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# Protocol for reading and understanding a paper

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Works for me

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## ABSTRACT

This is a protocol for generating zettels from texts and books and articles. It includes techniques discussed by other authors.

## DOCUMENT CITATION

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<https://protocols.io/view/protocol-for-reading-and-understanding-a-paper-bhhyj37w>



## KEYWORDS

zettelkasten, zettels, journal article, document, information

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The goal of this document is to write the protocol for reading a paper or journal article and then abstracting information using a Zettelkasten method. The steps are as follows:

## Equipments:

- Journal article or book or artifact that you need to abstract information
- A copy of [Zotero software](#), downloaded and installed for your version of the Operating System
- A pdf reader such as Adobe Acrobat or Preview or Foxit Reader, downloaded and installed for your OS
- Paper, ideally a notepad
- Pencil/Pen
- Copy of [Obsidian](#)
- Copy of [Zettlr](#)

## Steps

1. Open the copy of the Article or Book
2. Skim the book or article
3. Mark the passages
4. Write a short note or one paragraph from the passage that you want to come back to or understand or find important to bookmark
5. Go through the passages you obtained from the book in Step 4. Add questions or think of questions that you want to explore

6. Re-read the book with these questions you drafted in Step 5.
7. For each such question, write an elaboration (follow the steps of writing an elaboration below)
8. Transfer this elaboration into the Bibliographic Software (Zotero) - these are your reference notes
9. Divide the reference notes into individual chunks, these are atomised zettels (Follow the procedures for writing zettels)
10. Open Obsidian and enter zettels
11. Search zettels for your individual project - transfer and write about them in your own words, DO NOT COPY PASTE
12. Write the paper in Zettlr.
13. Export the zettlr based paper to [Overleaf](#), or docx using Pandoc in Zettlr

### Steps of Writing Elaboration

1. Write a title of the idea
2. Explain the idea in your own words (NO quotes or copy paste from the original paper)
3. Include an example or analogy
4. Include a visualisation

### What to include in a Zettel

- An identity code for the zettel in the form of YYYYMMDDHHMMSS
- Tags that start with a hash mark (example: #mytag)
- Backlinks to other documents in the vault ([[backlink]]) format
- A question in header level two and content explaining ONLY ONE idea
- References back to the original document that is the source (URL, @zotero\_id, full citation, anything that can identify the piece by itself)