**Summarize Each Source**  
(Courtesy of Penn State Graduate Writing Center)

1. Who is the author?

2. What is the author’s main point?

3. What is the author’s theoretical perspective? Methodology?

4. Who is the intended audience?

5. What is the main point, conclusion, thesis, argument, or question?

6. How is the author’s position supported?

7. How does the study relate to other studies on the topic?

8. What does this study add to your project?
Key Questions for Analysis: Summarizing, Synthesizing, Critiquing, and Comparing
(Courtesy of Penn State Graduate Writing Center)

Ask yourself these key questions about what you’ve found in your research

1. What is known about the research area?

2. What are the key arguments, characteristics, and/or concepts in the literature?

3. What are the existing debates/theories?

4. What are common methodologies?

5. How do the different studies relate?

6. What is new, different, or controversial?

7. What needs further testing?

8. What evidence is lacking, inconclusive, contradicting, or too limited?

9. What research designs or methods appear unsatisfactory?

10. Decide whether your sources:
    - Demonstrate chronological development
    - Show different approaches
    - Show an ongoing debate
    - Center on a seminal study
    - Demonstrate a paradigm shift
20 Questions Exercise
(Courtesy of Penn State Graduate Writing Center)

20 Questions Exercise

These questions can serve as invention “jump starters,” providing a variety of approaches, ways of thinking about a given topic. If you are not sure what else to say on a given subject, run through this list and see if any of them apply. You can apply the list not only to the main topic of a given section, but also to the key terms/vocabulary.

1. What does X mean? (Definition)
2. What are the various features of X? (Description)
3. What are the component parts of X? (Simple Analysis)
4. How is X made or done? (Process Analysis)
5. How should X be made or done? (Directional Analysis)
6. What is the essential function of X? (Functional Analysis)
7. What are the causes of X? (Causal Analysis)
8. What are the consequences of X? (Causal Analysis)
9. What are the types of X? (Classification)
10. How is X like or unlike Y? (Comparison)
11. What is the present status of X? (Comparison)
12. What is the significance of X? (Interpretation)
13. What are the facts about X? (Reportage)
14. How did X happen? (Narration)
15. What kind of person is X? (Characterization/Profile)
16. What is my personal response to X? (Reflection)
17. What is my memory of X? (Reminiscence)
18. What is the value of X? (Evaluation)
19. What are the essential major points or features of X? (Summary)
20. What case can be made for or against X? (Persuasion)

(Adapted from Jacqueline Berke's Twenty Questions for the Writer)