

## Organising your readings – Synthesis Grid

While reading, a valuable tool for taking notes and organising sources on a particular topic is called a **synthesis grid**. Reference details, essential definitions, key points, critical comments and more may all be collected in a grid or matrix to assist with perceiving relationships between sources and organising information.

In each row of the Source column, note the reference. To create headings for the Theme/Concept columns, carefully consider your assessment requirements, task details and marking rubric. These documents will provide the information that you need to write about. The columns reflect the essential themes or concepts you must include. Ensure your notes are concise. Include only the *minimum* amount of information that can be used as evidence for the key themes in your assessment task.

This example (below) of a partially complete synthesis grid shows the beginnings of the organisation of information for an assessment task. The task requires critical discussion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB). The columns indicate themes/concepts that are specified in the task information and rubric as essential for inclusion in the discussion.

Source	Definitions	Social determinants of health	Self-determination and human rights	Indigenous Australians' healing concepts, processes & programs
(Gee et al., 2014)	SEWB = "a multidimensional concept of health that includes mental health, but which also encompasses domains of health and wellbeing such as connection to land or 'country', culture, spirituality, ancestry, family, and community" (p. 55).		Indigenous Australian cultural strengths - kinship systems, family and community relationships, connection to Country, Indigenous knowledge, law and languages – underpin self-determination/human rights perspective.	
(Dudgeon et al., 2017)		Social determinants of Indigenous disadvantage stem from colonisation and racism – inequity in access to income and employment, education, housing, and control over resources.		
(Calma, 2009)			Self-determination protective/preventative re SEWB and essential for addressing contemporary health issues.	Culture itself is a protective factor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SEWB. Restoration of culture and community is a necessity for healing.

Use the template below to create your own synthesis grid.

Source	Definitions	Theme/Concept 1	Theme/Concept 2	Theme/Concept 3	Strengths /weaknesses & critical comments
Reference 1					
Reference 2					
Reference 3					
Reference 4					
Reference 5					

Check the *SCU Learning Zone* for more related Quick Guides.