



RESEARCH IN FOCUS

HOW TO... SET UP A JOURNAL CLUB



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What is a journal club? Like a book club but...

Journal clubs are meetings which are held on a regular basis where individuals with similar interests get together to discuss recent articles and academic literature. They aim to bridge the gap between research and practice and promote discussion about how evaluate and apply research. Whilst their origin is in the medical sector, they are gaining popularity in other professions.

What are the benefits of a journal club?

Journal clubs are valuable in many ways:

- enables you to keep up to date with the latest research
- develops critical appraisal skills
- promotes topical discussion about education with your peers
- encourages team working and learning

Setting up a club



When setting up a club, it is important that you have clear objectives in mind. There is no set format for a journal club, but there are some things which you may want to consider:

- where will the meetings take place – a designated location, or virtual, or a combination of the two?
- how often will the meetings take place?
- timings of the meeting and length of session
- who will be responsible for leading the club?
- how will the members be selected?
- how will the articles for discussion be chosen?
- will there be a formal output from the session?
- how will any good practice be disseminated beyond the group?
- will food / refreshments be provided?

Make the most of your registration

As an EWC registrant, you have access to the EBSCO education Source via your Professional Learning Passport.

Education Source

Education Source is the world's largest and most complete collection of full-text education journals with over 2,500 resources. This database provides scholarly research and information to meet the needs of education students, professionals, and policy makers. It covers all levels of education.

E-Book Education Collection

This collection features more than 4,000 quality e-books supporting the education discipline. Titles range from introductory texts to more complex and detailed works. Also included are support materials for those working in education from the Foundation Phase to post-16 and work-based learning, and informal education, covering topics from curriculum building to student behaviour.

Managing the sessions

It is a good idea to ensure that members have had a chance to read the articles prior to the meeting. You will need to consider copyright issues relating to copying / distributing material.

As an example, you may want to consider the following format. This can be amended at a later date as the group evolves.

1. Facilitator welcomes the group members and provides an introduction as to what will be covered in the session.
2. Facilitator provides an overview of the article including:
 - source
 - question it is addressing
3. Facilitator gives members time to reacquaint themselves with the article
4. Brief appraisal using the method that has been agreed in advance – this should cover things such as the design of the study, evidence, and results. See our suggested template for ideas of what you might include (**Journal Club Evaluation Sheet**).
5. Group discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the study, the implications it may have on your practice, ethical issues / bias, and suggestions on what could have been done differently.

It will be useful to take notes of the discussion and actions / recommendations in order that they can be disseminated amongst the team and can be revisited if necessary at a later date.

Additional considerations

- Have a regular, set time for the sessions so that members can plan accordingly
- Adhere to meeting schedules
- Publicise times, locations and topics in advance, and consider your communication channels

NOTES:



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