

Scientific Reporting

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Literature Reviews

- You must know what has already been published in your field to a first approximation
- Start with search engines, like:
 - Google Scholar www.scholar.google.com
 - Pubmed <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/>
- The literature is quite extensive. For example, using the key words “Dog and behavior” returned 1.6 million documents; using Pubmed returned 13,278 documents

Refine your literature search

- Add key words until you narrow your search.
- When you have narrowed your search too much, you will get no documents
- Keep in mind these levels of documents and their relative importance:
 - Scientific, peer reviewed journals (most critical)
 - Books
 - Patents
 - Informational writings (ex., Time, Nat Geo, etc.)
- Also keep in mind some documents are not in databases, especially older literature. In this case, you may have to go to the library and find the document in our collection or order a copy by inter-library loan.

Unique aspects of Animal Behavior Literature

- Many lay writings will be found; that is, not by scientists in scientific journals
- Many informative descriptions of animal behavior are in textbooks and other books. While informative, they are descriptive and not quantitative
- Narratives are interesting and useful for generating hypotheses that can be tested in controlled studies. But a narrative cannot be used as the sole evidence for a behavioral theory or principle.
- Look for controlled studies to understand behavior

Outline of Writings

- Major headings:
 - Abstract
 - Introduction (end with the objectives of the study)
 - Materials and Methods
 - Be specific about animals observed, numbers, times, dates, feeding & general care.
 - Include averages and descriptive statistics where possible
 - Results (only objective findings)
 - Discussion
 - Relate your findings to the literature (same or different; if different, why?)
 - Relate your findings to the behavioral biology of the animal(s)
 - Give useful applications of this information for animal owners

Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery

- Use this journal as an example for style and form
- Use this link to see a recent paper on kitten behavior (free to download):

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1098612X18795258>

The screenshot displays the journal's website interface. At the top, the journal title 'Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery' is on the left, and the 'isfm' logo (International Society of Feline Medicine) and a cat silhouette logo are on the right. Below the title, navigation links include 'Journal Home', 'Browse Journal', 'Submit Paper', 'About', and 'Subscribe'. A search bar is located on the far right. On the left side, an 'Article Menu' sidebar is open, showing a 'Download PDF' button and a 'Full Article' link. The main content area features the article title 'Preference of kittens for scratchers' by Lingna Zhang, Rebekkah Plummer, and John McGlone. It notes the article was first published on August 28, 2018, and provides the DOI link: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098612X18795258>. At the bottom of the article preview, there are icons for Altmetric, a citation count of 1, and Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial (CC BY NC) license.