

Now that you know the key elements of a research article, let us examine a sample article from your text: "The Use and Usefulness of Criminology, 1751–2005: Enlightened Justice and Its Failures" by Lawrence W. Sherman.

1. What is the thesis or main idea from this article?
 - ◆ The thesis or main idea is found in the introductory paragraph of this article. Although Sherman does not point out the main idea directly, you may read the introduction and summarize the main idea in your own words. For example: The thesis or main idea is that criminology should move away from strict analysis and toward scientific experimentation to improve the criminal justice system and crime control practices.
2. What is the hypothesis?
 - ◆ The hypothesis is found in the introduction of this article. It is first stated in the beginning paragraph: "As experimental criminology provides more comprehensive evidence about responses to crime, the prospects for better basic science—and better policy—will improve accordingly." The hypothesis is also restated in the middle of the second section of the article. Here, Sherman actually distinguishes the hypothesis by stating, "The history of criminology . . . provides an experimental test of this hypothesis about analytic versus experimental social science: *that social science has been most useful, if not most used, when it has been most experimental, with visibly demonstrable benefits (or harm avoidance) from new inventions.*"
3. Is there any prior literature related to the hypothesis?
 - ◆ As you may have noticed, this article does not have a separate section for a literature review. However, you will see that Sherman devotes attention to prior literature under the heading "Enlightenment, Criminology, and Justice." Here, he offers literature regarding the analytical and experimental history of criminology. This brief overview helps the reader understand the prior research, which explains why social science became primarily analytic.
4. What methods are used to support the hypothesis?
 - ◆ Sherman's methodology is known as a historical analysis. In other words, rather than conducting his own experiment, Sherman is using evidence from history to support his hypothesis regarding analytic and experimental criminology. When conducting a historical analysis, most researchers use archival material from books, newspapers, journals, and so on. Although Sherman does not directly state his source of information, we can see that he is basing his argument on historical essays and books, beginning with Henry Fielding's *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers* (1751) and continuing through the social experiments of the 1980s by the National Institute of Justice. Throughout his methodology, Sherman continues to emphasize his hypothesis about the usefulness of experimental criminology, along with how experiments have also been hidden in the shadows of analytic criminology throughout history.
5. Is this a qualitative study or a quantitative study?
 - ◆ To determine whether a study is qualitative or quantitative, you must look at the results. Is Sherman using numbers to support his hypothesis (quantitative), or is he developing a nonnumerical theoretical argument (qualitative)? Because Sherman does not use statistics in this study, we can safely conclude that this is a qualitative study.