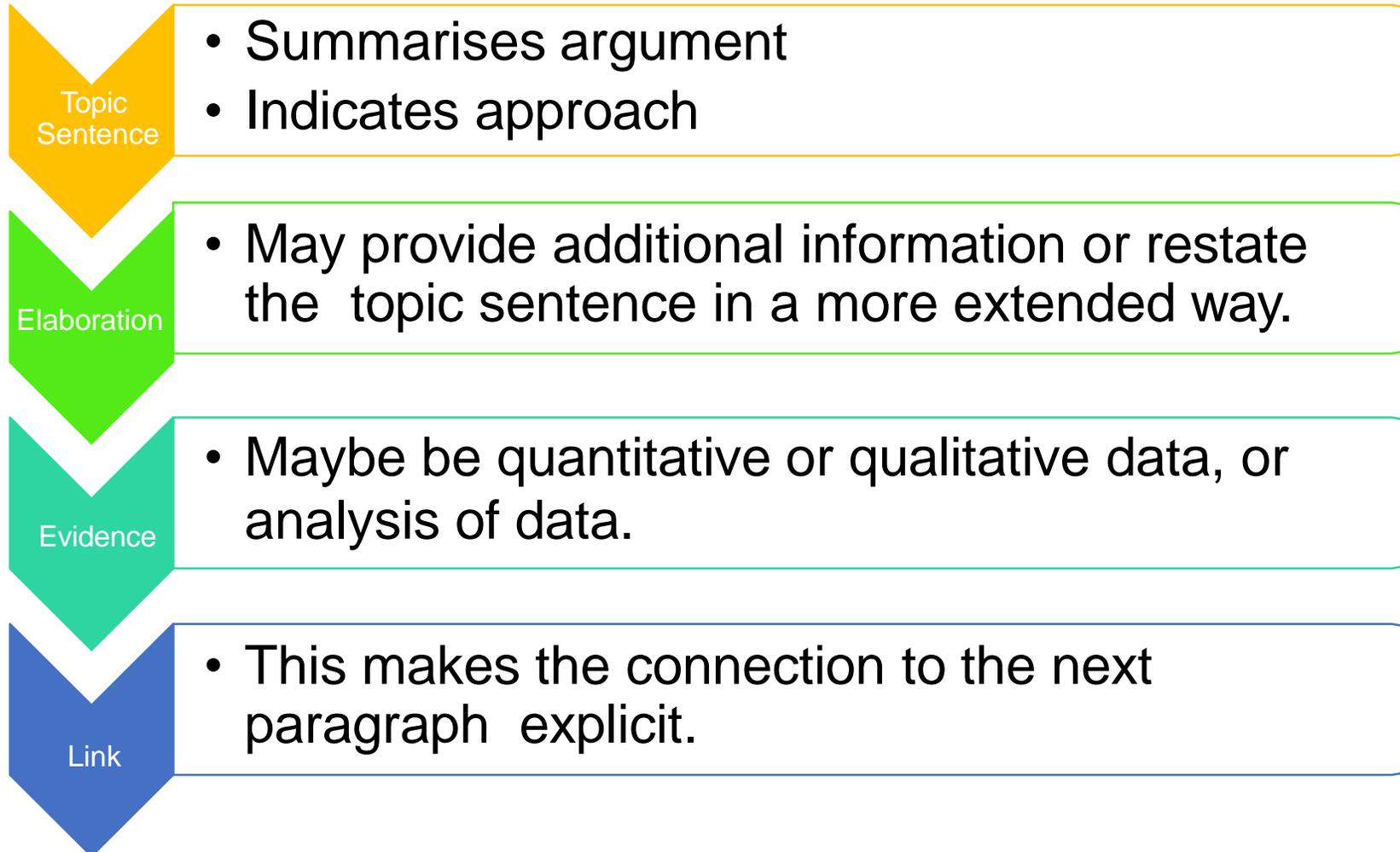
# The funnel approach

- Go from the general to the specific in relation to your topic



**Your  
topic**

# Paragraph structure



# Referencing techniques

- In-text referencing is where the citations are in the text itself
  - An example is Harvard citations

In-text	Reference list
Bourke (2007: 135) discusses that public libraries tend to be the central hub of activity in a community.	Bourke, C. 2007. Public libraries: partnerships, funding and relevance. <i>Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services</i> . 20(3): 135-139.
Public libraries tend to be the central hub of activity in a community (Bourke, 2007: 135).	



**Thank  
you!**