Guidelines to Assist in the Literature Critique
Biology 484 - Ethology
Lange

The following suggestions will be useful for you as you work on your literature critique. Please also refer to your syllabus for further details and advice.

Goal: Analyze and critique a formal primary research article from a relevant journal related to behavior.

Estimated Length: Variable... there is no set length, but it is likely your paper will end up being 4-8 pages in length (excluding references, title page, graphs, illustrations).

Requirements: a) The finished product must be typed.
               b) The finished product must have at least 4 references appropriately cited in the body of the paper and listed on the reference page.
               c) The finished product must have a separate title page.

The following is a suggested outline of how you may wish to organize your paper. Be sure to realize, however, these are only suggestions. You may feel free to follow other methods if you wish, but you must thoroughly analyze the article you have selected.

I. Introduction
   A. What is the goal of the paper you are writing?
   B. What are characteristics of the paper you are critiquing (name of the article, authors, type or article, journal in which the article is published, the discipline for whom this article is written, etc).

II. Overview of the Article
   A. What are the objectives of the journal article?
   B. What methods did the author(s) utilize in this work?
   C. What are the significant findings of the journal article?
   D. What do the author(s) draw as conclusions?

III. Analysis of the Details of the Article
   A. Are the author(s) objectives appropriate for the research conducted?
   B. Are the methods employed appropriate for the questions posed?
   C. Do the results match the methods employed?
   D. Are the author(s) conclusions appropriate given the results presented?

IV. General Opinions
   A. Do you find the writing style used by the author(s) appropriate?
   B. What do you think about the organization of the research?
   C. Do you feel that there are other (perhaps hidden) agendas behind the writing of this article?
   D. What types of improvements in the research conducted and/or presentation of this research would you suggest?

V. Future Steps
   A. What would you anticipate would be the next logical step in this line of research?
   B. What “larger” next step in this research can you imagine that would take this research to a new, higher level?

V. Conclusions
   A. Summary Statement About the Article
   B. Summary Statement of the Value You See in Journal Articles
   C. Summary Statement of Your Analysis of This Article