Anatomy of a Scholarly Article

Mostly scholarly, peer-reviewed articles have similar organization. Use these headings to help you focus on the parts of the article needed for your purpose.

**Title, Author, Abstract, Keywords**
- Descriptive information that lets readers search for an article.
- Read the Abstract (summary) to determine if article is relevant for your topic.

**Introduction**
- What is the context for this project?
- How does it fit in with other research on the topic?
- *What is the research question?*

**Methods**
- What did the author(s) do to answer the research question?

**Results**
- What was the answer to the question?
- This is often shown in tables and figures.

**Discussion/Conclusion**
- What is the significance of this project?
- How does it fit in with what else is known about the topic?

**References**
- Materials the author(s) cited when writing this paper.
- References may lead you to other sources of information.

*Interactive Tutorial*: Mouse over parts of a scholarly article online to view descriptive labels at "Anatomy of a Scholarly Article," North Carolina State University Library
Peer Review: How Research Articles get Published in Scholarly Journals

The peer review process for journal publication is a quality control mechanism. It is a gate-keeping process that is over 300 years old. The model we know today was established in 1967 by the journal Nature. Peer review, also called refereeing, is a process by which experts evaluate scholarly works. Its objective is to ensure a high quality of published science that meets a journal’s standards and objectives. Peer reviewers do not make the final decision to accept or reject papers. At most, they recommend a decision. At peer-reviewed journals, decision-making authority rests solely with journal editors or the journal’s editorial board.

Benefits of initial screening:
- If the manuscript clearly lies outside the scope of the journal, then a rapid rejection allows the author to quickly find and submit their manuscript to another journal.
- Peer reviewers’ time is wasted when they have to spend time evaluating and giving feedback for a manuscript of clearly inferior quality.

Peer review
Once a manuscript clears the initial screening, it is sent for peer review. There are three common types of peer review for journal publication:
- Single blind: names of reviewers are not revealed to authors
- Double blind: names of reviewers and authors are not revealed to each other
- Open peer review: Names of authors and reviewers are revealed to each other

Sources:

Scrutinizing science: Peer review. Available at: http://undsci.berkeley.edu/article/howscienceworks_16