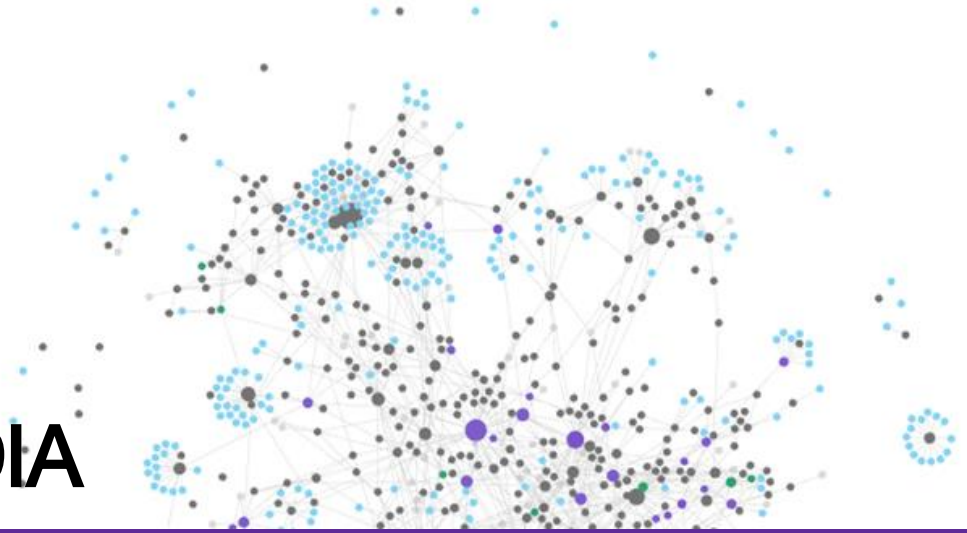


PERSONAL WIKIPEDIA

How Obsidian can help you build connections between your notes for school, work & creative projects

Samantha Yuen

samantha.yuen@umontreal.ca

May 6, 2021

Breakout Rooms

1. **How & why do you take notes?**
2. **Did you download Obsidian yet?**
3. **Did you read an article before the workshop?**

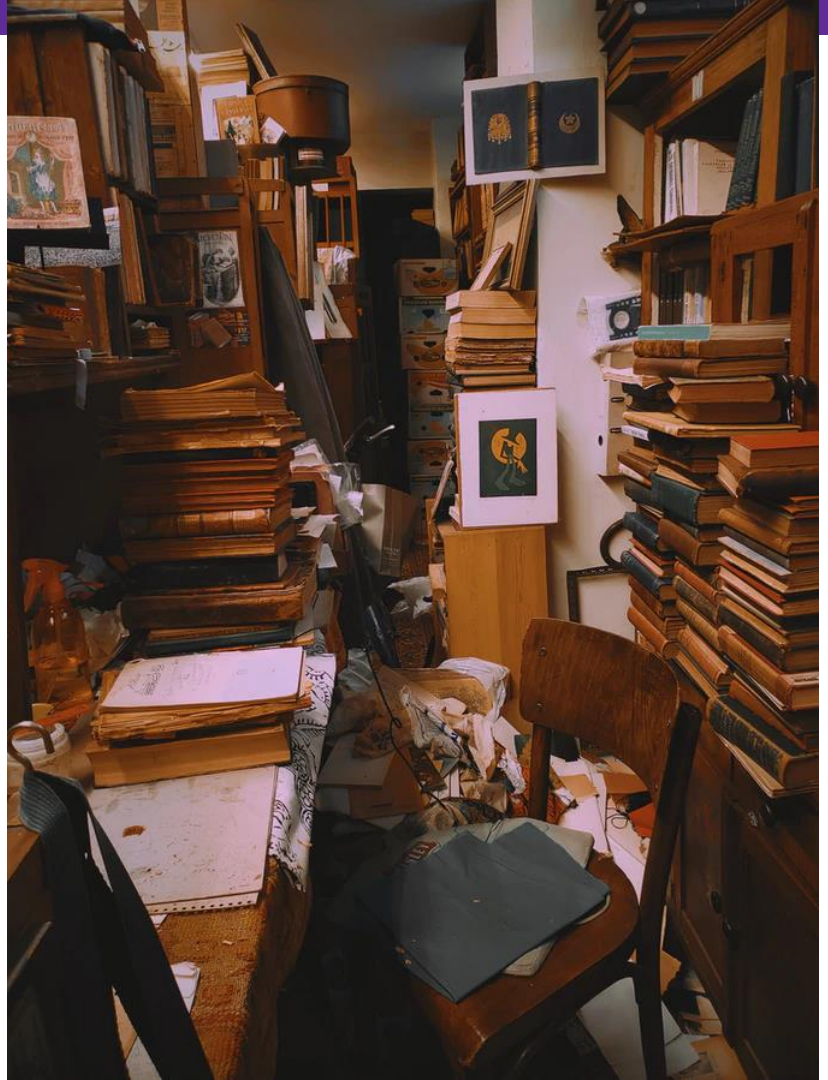
Get in groups of 3-4.

Have one person answering the **question** and one person with a **timer**.

Alternate every **minute**.

Write in the chat your answers for #2 and #3

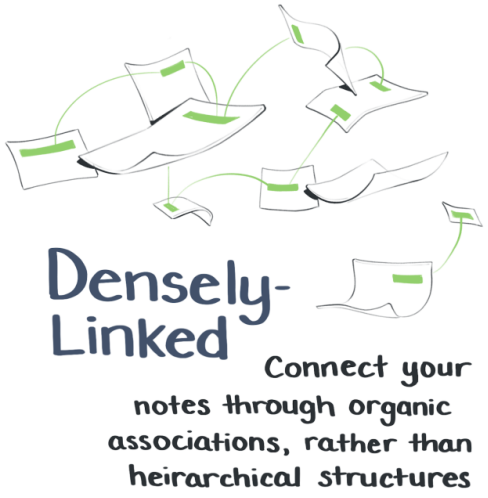
6-8 min



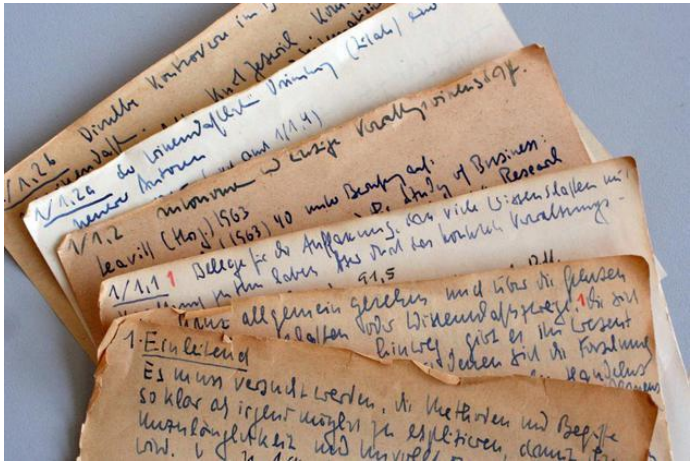
Instead of storing away our notes, what if we could keep building and updating what we know in a unified space?

The Personal Wikipedia

- A **reference** for information the way you understand it
- **You** decide the file structure & organization
- The structure, content and workflow **evolves** over time as you use it



Evergreen Notes by Andy Matuschak



Zettelkasten by Niklas Luhmann

A second brain, for you, forever.

Obsidian is a powerful knowledge base that works on top of a local folder of plain text Markdown files.

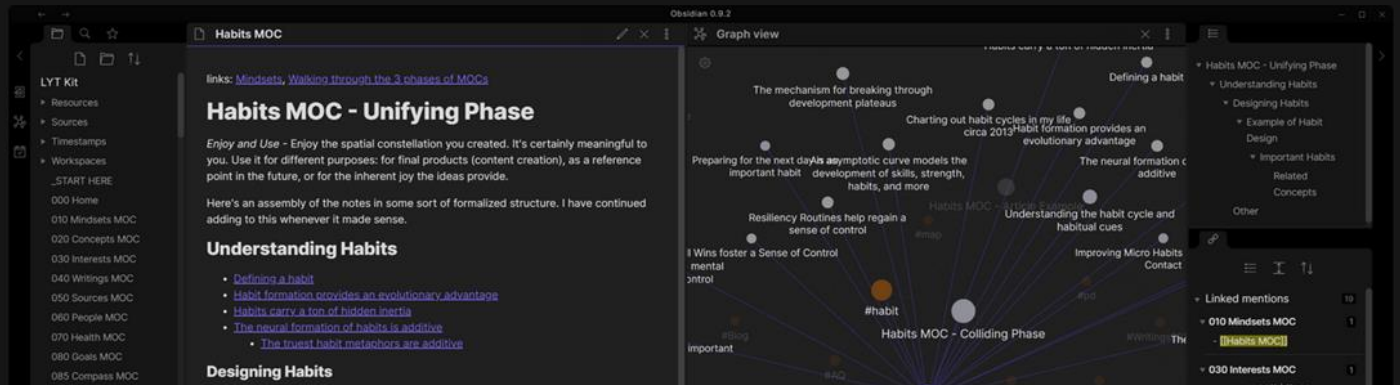
Get Obsidian for Windows
Beta version 0.11.13

Also available for macOS, Linux (AppImage), Linux (Snap), and Linux (Flatpak). More platforms.

PRIVATE BETA Download on the App Store

PRIVATE BETA GET IT ON Google Play

- Markdown Editor
- Locally Stored (secure)
- Easy to link to notes
- You decide the structure



Outline

What can you do with Obsidian?

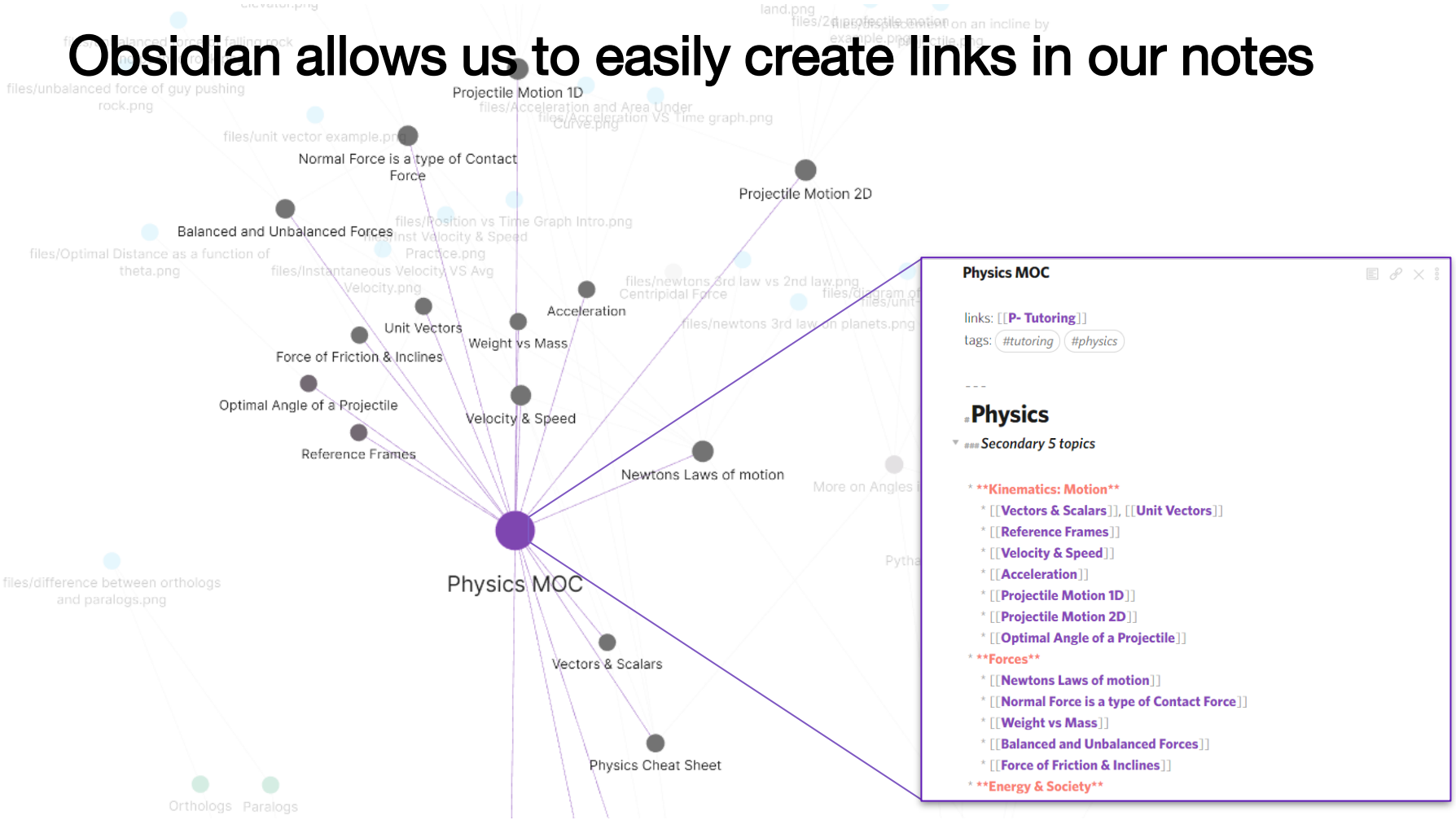
- Obsidian vs Other Apps

Walkthroughs

1. Obsidian Basics
    - Setting up Obsidian + What is Markdown + Main Features of Obsidian
2. Create personal notes from an article

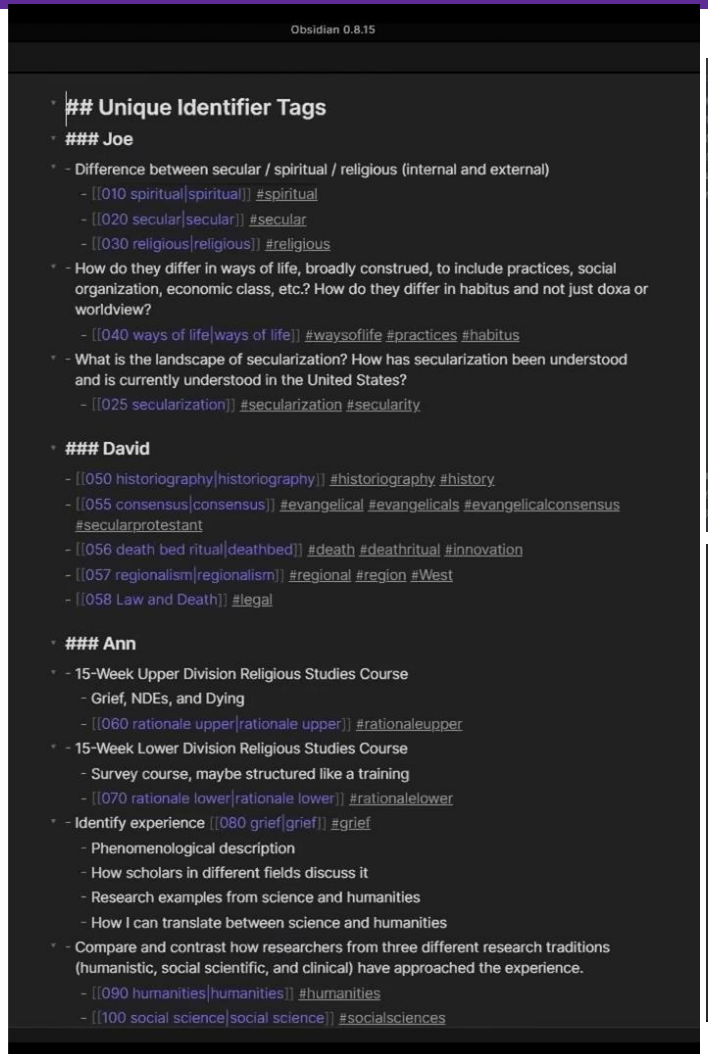
Resources + Questions

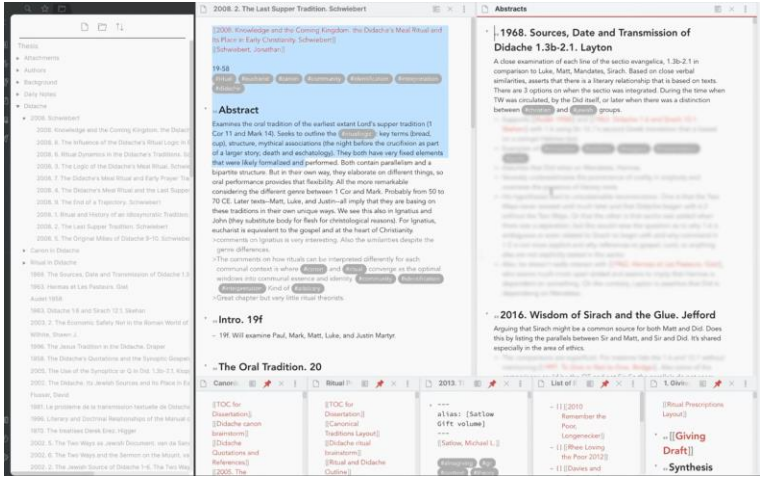
Obsidian allows us to easily create links in our notes

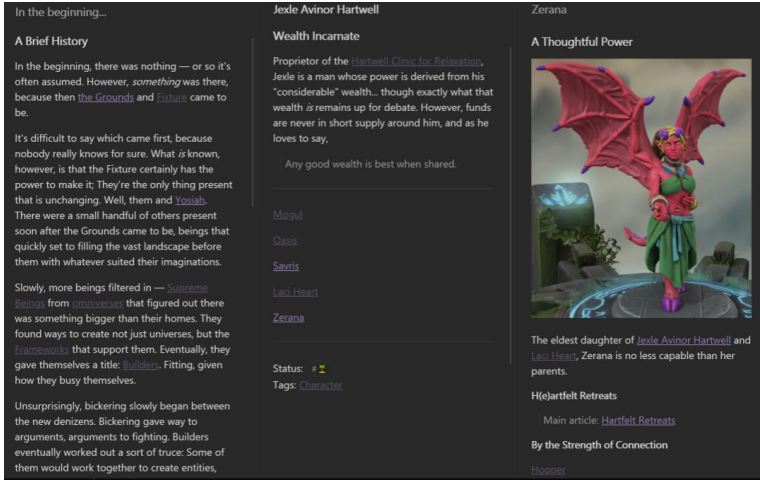


Examples of Other use Cases

- Research [1][2]
- World Building for Writers
- Outlining papers/ Projects
- Workplace Notes
- University Notes
- Others







How do Other Note-taking Apps Compare?

	Google Docs	MS Word	One Note	Obsidian	Evernote	Notion
Features						
Text Formatting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PDF Export	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cloud-Sync	✓	-	✓	0 to 4 USD	✓	✓
Templates	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
Wiki-links [[ ]]	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
Backlinks	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
Graph View	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Customizability						
Community Plugins	✓	✓	-	✓	-	✓
Themes	-	-	-	✓	Light/Dark	Ligh/Dark
App Info & Storage						
Price (for personal use)	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
Local First Storage	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
Mobile App	✓	✓	✓	✓ (beta)	✓	✓
Web-access	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓
Windows	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MacOS	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Linux	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-
Total	8	10	10	15	10	13

Atoms
Basic unit of matter that consists of a dense central nucleus surrounded by a cloud of negatively charged electrons.
Lysosome
A vesicle that contains destructive/digestive chemicals.
Exocytosis
Movement out of a cell.
Isotonic Solution
the same concentration of dissolved substances.
Water in = Water out
Hypertonic Solution
Higher concentration of solutes outside cell than inside.
Plasmolyse
When a cell has shrunk.
Cell membrane
a thin membrane around the cytoplasm of a cell.

Walkthroughs

echidna
courses
ML-Udemy
dailies
files
masters-projects
personal writings
resources
seedbox
000 Root
010 Learning in Progress
090 Resources
091 Books
091 Sources
092 Research Sources
093 My Lists
094 People & Places MOC
100 Workbenches
COVID-19
CS-Statistics MOC
Functional Tags
Generating Output
Goal-Planning
Gratitude
Hawthorne Effect
Hedonic adaptation
Hinduism
Holding Space
Honesty
How to process notes
Humor

000 Root

Root

![[black owl eyes closed (2).png]]

Branches

- [[010 Learning in Progress]]
- [[090 Resources]]
- [[100 Workbenches]]

Others

- Journaling: [[thoughts]] #LFT #journaling/covid19
- Processing: #todo #todo/toRead #todo/toProcess #todo/toDevelop
- [[Goal-Planning]]

Terminology

processing: looking through my source notes to garner any new permanent notes that may be relevant [[How to process notes]]
developing: looking at my new notes that contain my thoughts and curated relationships.

Setting Up ...

000 Root

Root

Branches

- 010 Learning in Progress
- 090 Resources
- 100 Workbenches

Others

- Journaling: thoughts #LFT #journaling/covid19
- Processing: #todo #todo/toRead #todo/toProcess #todo/toDevelop
- Goal-Planning

Terminology

processing: looking through my source notes to garner any new permanent notes that may be relevant How to process notes
developing: looking at my new notes that contain my thoughts and curated relationships.

Setting Up

May 2021 TODAY

W	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
18	26	27	28	29	30	1	2
19	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
20	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
21	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
22	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
23	31	1	2	3	4	5	6

Linked mentions 6

090 Resources 1
links: [[000 Root]]

Outline of League of Researchers Walkthrough 1
- Although I have a [[000 Root|home note]], I find myself always starting with a daily note....

010 Learning in Progress 1
link: [[000 Root]]

094 People & Places MOC 1
[[000 Root]]

100 Workbenches 1
[[000 Root]]

Read Later 1
Links: [[000 Root]]

6 backlinks

1
Obsidian Basics

Creating a vault + Setting up

Make a note

Markdown

Wiki-links

Back-links

Panes

Quick Switcher (CTRL-O)

Command Palette (CTRL-P)

Graph view

Obsidian Markdown Cheat Sheets

Element	Markdown Syntax

Heading	`# H1`
	`## H2`
	`### H3`

Bold	`**bold text**`
Italic	`*italicized text*`
Blockquote	`> blockquote`

Ordered List	`1. First item`
	`2. Second item`
	`3. Third item`

Unordered List	`- First item`
	`- Second item`
	`- Third item`

Code	`` `code` ``
Horizontal Rule	`---`
Link	`[title](https://www.example.com)`
Image	`![alt text](image.jpg)`

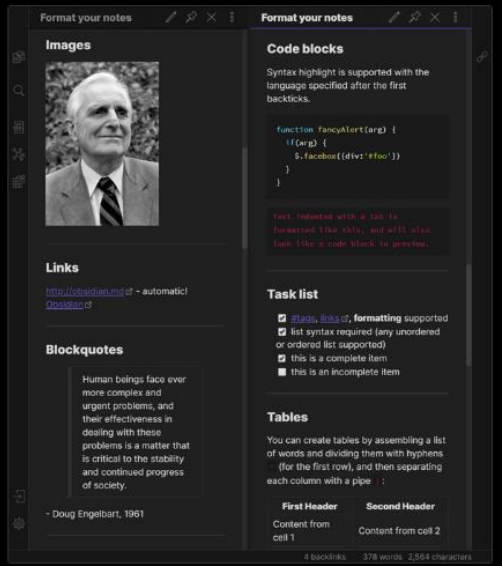
PORTABLE AND EXPRESSIVE

For portability, Obsidian supports CommonMark and GitHub Flavored Markdown (GFM):

- Code fence with **syntax highlighting**
- | Markdown **table** |
- **- [x] Task list**
- ~~Strikethrough~~

For expressiveness, Obsidian also supports:

- **#Tags**
- $$**LaTeX** math$$
- [^**Footnotes**]
- **[[Internal links]]**
- **![[Filename]]** to embed notes and other files



Breakout Rooms

It's your turn to try out Obsidian!

Get in groups of 3-4.

One person should screenshare if someone in the group has not downloaded the software yet.

Create some notes, explore the software!

6-8 min

Questions so far?

Graduate Matters

Making time and space for graduate school during a pandemic

Grad students, especially in the humanities, need to structure their time in a way that allows for schoolwork and social activities.

BY BARÅA ARAR | NOV 23 2020

CAREER COLUMN · 25 NOVEMBER 2020

Why seek a single mentor when you can have three – or more

Anna Henschel's experience in seeking out a board of mentors enabled her to build a powerful support structure.

Anna Henschel

What if This Isn't a Good Time for Getting To Know Yourself?

When the relentless focus on yourself is failing you, it may be time to put your attention on others

Marta Brzosko Jan 28 · 6 min read ★

This Year I'm Not Setting Goals: I'm Creating Practices

How to make sure you get where you want to be by focusing on the process instead of on the outcomes

Sílvia Bastos Jan 25 · 5 min read ★

How To Love Running, Whatever the Weather

I had to learn the way to set a default position for my mind so I could run (or achieve anything) all year round

Ashley Sandeman Jan 8 · 9 min read ★

Pick an article, any article

(or have your course notes handy)

2
Taking Notes from an Article

Create a note dedicated to that article

Which part(s) of the article(s) intrigued you? Why?

Does this make you think of another idea or concept?

Does it relate to a personal experience or another piece of media?

Breakout Rooms

Let's try taking personal notes with the article you read

Get in groups of 3-4.

One person should screenshare if someone in the group has not downloaded the software yet.

Each person try to create ≥ 1 note based on the article they read.

6-8 min

Resources

- Zettelkasten
- Building Your Second Brain [1][2]
- Justin's Effective Remote Work - Basics, examples of note-taking workflows.
- Nick Milo's Linking Your Thinking - Example vault you can download
- Bryan Jenks Advanced Obsidian Tips
- Productivity Guru - technical Obsidian videos

Books

- Sonke Ahrens - How to Take Smart Notes
- David Allen - Getting Things Done

The Obsidian Discord community and Discourse forums are a great place to ask questions!

Other Topics

- Cloud sync
- Pinning, Starring Files + Search terms, REGEX
- Core/Community Plugins
  - Templates
  - Citations
  - Calendar
  - Sliding Panes / Obsidian Tab / Cycle Panes/ Pane Relief
  - Dataview
  - Outliner
- Theme Customization (CSS)
  - Personal Favorites: Minimal, Discordian
- YAML headers (Metadata aka data about data)