Turn a paper into a ten-post thread

Starter · 1–3 hours · Free · Step-by-step guide

Online version: https://ai-safety-sandbox.vercel.app/projects/paper-to-thread/

Summary

Pick a beginner-friendly paper linked from any project on this site and summarise it in ten clear posts: the question, what they did, what they found, and why it matters.

Why it matters

Learning to read papers quickly is the most important research skill there is. Summaries also help papers reach people who will never read them.

What you will have at the end

A ten-post thread (publish it or keep it as notes).

Steps (tick each box as you go)

- [ ] **1. Learn the three-pass method (15 min)**
  Skim Keshav's "How to Read a Paper". You will do the first two passes only.
- [ ] **2. First pass (15 min)**
  Read the title, abstract, introduction, headings and conclusion. Write the main claim in one sentence.
- [ ] **3. Second pass (45 min)**
  Read the paper properly but skip proofs and fine detail. Note the key figure and the biggest limitation.
- [ ] **4. Write ten posts (30 min)**
  Question -> why it matters -> method -> three findings -> limitation -> what is next -> link.
- [ ] **5. Check with the source (15 min)**
  Re-read your thread against the paper. Remove anything the paper does not actually claim.

What you need

- About two hours

What you will learn

- How to read a research paper
- Summarising accurately

Key terms

Replication
Re-running someone else's experiment to check you get the same result. It's a common way to start research, especially if you then extend it.

Source and links

Keshav — How to Read a Paper
https://web.stanford.edu/class/ee384m/Handouts/HowtoReadPaper.pdf

When you have finished

Write a few paragraphs on what you did, what you found and what you would try next, and share it with a friend, your society or online.

Courses, mentors, small grants and communities:
https://ai-safety-sandbox.vercel.app/next-steps/

Questions? Ask in AI Safety Cardiff University (AISCU): https://aiscu.org/

Notes