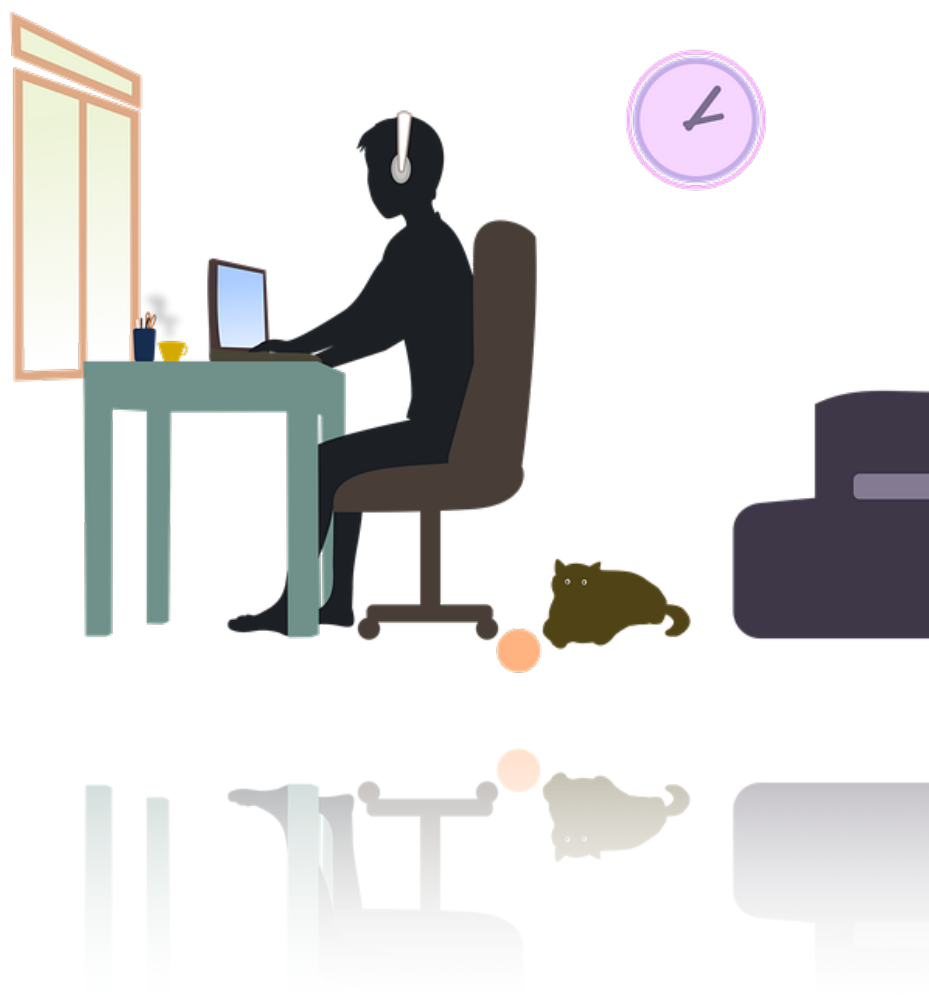




# ACADEMIC WRITING

- WORK MATERIALS -







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Academic Writing. Work Material

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Sources and colleagues are listed in each case

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## Me and the writing

Begin your engagement with academic writing by writing about yourself and writing.

⇒ write an anaphora / list poem to the beginning of the sentence:

For me, writing is...

Look at your text. Mark what is important or surprising for you. How do you feel about writing? What motivates you? Do certain questions or preferences suggest themselves?

## what is academic writing?

⇒ Create a cluster about the importance of academic writing.

Look at your cluster: On which points do you still feel uncertain or what do you wish to work towards here?

## Technique: Cluster - Focusing and linking ideas

### How does clustering work and what can clustering be used for?

Clustering is a non-linear brainstorming technique that activates many areas of the brain and combines linguistic and visual work. Starting with a core word, one association leads to another. In this way, entire chains of associations with diverse links are created and the result is a comprehensive picture of one's thoughts. That is why the cluster is well suited to

- to fall back on unconscious knowledge structures when you are stuck.
- to develop thoughts freely, to collect ideas, to start writing
- to make partial aspects of a topic visible and to connect them
- to find a new focus
- to collect work steps

### Instruction

- Write your core word in the middle of the sheet and circle it.
- Starting from this word, write down everything that spontaneously occurs to you - circle individual words and connect them with the previous circle by drawing a line. This creates chains of associations. Write as long as the associations run or until you reach the end of your sheet.
- Start again with new ideas at the core word or at the respective association.
- If you can't think of anything, draw connecting lines, circle words. Just don't put the pen down and just follow your thoughts, don't try to control.
- If you spontaneously feel like writing a text, give in to this impulse.

### example



Grieshammer u.a. 2016 (174f)

### Evaluation and further work

- Look at the cluster. Add more ideas if necessary. Mark interesting parts.
- What new ideas and links can you discover? Mark them with lines, arrows, symbols.
- Which aspects can be grouped into categories? Can you make a hierarchical structure, e.g. an outline, a scheme, a mind map? Which aspects can be ordered chronologically or linearly by numbering?
- Explore interesting aspects further in writing with focused freewriting or another cluster.

### Literature

- Grieshammer, Ella/Liebetanz, Franziska/Peters, Nora/Zegenhagen, Jana: Zukunftsmodell Schreibberatung. Eine Anleitung zur Begleitung von Schreibenden im Studium. 3. Auflage. Baltmannsweiler: Schneider Verlag Hohengehren 2016.
- Rico, Gabriele: Garantiert Schreiben lernen. Reinbeck bei Hamburg: rororo (1984) 2004 (Sonderausgabe)
- Scheuermann, Ulrike: Schreiben als Denk- und Lernwerkzeug nutzen und vermitteln. Opladen/Toronto: Barbara Budrich 2012.
- Wolfsberger, Judith: frei geschrieben. Mut, Freiheit & Strategie für wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeiten. Wien u. a.: Böhlau 2007

The basis of scientific work and writing is transparency. This means that in the sciences, an attempt is made to make all thought processes comprehensible and to present everything in texts in such a way that readers can understand where one has taken the information from, on what theoretical basis one has based one's own research, how one has come to one's conclusions and how one's own research was designed. Therefore, all statements in your own work must be substantiated and/or justified. Using statements from others without making this clear is misconduct in the sciences (plagiarism).

Furthermore, it is important to reflect the discourse of one's own subject or within one's own topic, to show appreciation for research, to make different points of view known and to illuminate topics from different sides. This requires citing and referring to sources. However, science also demands a critical approach to sources and the findings made in research. In this way, sources can also be cited for one's own argumentation in order to support one's own point of view and to express criticism of others.

According to Kruse (2005), scientific procedures and methods differ greatly from each other, among other reasons, because science has different points of reference.

- Scientific knowledge (and accordingly a scientific text) can firstly refer directly to a certain area of reality itself. This area can be described, investigated or mapped with the help of empirical methods, explored experimentally or analysed with the help of the mind.
- Secondly, scientific knowledge can deal with the scientific ideas and theories that exist about an object. Then one is indirectly concerned with reality, primarily with knowledge about it.  
This knowledge can be collected, compared, systematised or analysed. One can argue with it or form one's own opinion about it.
- Thirdly, one can deal with values. This refers to the ethical or moral dimension of science. If values are involved, one has to assess, judge or evaluate.
- Fourthly, science can deal with texts, works or sources. These are (usually written) materials that contain statements, opinions, representations, work protocols or judgements of people. Dealing with texts may require an interpretative approach.
- Fifth, one may be dealing with the guidance of actions and the description of systems of actions (i.e. methods). In this case, one does not operate with statements, but with calls to action or rules, which can be combined to form more differentiated methods or justifications of methods and rules.

(Kruse 2005, S. 130f., Translated with [www.DeepL.com/Translator](http://www.DeepL.com/Translator))

Researchers from different disciplines have identified the functions that writing can fulfil, because many people practise very different forms of writing and associate writing with a variety of intentions, feelings and values. Depending on the discipline and research culture, certain writing functions are the focus of the respective models: Janet Emig (1977, 1983), James Britton (1975), Katrin Girgensohn (2007) and Fritz Hermanns (1988) look at the functions of writing from the perspective of school didactics as well as university didactics or adult education. Otto Ludwig (1980) and Jakob Ossner (1995) have a school didactics background. Jürgen vom Scheidt (2003) describes functions of creative writing from a more psychological perspective. Silke Heimes (2012), Carmen Unterholzer (2017), Ramona Jakob (2017) deal with the functions of writing in coaching and psychological as well as physical healing processes.

The last comprehensive study on the functions of writing at universities was presented by Katrin Girgensohn (2007). She investigated at the European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) what effects and functions writing by students in self-designed and self-responsible writing groups can have. The students in these writing groups predominantly chose creative writing prompts. In the evaluation of her materials (protocols, interviews), Katrin Girgensohn was able to show that the students experienced themselves as competent writers with writing in the following functions:



- \* **Rhetorical function:** The best-known function of writing is to communicate with others. It is about conveying information or knowledge to specific addressees. In this function of writing, one must observe the rules and requirements that apply in the respective communication context.
- \* **Heuristic function:** Writing serves thinking and learning, it helps to discover ideas, explore topics, link knowledge. That is why it is also called reflexive, expressive writing or writing thinking. This form of writing produces texts that serve the writer's self-understanding and are not addressed to other people. Such texts are quite colloquial and associative.
- \* **Personality-building function:** Through writing, one can process feelings, better perceive one's own voice, explain contexts to oneself. It strengthens the writers to get to know themselves, to reflect on their own thoughts and behaviour and to see themselves as critical thinkers. This results in individual, even personal texts.
- \* **Communicative function:** In writing groups, workshops or seminars, a kind of community can develop between the writers and readers. In this community, an appreciative exchange about the texts and the writing experiences is possible. Writing can even be experienced as a community experience.
- \* **Hedonistic function:** Writing is often seen as challenging and problematic. It can enrich, invigorate, relax and generate positive feelings such as enjoyment, satisfaction, joy. Some authors also speak of the pleasure of writing.



## Academic writing process model

Here you can see a model for the phases of academic writing. You can also apply this to writing in professional contexts where a text is to be produced for readers.

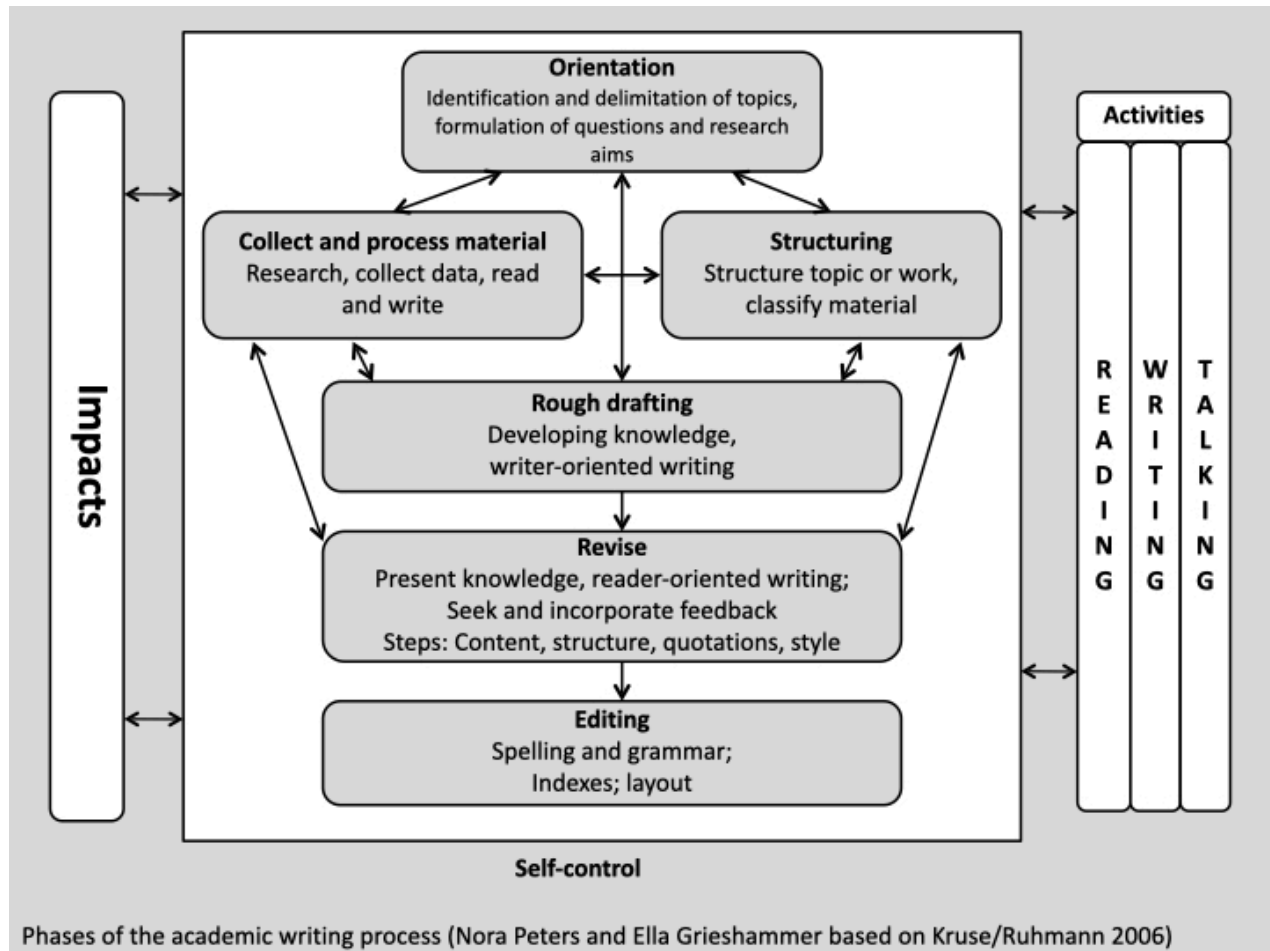


Figure 1: The writing process (Grieshammer et al. 2012, p. 58)

The basic idea is first of all that writing proceeds in different phases, that these phases are mutually dependent and that individual phases can also be gone through several times, for example if you realise that you want to research information again. This is illustrated by the arrows between the individual phases. During all these phases, texts can be created in the function of heuristic writing, i.e. auxiliary texts, notes, excerpts, reading notes, visualisations, which help to understand content and organise thoughts.

On the right-hand side, the activities of **reading, writing and talking** are arranged in parallel and are intended to illustrate that writing is a communicative process even during the writing process. Even professional writers communicate with each other in all phases of writing.

**Self-control:** The entire writing process is controlled by you. Untrained writers usually control this process unconsciously. The writing course is designed to help you do this more consciously. This means that you shape the entire process yourself, that you know the function of your writing and set writing goals, that you must always maintain your motivation, that you should know and use your resources, that you select and apply working techniques in the individual phases. It also means that you must always check whether the chosen working techniques still fit your goal, whether you need other materials, data, sources or whether you need to change the objective. It also means that you have to see if you need a break, need to remove disturbing factors, that writing fits your biorhythm, that you take good care of yourself overall during this process.



**Impacts / Influencing factors:** This can be understood as all the inner and outer factors that accompany writing. These are, on the one hand, feelings, attitudes and motivation (inner factors). What personal goals does one pursue with writing? What experience do you already have with writing this type of text? What is one's attitude to writing, to the topic, to the readership? How do you deal with the fact that you are not interested in the topic but have to work on it? What about it can be exciting for your own learning process? Or what do you do with ideas that bubble over but don't all fit into the text? (Tip: create a treasure box for them - in a file, a notebook) On the other hand, there are the requirements of the clients, superiors, editors of journals, the readers to be informed. These requirements or regulations relate to both the external form and the content.

**Orientation:** In this phase, the focus is on finding, narrowing down and formulating the topic. This includes an initial orientation research. The topic to be worked on must fit one's own level of knowledge and one's own abilities, be concretely delimited, and be able to be worked on with a factual distance. This requires techniques for exploring topics (associative techniques such as freewriting, writing relay, brainstorming, clustering) and for planning the text (cognitive techniques such as mind map, concept map, text path, annotated outline, exposé) as well as research strategies and orienting reading techniques.

**Structuring:** The ideas and initial research results must be sorted and organised in a preliminary structure, in the case of longer texts in an outline. If necessary, outlines specific to the type of text must be taken into account. Writers must select, bundle, separate and hierarchise the individual aspects of the content. This shows how clear the question or objective is. If you have difficulties with structuring, it is worth taking a closer look at the question/objective. For this phase, cognitive and visualising writing techniques are helpful, such as mind map, concept map, text path, exposé, annotated outline.

**Collect and process material:** The materials, data and sources necessary to answer the question or to prove a hypothesis must be obtained or collected and then processed using the necessary professional methods. There is a danger of getting bogged down in the material and not being able to prioritise. First of all, it is helpful to research or collect the material systematically and purposefully, to select it and then to manage it well. Here you need the respective methodological skills as well as reading and note-taking techniques. When editing the material, it may seem necessary to adapt the structure of the text to be written.

**Rough drafting:** This phase must first be recognised as a phase in its own right. In this way, you can first give your thoughts free rein in a rough draft. In this phase, you use your notes from editing the material and relate them to your own thoughts as you write. You think as you write, discovering and organising your thoughts as you produce flow text. Up to this stage, this is called writer-oriented writing. It is about concentrating on the content, keeping the text as a whole in mind with the knowledge that the text will still be shaped and corrected in the next phases. In this phase, in addition to your notes, you need a previously prepared structure/outline. And above all, you need strategies against procrastination and writer's block.

**Revise:** What is on paper can be revised. That is what this phase is about. The writer-oriented text must now become a reader-oriented text, i.e. the text must be systematically revised with regard to the writing goal and readership. To do this, you need to be aware of the demands on the text, use a revision plan for extensive texts and proceed step by step from the content, to the structure, to the wording. Use feedback. The view of interested test readers can help to discover gaps and unclear passages. Allow enough time for this phase.

**Editing:** In this last phase, the text must be finalised for the respective publication or submission. Now grammar, spelling and punctuation have to be checked, indexes, captions, appendices and references have to be checked for completeness. The text must be visually designed according to the specifications. For this, you need to know the technical possibilities and understand the specifications. And finally, you must find or decide the point at which the text is finished. Keep your personal objectives and motivation in mind. This will help you to complete your writing project.



⇒ You have read or heard the information about the writing process. What do they mean to you?

What does that have to do with me? That was my aha moment... I just realised... I really want to remember that.... I need more input or practice for this... This is special in my writing process....

## types of writing and writing strategies

### Types of writing and writing strategies

"Writers have learned to use their texts for different purposes and thus to expand their own scope of action. This means that they proceed in a certain way when writing (writing strategy) and use appropriate tools for this (writing techniques). Usually, they have discovered a preference for certain strategies and techniques in the course of their writing biography. They then use these to deal productively with the demands and influencing factors of the writing process. Each strategy can lead to success and thus be appropriate. It is important for writers to know the strengths of their own writing type and to use them in appropriate situations. But they should also be aware of the weaknesses that their writing type or strategy has." (Grieshammer et al. 2012, p. 29<sup>1</sup>)

I would like to introduce the following 5 types of writing (see Grieshammer et al. 2012, p. 30):

- **The panster** writes down all his thoughts associatively and spontaneously in a continuous text. He writes on the fly.
- **The plotter** plans his approach and/or the course of the text. He can use this as a guide when writing.
- **The remixer** produces several text versions on a topic or on his task. In the end, he has to decide on one version or collect the best from all of them and produce a final version.
- **The editor** approaches his final text through editorial work, i.e. rewording, additions and deletions to individual parts of the text, which in the end he has to bring together in a meaningful way to form a whole.
- **The puzzler** pursues his thoughts and motivation entirely according to the pleasure principle. He writes parts of the text at will and has to put them together into a complete text at the end.



"How an individual writer approaches writing a text and what he or she considers a good strategy depends on,

- which writing strategy the writer generally prefers. Which strategies have proved successful in his previous writing projects and have perhaps even become automatic?
- Which writing strategies he knows and consciously chooses (...): Which strategies are known to the writer? Does he know their respective suitability for certain writing phases, text types and tasks?
- Which writing phase he is currently in: At the beginning, planning is suitable to pre-structure a longer writing task; at the beginning of writing and to develop ideas, writing in one go is suitable.
- what type of text he is writing: A diary entry might be written in one go, a private poem might be constructed from pieces of a puzzle, or it might be written in several versions, and an academic paper might be written with a plan beforehand.
- What task he has to accomplish or for what occasion and function he is writing: Does he clarify his thoughts and lay new tracks in flow writing? Does he edit with the reader in mind?"

(Grieshammer et al. 2012, p. 31)

### ⇒ Writing Type Test

Take the Writing Type Test. What did it bring to your attention? How have you been working so far? What feels really good, what are you satisfied with? What doesn't work so well yet? What alternative writing techniques would you like to try out in the future?

<sup>1</sup> Original im Deutschen, Zitat wurde direkt übersetzt mit Hilfe von <https://www.deepl.com/translator>



## writing-Type-Test

Think about the last longer text you wrote and answer the following questions. Tick the answer that most applies to you!

### What did you do first and what happened next?

panster	I started by writing down all my ideas and thoughts about it.
plotter	I got an overview of my topic, thought about the aim, question and structure and then wrote the paper step by step according to my outline/plan.
remixer	I started writing on an idea. Then I wrote a new version of the idea and another and so on.
editor	Once I have a rough plan, I start writing. If there is some text, I read it through and reword it, rearrange sentences or paragraphs, delete something or add something.
puzzler	I can no longer say what I started with. I always do what comes easily to me: I spontaneously write a chapter. I follow an idea and plan a new part of the text. Or I reword something.

### What was created first?

panster	a running text, sometimes just free notes, diary-like texts
plotter	a plan, an outline with notes, an exposé, a bibliography, excerpts
remixer	a first version
editor	a rough plan, the introduction or the first chapter and of course: a good first sentence
puzzler	I can't say exactly: fragments of chapters, ideas of an outline, but rather in interplay

### How do you come up with your ideas?

panster	I explore new ideas, thoughts and contexts while writing.
plotter	The ideas for a topic mature in my head or on paper in bullet points at the very beginning and are incorporated directly into the outline.
remixer	While writing, I come up with new ideas and new insights. I then have to pursue this idea in a new version in order to be able to grasp it. That's how the theme keeps developing.
editor	By rewording & revising, I engage a lot with the topic and come up with new ideas.
puzzler	Since I always do what I feel like doing or what comes easily to me, I follow my thoughts, the ideas always develop further when I write.

### How to develop the structure of your text?

panster	While writing, I slowly get a more precise idea of my topic and its structure.
plotter	Before writing, I think carefully about how I want to answer my question or convince my readers in the text and develop an argumentation structure.
remixer	As I write the different versions, I try out which structure is best for my topic.
editor	I have worked out the structure roughly beforehand. The fine structure, however, is the result of rewording and rewriting paragraphs and sentences.
puzzler	I can plan the structure roughly in the beginning. Mostly, however, it emerges during the writing of individual chapters/subchapters or afterwards, when I put the individual parts of the text together like pieces of a puzzle.

### What techniques did you use??

panster	When I'm not actually writing a text, I spontaneously collect my ideas with a brainstorming session, combine thoughts in clusters or explore my motivation to write with a diary-like freewriting session.
plotter	Mind maps help me to organise and connect my ideas. With a graphic or an annotated outline, I can put the ideas in order and give myself reasons for their content.
remixer	When I write, I like to change the perspective or start from different points of view. I then often write down the respective version as if in a flow.
editor	A rough writing plan, an annotated outline help me to keep an eye on my goal and the time. I find suggestions for wording and style exercises from writing guides helpful.
puzzler	I try many different techniques: first techniques that help me produce text quickly, and then ones that help me work out my structure and help me revise.

The test is based on: Grieshammer, Ella/Liebetanz, Franziska/Peters, Nora/Zegenhagen, Jana: *Zukunftsmodell Schreibberatung. Eine Anleitung zur Begleitung von Schreibenden im Studium*. 1. Auflage. Baltmannsweiler: Schneider Verlag Hohengehren 2012.

**panster:**

As a spontaneous writer, you are quickly in the flow of writing and enjoy the motivating feeling that you can realise your views and insights in the text. Therefore, your strategy is suitable for gathering ideas on a topic, for gaining a more precise idea of the subject, for starting to write (again) in a relaxed way and for not thinking too much about perfect formulations. However, you always have to revise your texts quite extensively: You have to work out a structure, also delete many parts of the text or deepen them afterwards if you have drifted off the topic. You also have to carefully check formulations and formal aspects. You need a lot of time, calm and motivation for this.

Tip: Combine your writing type with the plotter's type: first write an exposé with a timetable and outline! The timetable could help you prepare the individual steps and meet the deadline. With content planning, you can prevent yourself from digressing. You would then always keep your objectives and questions in mind and could write individual parts of the text spontaneously but with focus. With a revision plan, you manage to revise the text structurally as well as linguistically and formally for your readers.

You are in good company with: André Breton, Martin Walser, Siegfried Lenz.

**plotter:**

Because you plan thoroughly in advance and draft an outline, you create a sense of security: you always know what to do next. This way you keep an overview and hardly ever digress. You usually don't have to revise your texts so much structurally. Your strategy is suitable for keeping or rediscovering the red thread during the writing process and for focusing on the goal. However, it takes quite a while before you actually start writing. And you do not react flexibly to new ideas - it is difficult for you to incorporate them or change the structure.

Tip: Your strategy can be combined well with all other strategies: To become loose and open to new thoughts, try spontaneous writing or writing several versions of a text section in between. You can finish individual chapters by editing them like editors do. You can also follow the pleasure principle and fine-tune, write or revise what you just have ideas for.

You are in good company with: Hermann Hesse (planning in their mind), Henning Mankell and Carl Zuckmayer (planning on paper).

**remixer:**

You start writing quite freely at an early stage and quickly produce a lot of text in different versions. In the process, you clarify your thoughts and gain new knowledge. In this way, you gradually get to know your topic and its structure. Your strategy is particularly suitable for starting to write loosely and defying perfectionism, or for finding the best way of presenting a section of text such as the introduction. But before you can revise and create a final text, you have to decide on a text variant with a heavy heart. This can take time and be demotivating, especially as it is difficult to keep track of the abundance of text.

Tip: Like the puzzler, you could invest more time in writing preparation: Create an outline for yourself. This will give you more structure and you can use your strategy to write smaller parts of the text, e.g.: individual chapters in several versions. Consciously change the perspective for the different versions. To deepen content, you can try writing techniques such as the writing relay or focused freewriting. Or try depicting sub-topics graphically and linking content together in this way.

You are in good company with: Friedrich Dürrenmatt (rewrote whole books), Heinrich Böll (rewrote parts of texts).

**editor:**

You get into writing quite quickly, but pay close attention to formulating the content in a thematically appropriate and reader-friendly way. And the other way round: by working on the text in this way, you deal intensively with the topic. Your strategy is therefore well suited if you are writing a stylistically very good but short text or if you want to go deeper into the content and have a lot of time to do so. After all, you find it difficult to finish working on a piece of text. Then you just can't find the perfect wording and get caught up in trivialities. You get out of your flow of thoughts and lose sight of the big picture. When revising, you then need a lot of time and motivation to check the overall structure of the text.

Tip: If you fall into perfectionism, if you spend a long time tweaking certain formulations and thus get stuck in your writing, then write a part of the text loosely and spontaneously, perhaps in several versions. This creates fresh, coherent thoughts, you get back into a flow of thoughts. Allow yourself to do this, enjoy it and then shape the text later. A revision plan could help you to check whether your research question has been answered or the goal has been achieved, whether you have captured all the information and ideas necessary for it and connected them in a meaningful way.

You are in good company with: Honoré de Balzac, Aldous Huxley, Karl Kraus.

**puzzler:**

You write quickly and with motivation, for which you just have a content-related idea or know a suitable writing technique. In this way, you work out the content and structure while writing, you try out a lot and take advantage of different writing strategies. By doing what comes easily to you, you avoid writer's block and easily follow your flow of thoughts. The risk of writing according to the pleasure principle, however, is that it is difficult to assess how far you have got so far, that you lose track of what you have written, that you write content twice, that you don't grasp some things at all or that you put off unloved parts of the text forever. In the end, you have to combine the many parts into a coherent whole. In the process, you sometimes realise that you have had too little patience and time to go into the content in greater depth.

Tip: Since you jump around in the text and produce parts of the text in different ways, you have to put a lot of effort into revision: you have to check whether the question has been answered or the goal has been reached, whether the overall structure is coherent, whether the text is complete and, conversely, does not contain any unnecessary repetitions, whether the content is sufficiently deepened or remains on the surface. A revision plan as well as special exercises to work on the text structure can help. To reduce this effort in the end, you could alternatively invest more time in preparation: An exposé, an annotated outline and a detailed introductory chapter can help you to always keep the goal and steps of your argument in mind. Use graphical representations or mind maps to visualise how individual contents are connected.

You are in good company with: Ingeborg Bachmann, Günther Grass, Thomas Mann.



## Tips for time planning - so that you feel good about it!

With good time planning, you work in a concentrated manner and avoid a guilty conscience. You create obligations for yourself and can check off what has been done. In this way, you can take the pressure off your mind, anticipate stumbling blocks, save time and keep to your deadlines. In this way, you keep an overview and are prepared for consultation meetings.

4 good reasons to get involved with time management:

- You create liabilities for yourself. You see in black and white what you have to do. Recorded in the calendar, your tasks seem just as important as official tasks and appointments with others.
- You don't have to keep everything in your head and you get a good overview of your appointments.
- Each completed task can be ticked off and your own progress can be seen. Good time planning is therefore a motivational boost.
- Good time planning means relaxing, because it is important to plan for the long term, to work with buffers and to always reflect on what has happened. In this way, one cannot get lost and does not get under pressure.

### Basically:

- Use the previously determined goals, expectations and consequences as a basis.
- Use the knowledge about your strengths and resources.
- Be honest with yourself. Only take on what you can really manage.
- If you are not doing well despite your time planning, there can be many reasons for this. Check what the reason might be. Think back to the beginning: What is your motivation?





### **And this is how you can proceed with time planning:**

1. Think about some form of record-keeping: calendar, to-do lists, timeline, bullet journal....
2. Get an overview of your tasks, exams, appointments throughout the semester.
3. Make a long-term plan. It makes sense to create a semester overview: Write down monthly plans and enter all relevant dates, exams or exam periods, deadlines, part-time jobs, events such as festivals, holidays, birthdays.
4. Prioritise your appointments, exams. Think about which exams and contents are really important early on.
5. Divide your work, tasks and goals into manageable subtasks. This makes it easier to check and the partial successes motivate you.
6. Make weekly plans: Enter appointments, tasks, hobbies, etc. into the week. See if you can find regular time slots for the same activities, e.g. studying, writing, reading. This will help you develop a routine.
7. From the weekly plans, make detailed daily plans. Make sure you have clear work assignments and time slots. Always set a clear beginning and end. Estimate how long you can concentrate at a time.
8. For tasks such as writing, reading, studying - everything that can be part of your studies - also plan your breaks.
9. Also assign to the tasks which resources you need for them and which you already have. You can also consider your lecturers as a valuable resource. Make use of their office hours.
10. You should always enter buffer times. Only 60% of your time on any given day should be fixed and 40% should be buffers. Something unexpected can always happen or something is delayed or your estimate of the length was not right.
11. Not only tasks and appointments are important, but also leisure time, recreation, rewards, etc. Put these aspects of your life into your daily plans as well and take them just as seriously.





## distraction-free working with Pomodoro

You can work without distractions, fully concentrated, with the Pomodoro technique. Since the inventor of the technique used an egg timer in the shape of a tomato for his technique and is Italian, he called it Pomodoro (Ital. tomato). The technique suggests that you divide your working time into small units of work - called pomodori. A timer signals the end of a unit. The inventor specifies 25 minutes per unit. In this unit, a previously defined task is to be completed in a focussed manner. Everything else is faded out. During the 25 minutes, the phone is muted, the email programme, browser are closed, etc. Other important tasks are also not carried out in this unit. In this way, you concentrate precisely on one task, do not get bogged down and can already chalk up a success after 25 minutes by ticking off the task as completed.

The time can be adjusted to your own needs and ability to concentrate. However, it has been shown that a session should not exceed 45 or 60 minutes, as we are usually unable to concentrate without distraction for longer. In addition, the trick with 25 minutes is that this time does not seem too long and therefore feasible. But the session should also be at least 25 minutes long, because we need about 15 minutes to get into a working flow. Flow is a state of full concentration and self-forgetfulness; experiencing flow is an essential factor in being happy.

After 25 minutes of working, take a 5-minute break. Break means to really remove oneself from the work and the table mentally and if possible physically. The task and the head should rest. Then continue with the next unit and the next task. After 3 or 4 units of work, you should take a longer break. After that you could repeat the set.

### example

Pomodori	task
25 Min / 9:00 - 9:25	Freewrite ideas for the introduction, Freewriting for the introduction
5 Min / 9:25 - 9:30	break: Close eyes, breathe deeply, listen to music
25 Min / 9:30 - 9:55	Create structure: Create introduction as text path with the help of the free text
5 Min / 9:55 - 10:00	break: a few stretching exercises
25 Min / 10:00 - 10:25	Fill in the first two points of the text path, already write more comprehensibly
25 Min / 10:25 - 10:50	Break: drink coffee, take a short walk

The Pomodoro technique is based on the fact that we can only concentrate for a short time. And it helps to break down the tasks at hand into manageable subtasks. So you don't set yourself the task of writing your text for 4 hours, but instead set something specific for the time unit, like writing down 3 definitions for your paper. In addition, by setting precise time and tasks with a clear end, the technique makes use of Parkinson's rule. Parkinson stated that work expands to the exact amount of time available to complete it. This means that if you decide to tidy up today, it will probably take you the whole day. If, on the other hand, you set aside exactly 2 hours for it, you will quickly get everything important done in the household.



## Finding, unfolding, exploring and narrowing down a topic

### finding a topic

- ⇒ Brainstorm about your studies, your subject, your courses: what are the topics? what do you find interesting? what is important for your future career?
- ⇒ Look at the brainstorming and mark topics that you:
  - find interesting
  - have already worked on
  - can imagine themselves for a scientific paper

### Challenge: make a given topic your own.

If you have been given a topic that you feel somewhat out of touch with, these suggestions might help:

- Pay attention to points where you get stuck. What repels you or attracts you? What do you find surprising or strange?
- Pay attention to points that you can link to your own experiences.
- Are there links to issues you have dealt with in another context?
- Feel your way in: What kind of person could someone be who deals with such a topic? What is important to this person?
- Is there something that mobilises your detective intuition? An exciting correlation?
- Is there something that could be tried out? The application of a certain method to an unusual object?
- What counter-position could one take? With what justifications?

(Frank u.a. 2007, S. 16)

### Unfolding a topic

- ⇒ Make a cluster on your topic. Tip: Take an A3 sheet in landscape format.
- ⇒ Look at the cluster and continue working with it.
  - Add further ideas if necessary. Mark interesting parts.
  - Did something spark your interest? Deepen this aspect and explore the topic with focused freewriting or another cluster.
  - Which aspects can be grouped into categories? What belongs together? Can you make a hierarchical structure?
  - Which aspects can be ordered chronologically by numbering? Can you derive a linear structure?



## Exploring a topic

- ⇒ write a focused freewriting on your current topic idea. (5-7 min). Read your freewritten text and continue working with it:
  - Which formulations do you like? Which formulations can you continue to use?
  - What have you just become aware of about your topic? What aspects of content or methodology have come up in your text? What do you find exciting and would like to pursue further? What irritates you? What would you like to clarify or explore?
  - Summarise the core statement in one sentence. Write a new focused freewriting on the core sentence.

## Narrowing down a topic

- ⇒ Take the title or topic of your paper and see what you can specify or where you can still narrow it down. It is particularly advisable to ask yourself the following questions:
  1. Can the topic be restricted in terms of location?
  2. Can the topic be limited in time?
  3. Which contents/terms of the topic or title could be clarified?
  4. Does the title or topic give information about the method or data used?
  5. Does the topic/title indicate the aim of the work?

An Example: *Political Discourse in the Austrian Media*

1. The topic is already localised: Austrian media.
2. The topic is not limited in time, but it would make sense. Possibility: the year 2010 (a year in which a discourse took place that was heavily discussed in the media).
3. Political discourse is too broad: in this case, the topic is school reform.
4. The method is not mentioned at all; media gives an insufficient reference to the data. Possibility: media-critical comparison as method and daily newspapers Krone, Kurier, Presse and Standard as data.
5. The goal does not emerge. However, if points 1 to 4 are formulated in the title, the goal is also clear.

New working title: *The political discourse on school reform in the Austrian daily newspapers Krone, Kurier, Presse and Standard in 2010: A media-critical comparison.*

(Huemer u.a. 2012)

- ⇒ Try further narrowing down criteria:
  - a selected aspect (e.g. image of women in Freud's early publications)
  - Person, groups of persons (e.g. burnout in teachers; research personalities)
  - Set focus points, with special consideration of...
  - according to disciplinary aspects, research method, level of observation (e.g. social, historical, systematic, causal, economic, cognitive, legal... level)
  - Limitation of theoretical approaches, authors (e.g. Bühler's communication theory)
  - Limitation of sources (e.g. only poems, only interviews)
  - Establish relation/comparison between objects, theories, persons... (burnout in primary vs. comprehensive school teachers; writing process model by Hayes 1980 vs. his 1996 model, person-centred psychotherapy and politics)
  - Emphasise individual case/example (explain theory with a case, case study)
  - Specify variables (focus on best variables in empirical work)
  - Emphasise new things
  - Give an overview (give up details - but you have to be familiar with them)
  - Specify practical relevance (which cases, areas of application, institutions?)

(vgl. Grieshammer u.a. 2016 (3. Korr. Auflage), S. 176f; vgl. Kruse 2005 (11. Auflage), S. 201f)



## Technique: Freewriting - developing ideas, exploring needs

Sometimes your inner censor interferes with your writing: Thoughts have to be formulated perfectly at the first go, sentences are discarded even before they are written... Sometimes it is worthwhile to trick that inner critical voice.

And this is how it works: By increasing the speed, thinking and writing run almost simultaneously, different areas of the brain are activated, complex contents can be formulated. You write down everything that comes to your mind without evaluating. In focused freewriting, you write spontaneously on a topic or a question. Personal thoughts, original ideas and interesting insights can thus unfold in your text. You are also likely to discover valuable formulations in your natural voice, because in freewriting you allow attention and energy to flow into the text.

That is why freewriting is suitable for

- exploring ideas, clarifying one's intentions and goals
- to get clarity about one's reading or important topics
- to get into writing a new text or when you have lost the flow of writing.

### Instruction Freewriting

- Set yourself a timer and write your thoughts for 3-5 minutes in a row - in sentences, in key words....
- Do not put the pen down, do not interrupt, do not read your writing.
- Do not cross out and neglect spelling and grammar.
- If you can't think of anything else, keep writing "What else?" until your thoughts flow again.

### Instruction for focused freewriting

- Write the topic or question at the top of your page, then write down any thoughts about it.
- If you notice that you are digressing, start again on the next line, focusing on your topic/question.
- If you can't think of anything else, write "What else about [topic]?" until your thoughts start flowing again.

### Evaluation and further processing

- Read through your text and summarise the key message in one sentence.
- What do you notice? Ideas, insights, formulations, irritations, new thoughts, clarifications? Mark them.
- Follow up any striking features with a cluster, focused freewriting, a writing relay
- Look at the language: What is the tone like? What do you like? What phrases can you continue to use?

### Literature

Elbow, Peter: Writing without teachers. New York/Oxford: Oxford Press 1998.

Bräuer, Gerd: Peter Elbows Konzept des freewriting als Paradigmenwechsel in der amerikanischen Schreibpädagogik. In: Schreiben im Kontext von Schule, Universität, Beruf und Lebensalltag. Hg. von Berning u. a. Berlin: LIT Verlag 2006, S. 11-28.

Wolfsberger, Judith: frei geschrieben. Mut, Freiheit & Strategie für wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeiten. Wien u. a.: Böhlau 2007.

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## Technique: serial, focused freewriting

Serial, focused freewriting is a more intensive form of freewriting in which one writes several freewritings in a row. The effect of freewriting can be increased here. For example, you can deepen your work on content or try out alternative formulations for your thoughts and insights.

### Instruction

- First write a focused freewriting, e.g. on a headline (h1), thus write down all thoughts on a topic. Do not interrupt yourself, do not read or correct anything. If you digress, remember your topic and start on the next line with this focus.
- Read your text, mark what you find remarkable, important, special about it and summarise it in a key sentence (K1).
- Variant "Writing in depth": Take the core sentence (K1) like a baton for the next round as a focus, i.e. as a new heading (h2) and write a new freewriting about it. Then summarise this too and use the core sentence again for freewriting. Keep doing this until you have sufficiently explored your topic. (Fig. 1)
- Variant "Writing Versions": Write several freewritings on the same heading (h1). Read these texts and summarise the most important points as key sentences. (Fig. 2)

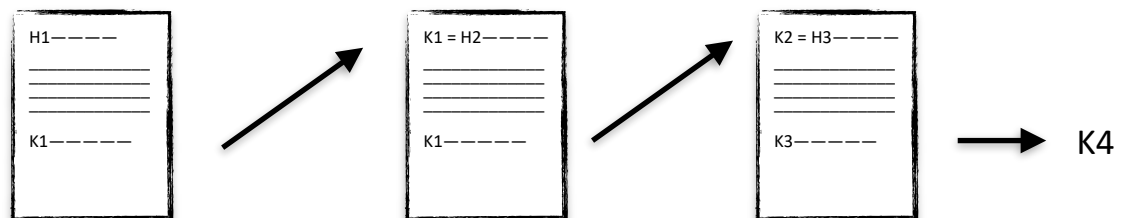


Fig. 1 Writing in depth

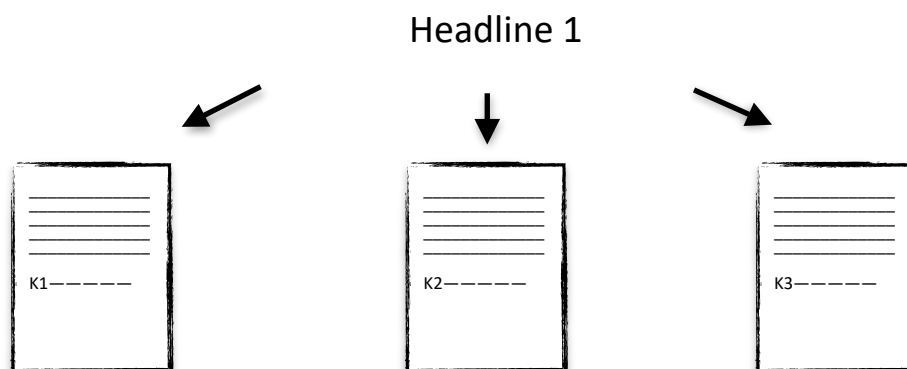


Fig. 2 Writing versions

### Evaluation and further processing

- Read the texts and see what strikes you: Which thoughts would you like to pursue in further texts? What would you like to research in more detail? Which ideas would you like to sort out, e.g. with mind maps or concept maps?
- Which formulations express well what is on your mind in terms of content? Mark these. If necessary, transfer them to your draft text.

### Literatur

Scheuermann, Ulrike: Schreiben als Denk- und Lernwerkzeug nutzen und vermitteln. Opladen/Toronto: Barbara Budrich 2012, S. 79-81.



"A good research question

... is interesting for the writer.

... is relevant in the subject context.

... arises from the writer's own observations about a salient fact, about a subject-specific problem, a contradiction or a research gap: "something that is not true/is consistent", "they say ... but in reality...", "the relationship between X and Y", "a salient fact...", "wondering about...".

... makes it possible to discuss, debate and argue a topic.

... makes it possible to draw conclusions.

... takes the form of a direct question or a hypothetical statement that is challenging, focussing pointing to a problem, in other words, questioning.

... contains a clear main question and possibly subsidiary questions.

... is formulated in precise language.

... is short, i.e. a maximum of 10 lines.

... is presented in the introduction and is the basis of a concept."

(Wolfsberger 2007, S. 84; sie zitiert Lotte Rienecker „Research Question and Academic Argumentation“ p. 98)

💡 **Tip:** Always make sure that your research question is an open question. Use question words such as *to what extent, how, why, who, what, which, where* ... Questions to which you can answer with yes or no are not very useful. So avoid questions that begin with: *If, Can, Must, Is...*

⇒ Take your narrowed topic or topic idea and spend 5 to 10 minutes freely formulating all the possible questions you can think of about it.



## Technique: Three steps to formulate topic and question

- ⇒ With the following three steps, you can systematically develop your question and at the same time check what your intention is and what this means for your text:

1. State the topic (= what am I writing about?)

"I am researching/working on/writing about ..."

I am investigating medium-sized companies in Germany....

2. Include question (= what do I want to know?)

"... because I want to understand/find out/comprehend ..."

...because I want to find out how the usual measures for optimising human resource management are designed

3. Define research objective or research interest (= why do I want to know?)

"... to consider/establish/check, to show..."

...to check whether these measures correspond to the categories of a modern corporate culture.

- ⇒ Depending on the intention and subject convention, it can be helpful to reformulate the research question. If you want to present or test something in a specific way, you need to formulate a goal or hypothesis. The following impulses can help:

Reformulate into a **question** what you have written under 2:

*Do the measures to optimise the human resource management of medium-sized companies correspond to those of a modern corporate culture?*

Reformulate what you have written under 3. into a statement and complete the following sentence beginning: **The aim of this work is to ...**

*to determine whether the measures to optimise the human resource management of medium-sized companies in Germany correspond to a modern corporate culture.*

Now you can develop a working **hypothesis** from the formulated goal, which begins as follows: **I assume that ...**

*in most cases, measures to optimise the human resource management of medium-sized companies in Germany do not correspond to a modern corporate culture.*

Source: cf. Grieshammer et al. 2016 (3rd corr. edition), 178f.  
Using material by Sven Arnold (who refers to material by Gabriela Ruhmann).

In a scientific paper, you have to meet some requirements regarding the structure and the outline. On the one hand, there are a few logical rules that structure a text sensibly and make a table of contents comprehensible. On the other hand, there are structural guidelines that give readers orientation and thus certainty, since they also have some expectations of the text.

Here are some important requirements regarding the outline:

1. All headings in the table of contents match those in the text.
2. No headings appear in the text that are not present in the table of contents.
3. Higher levels form a logical bracket around the levels below: Chapter Fruit forms the logical bracket around subchapter Apples and subchapter Pears.
4. Subchapters should not overlap in content and should not be mutually exclusive.
5. Depth of outline: Do not create sub-chapters up to more than 3 to 5 levels. The depth depends on the overall length of the text. A paragraph with 5 to 8 sentences is not a separate chapter.
6. First always follows second: 2.1 must always be followed by 2.2. This applies to all levels. If you divide your chapter 2 into 2.1 and then 2.1 into 2.1.1 and 2.1.2, another 2.2 must follow.
7. Do not divide a chapter into too many sub-chapters: 4.1 to 4.19 is unfavourable.
8. Choose meaningful headings that reflect the content of the chapter. Avoid general headings such as Theoretical Background, Methods, Definitions.
9. Keep the headings short and concise. The heading should be only one line long. Do not include articles, bulleted lists or brackets.

Academic texts have certain structural features that you can use as a guide. For example, there are certain contents for the introductory and concluding parts of the text that should and can always occur.

## Introduction

The following content should be included in every introduction:

- State the topic and the problem to be addressed in the paper.
- The question to be answered OR the (hypo)thesis to be proved or disproved.
- Aim
- Procedure and structure of the thesis: if applicable, an empirical method should be named and briefly justified; the outline should be presented and justified.

Each introduction can also include the following contents:

- Motivation or justification of the choice of topic
- State of the art of research, literature review
- More detailed justification of the methods used, naming advantages
- Definitions of terms





## Main part

The main part of a academic paper is structured according to the topic. However, all texts have in common that within the main part the subject of the work is described using technical terms or technical language. Certain aspects of the topic/subject are identified and analysed; if necessary, different issues are compared. In empirical work, the methods of data collection or extraction and data analysis are described and applied. Results of empirical work are presented and compared with theory. The most prevalent basic forms of academic writing are describing, analysing, interpreting and, above all, arguing.

The following arguments can occur in academic texts:

- Argument by analogy (comparative case, contrast).
- Authority argument (refer to an expert or a theory or statistic)
- Causal argument (inferring from cause to effect; inferring from effect to cause)
- Part-whole argument (inferring from a part to the whole; inferring from the whole to a part)

## Conclusion

The following contents should be found in each concluding chapter:

- Summary of the essence of the work
- Summary of the most important results
- Answer to the questions of the introduction, answer to the research question or evidence for the thesis
- Conclusions drawn from the results

Each concluding section may also include the following content:

- an outlook for further research or for practice
- Comments on the literature/theory used
- Comments on the research situation
- Discussion of the method used



## The annotated outline

The annotated outline can help you navigate your text throughout the writing process. Use it as a guide for orientation and look there to see what your next steps are. If you have gained new insights that show you that something in your outline does not fit the goal or the topic, then add to or change work steps or planned parts of the text. Proceed as follows:



1. Create an initial outline for your text using a mind map, a text path, sticky notes or a standard outline.
2. Write at least two sentences for each bullet point and answer these questions:
  - a. What am I writing in this chapter/subchapter? What is this about?
  - b. Why am I writing this? What is the function of this chapter/subchapter in answering the research question or in achieving my research objective?  
→ If this question b. cannot be answered, check whether this chapter is dispensable!
  - c. Later, make a note for each chapter which literature or sources you need.



## Technique: Mind Map - hierarchising and structuring content

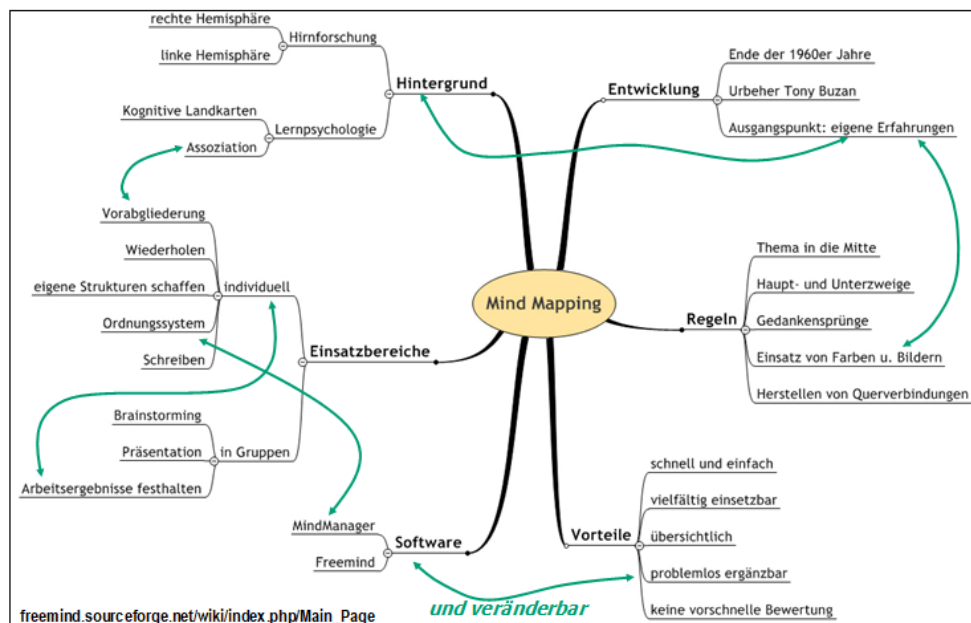
A mind map is literally a map of thoughts. It shows individual ideas, contents, thought paths and their connections. There are now many explanations, research papers and software developments on this technique. This technique combines associative and conscious processes and is suitable for

- structure one's own thoughts and topics, sort a lot of information, determine upper and lower categories
- to process complex, abstract topics (texts, learning material) and thus get an overview of them
- to understand texts and to find one's own words for what has been read

### Instructions

- Write your core word in the middle of the sheet and outline it.
- Starting from this, write further thoughts around this core word in a network, forming word chains and branches.
- First add main branches with generic terms to the core word and then branches with sub-headings.
- The associative collection can be supplemented, changed and designed with connecting arrows, symbols, numbering...

### example



### Evaluation and further work

- Number branches and twigs to create an outline or work plan.
- Connect those points that are related to each other. Find connections and transitions.
- Develop an argumentation from this. If necessary, write another mind map.
- If you are working on more extensive texts, you can use sticky notes to place the individual points on a large piece of paper and, depending on your level of knowledge, expand and move them around.
- Mind mapping software allows you to create mind maps flexibly and to write parts of the text behind individual bullet points.

### Literature

Renkl, A., Nückles, M. (2005). Lernstrategien der externen Visualisierung. In: Mandl, H. & Friedrich, H.F. (Hrsg.). Handbuch Lernstrategien. Analyse und Intervention. Göttingen/Bern/Toronto/Seattle: Hogrefe Verlag für Psychologie. S. 135-147  
<http://www.mind-map.com/> (Seite von „The Buzan Centers“ [?] Tony Buzan ist der Begründer der Mind-Mapping-Technik)

The annotated outline notes for each bullet point or chapter of an outline what the respective chapter should contain and why this information is important to answer the research question or to achieve the writing purpose. This allows one to assess the relevance of information to the emerging text at any point in a writing project, avoid writer's block, read and write purposefully.

### Instructions

- Draft an outline. Structuring writing or visualisation techniques can help here, e.g. mind map, concept map, text path. You can also use your institution's guidelines or subject conventions as a guide.
- Write at least two complete sentences for each bullet point and use them to answer these questions:
  - a. What am I writing in this chapter/subchapter? What is this about?
  - b. Why am I writing this? What function does this chapter/subchapter fulfil in answering the research question or in achieving my writing/research purpose?

### example

**Peters/Zegenhagen: Autobiografisches Schreiben für mehr Selbstfürsorge im Beruf (Behrendt/Kreitz Sammelband 2021)**

We place a short introduction to the article so that readers can easily find their way through the text.

**1. Schreibberater\*innen im Fokus**

In this chapter we briefly introduce our training workshop. Using our target group of writing consultants as an example, we explain that self-care is particularly necessary for activities in counselling, pedagogy and care.

**2. Selbstfürsorge aus Sicht der Positiven Psychologie und der Schreibforschung**

**2.1. Die Notwendigkeit der Selbstfürsorge bei Schreibberater\*innen**

In this subchapter, we use the systematics of Hoffmann/Hofmann 2012 to explain the framework conditions and challenges that writing consultants have to deal with: putting professional expectations into perspective, enduring feelings, being aware of fatigue, taking good care of themselves. In this way, we justify the necessity of self-care.

**2.2. Der Wert des autobiografischen Schreibens für Selbstfürsorge**

In this sub-chapter we show the multiple effects of autobiographical writing on mental health. We refer to research findings from writing research and positive psychology. With this, we explain why and how autobiographical writing can help with self-care (e.g. perception, change of perspective, strengthening resources).

**3. Mit Listen, Gedichten und Briefen den Beratungsrucksack neu packen - Das Workshopkonzept**

In this chapter we present our workshop chronologically and explain the function and effect of individual autobiographical writing impulses. This should give the reader a concrete idea of our workshop.

**4. Kritisches Plädoyer für autobiografisches Schreiben und Selbstfürsorge**

In this chapter we summarise the possibilities and limitations of autobiographical writing for self-care and encourage the adaptation of this workshop concept for other professional and learning contexts. Finally, we promote the awareness and ability of self-care and self-esteem among the target group and their teachers.

### Evaluation and further work

- Orientation phase: when planning the text: Were you able to answer these questions for all chapters and sub-chapters? If not, please check what the reason is: Can information from several chapters be combined into one chapter after all? Does a subchapter have to be moved to another hierarchical level? Does a chapter not fulfil a function for answering the research question / for achieving the writing purpose? Is it even dispensable?
- Orientation phase: for research: for each chapter/subchapter, add what kind of information you need from outside sources or from your own data collection. Then think about where you can find this information or what is needed for the survey. Research and read the relevant sources or organise your data collection.
- Writing phase: when writing the raw text: Put this annotated outline in view when writing. Or even write your draft text inside the annotated outline. You can certainly use the wording of the comments later as a chapter introduction to guide your readers through the text.
- Writing phase: for writer's block: In case of writer's block, look at the annotated outline to remind yourself of what you wanted to write or the relevance of the current section of text.
- Revision phase: When revising at the level of structure and content, you can compare the actual text with the planning in the annotated outline.



## Technique: Text path - structuring texts

The text path is an instrument that can be used to structure texts creatively and visually. When writing, the text path helps to put the thoughts or the individual text structure elements in a chronological order. You can plan your own text in detail with signposts and arrive at the raw text more easily. This prevents detours.

### Instructions – Text path when structuring your own text

- On the left side of your sheet, write down the individual elements with some space between them, such as thesis, explanation, argument 1, evidence, example, argument 2, evidence, example, counter-argument 1, quotation.
- Outline the elements with a specific shape each and then connect them, e.g. arrows for arguments...
- Add key points to the individual elements on the right-hand side

### example:

Textpath: Preface

Entry: Quotation

Nicholas Carr „...“

Explanation

Internet changes thinking: concentration drops, visual perception increases, more superficial  
what is missing? Focus, collection, depth

Transition to the book topic

Aim 1

writing in flow

Aim 2

Successful writing: confident, authentic, free

Aim 3

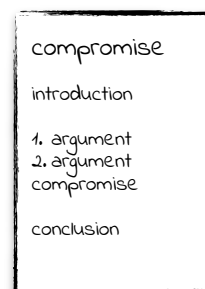
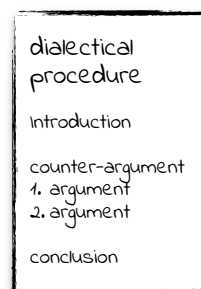
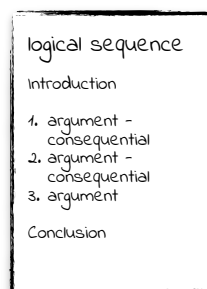
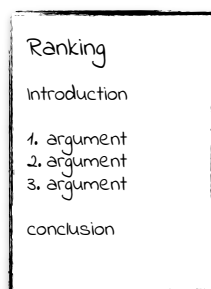
writing thinking, productive creative process

Structure book

Checklists, examples, exercises

Scheuermann 2011, S. 99

### Typical structures of argumentation



Scheuermann 2011, S. 99

### Evaluation and further work

- Now write your text along the text path.
- Guide your readers through the text using transitions, summaries, announcements.
- You can compare and question the argumentation structures of different texts/authors.

### Literature

Scheuermann, Ulrike: Die Schreibfitness-Mappe. 60 Checklisten, Beispiele und Übungen für alle, die beruflich schreiben. Wien: Linde 2011, S. 98f.

Scheuermann, Ulrike: Schreiben als Denk- und Lernwerkzeug nutzen und vermitteln. Opladen/Toronto: Barbara Budrich 2012, S. 82-84.



## Planning the content of a paper with the exposé

### Why should you write an exposé?

- Clarify own objectives, expectations or needs
- Identify possible limitations and difficulties
- plan the way of working
- Basis for a discussion in the office hours
- Presentation of a term paper/project/research proposal for application for doctoral admission/for funding or scholarship approvals

### How must an exposé be formatted?

- Technical language, not too long sentences, comprehensible (continuous text)
- If necessary, ask for the requirements of the respective institute/editor (regarding formal design, scope, work structure, bibliography).
- The exposé is not a final plan to be followed!

### What content belongs in an exposé?

- Topic, research question and material, personal interest in knowledge, problem statement (research gap).
- Methodological procedure (theories, terms, methods of the subject), research material (which phenomena, sources, data? selection criteria and scope, methods of data collection and data processing), initial literature selection
- Time schedule - work steps and resources
- annotated outline (draft)
- potential problems (e.g., finding subjects, borrowing technology, obtaining permissions)

(cf. Frank u.a. 2007, S. 29; Klemm/Hähnel 2008, Bunting u.a. 2000, 131, Kruse 2010, S. 85)

⇒ write a quick exposé

Set yourself a timer for 20 minutes. In these 20 minutes, write an exposé by trying to answer the following questions. It is important that you write down your thoughts quickly and answer the questions spontaneously. If you still cannot answer a question, move on to the next question.

1. What should your work be about? What is the focus?
2. What do you want to find out, show or test? Which aspects are interesting?
3. What should be the result of the work? What is important about it?
4. How will you proceed? Which methods of your subject will you use? Why this one in particular?
5. What will be studied? What empirical data or what primary texts, sources, phenomena? What are your selection criteria, what is the scope? What specialized literature will you use?
6. What is the state of research you are connecting to? What is the research gap, the professional problem
7. Timeline: What milestones do you set for yourself? When do you want to have completed the work?



## 1. What do you need texts or their contents for?

- What kind of information are you looking for? What function does the cited information perform for your work?
  - o introduce something, give an overview
  - o Provide or verify information
  - o Show examples of reasoning or explanation
  - o introduce methods or models
  - o refer to further literature in lists or in the text
  - o show statements in the original language
  - o use statements of others because they are linguistically special (maybe provoke)
- Go through your annotated outline chapter by chapter, noting at each point what literature you can use for it.

## 2. What do you already have? What does the material give?

Highlight in material from seminars/research what is or could be important.

- Lists: Literature lists, seminar plans, literature references on presentation handouts...
- Reader: Which texts have you already read? Which authors/texts are referred to?
- Text types: What kind of text is it in each case? (Monograph, handbook, edited volume / anthology, conference proceedings, Festschrift, textbook, scientific journal, online journal, online encyclopedias, university/institute website).
- Categorize text: Categorize the texts for yourself (see following page).

## 3. Are there chapters for which you need other materials or data?

- Are you still missing information that you get in other ways?
- then make a note of it, e.g.
  - o other research material (surveys, calculations, plans, photos, films, ...)
  - o test persons, interview partners
  - o equipment for experiments

## 4. Are there chapters for which you still need literature but have found none or too little?

- In what texts/books/lists could you find more literature?
- Collect keywords: associatively in a cluster on the topic and/or systematically e.g. in a mind map
- Where can you find what you are looking for? E.g. in bibliographies, catalogs, subject or literature databases, journal databases (e.g. [www.zdb-katalog.de](http://www.zdb-katalog.de)), German National Library ([www.dnb.de](http://www.dnb.de)), KVK - Karlsruhe Virtual Catalog. (Book search engine for the detection of several hundred million media in catalogs worldwide: <https://kvk.bibliothek.kit.edu>); worldwide library network ([www.worldcat.org](http://www.worldcat.org)), scientific search engines: google scholar, researchgate.net

## 5. Organize research results and reading results, manage literature

- It is best to consider and test a system for documenting and organizing literature prior to major writing projects; if necessary, familiarize yourself with literature management software.
- A comparison of different programs can be found at SLUB Dresden: M. Adam, K. Hoffmann, J. Musiat, S. Rahm, M. Stöhr, Chr. Wenzel, SLUB Dresden; as of July 2018; URL: <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bsz:14-qucosa2-233817>
- Also check with your library, usually there are licenses and training for the colleges/universities.

**Basic literature and introductions:** Publications that provide a basic explanation of a subject, that give an essential overview of a topic. Essential contents are presented in an understandable way. Usually the most important representatives of the subject, the basic models and the methods are presented. Here you will find many literature references.

**Handbooks and encyclopedias:** introduction to a topic and transfer of basic knowledge. Here you will usually find several articles collected by experts on the respective topic. These articles are well-founded and condensed, so you get a lot of important information in a short time. Helpful for definitions, discussions of terms, the state of research, the most essential findings and especially for further reading.

**Monograph:** a detailed written study of a single specialized subject or an aspect of it. A specific topic is dealt with fundamentally and in depth. You will find monographs on special topics of your subject, on subtopics of your subject or related topics to your subject.

**Qualification theses:** Doctoral dissertations and post-doctoral theses, also diploma theses, master's theses, less frequently bachelor's theses. In these theses you will usually find a scientific study, an in-depth research overview or a meta-study. In qualification papers you will usually find a state of the art research. Equally helpful are these publications to get ideas for a research question, because in the papers the research gaps are pointed out and / or at the end ideas are presented, how further work could be done.

**Anthology:** Various contributions around one topic. The theme of the book and the structuring is done by the editors. In anthologies, you will find subtopics on a larger topic. There are specific foci in the individual contributions by different authors.

**Professional journals:** Articles on specific topics in a subject discipline. Journals and magazines are organized by subjects, disciplines and topics. Journals in particular can reflect the current discourse, as this is where the results of a study are usually published first. This also includes online journals.

**Websites / blogs / information pages on the WWW:** In the meantime, a lot of specialized information is given on various websites of companies, institutes, non-profit associations, etc.. Since these sites are generally accessible and the information on them is published, they can also be cited. Here, care must be taken that they can be classified as a citable source: from the scientific field, recognized institution, reputable, author and publication date recognizable.



In your work, you can use any source that can be traced and verified. These are primarily published sources that are generally accessible. Furthermore, these sources must be from the scientific context, i.e. published by scientists at universities, colleges, research institutes. Furthermore, you can use sources from reputable institutions such as ministries, offices, health insurance companies, recognized institutions such as NABU, Amnesty, but also companies such as VW, financial institutions as well as articles from reputable daily and weekly newspapers. In addition, sources worth quoting are legal texts, ordinances, guidelines, judgments and legal commentaries.

In contrast, you may not cite unpublished texts or information for which it is not possible to trace where they came from and/or who wrote them. This includes internal documents from accepted companies and institutions. These sources are also called gray literature. Since these documents are not available to the public, they cannot actually be used as sources. As the author or writer of a student paper, you would have to make these documents or relevant excerpts accessible by putting them in the appendix of your paper, for example. It is equally difficult with conversations, discussions, correspondence or mail exchanges. These are also not accessible and reviewable and thus not worth citing. Here, you can also consider whether access is guaranteed by including minutes or transcripts in the appendix. You should always discuss such matters with your supervisors.

An exception are qualitative studies, where observations or interviews or group discussions are taken as a research basis. These must be made testable in transcripts in the appendix. Unpublished documents can also be the subject of an empirical study. These will be analyzed under a specific question. If it is feasible, it is also advisable to make the texts accessible to the readers in the appendix.

Quotations should be taken from the original sources whenever possible. The point is to understand the quote in the original and be able to classify it yourself. If an original source cannot be consulted, a citation may be made in the quotation, and the secondary source may then be used. However, it must be made clear that it is a processed quotation or a quotation within a quotation. Whether both sources have to be indicated is interpreted differently and should be discussed with the supervisor.

## Understanding literature in context

To check the relevance of a text to your specific concern, you first need to classify the text well. This table can help:

Table: Basic information about a text (Kruse 2010, p. 41)

Who is/are the author(s)?	Biographical data Other publications Subject affiliation Institution
When was the text published?	When written? Date of publication, later editions What can author (not) have read?
Where was the text first published?	Place of publication Medium (book, magazine, newspaper, internet) Editor, publisher, book series
History of editing	Original language, translation Adaptations and revisions Multiple versions? Critical editions?
Topic of the text	Title and subtitle Abstract Keywords
Type of text	Type of text Function and context Zeitgeist
Readers	Lay or professional audience For or against whom is the text written?
Publication and discussion context	Political context Discussion context Relation to other authors Position in the author's complete works
History of the impact of the text	Reputation Consequences/reception New editions, translation, impact

- ⇒ Take your mind map, outline or even just your topic and note down at the respective point which literature you can use for it. What literature do you already have? What information do you still need to look for? Try out the various search engines and catalogues.
- ⇒ Now check the sources you have found with the help of the scheme. What can you find out about the source? How can you classify the sources with this information?
- ⇒ Classify the sources into a) I definitely use, b) I might use, c) I tend not to use.



## Citation, references, bibliographies - the basics

### Quoting includes

- ...the taking over of any information from other sources that cannot or should not be collected by oneself, e.g.
  - o 'passages', literally or in one's own words
  - o Figures and data,
  - o figures and tables,
  - o definitions,
  - o equations and formulae.
- The sources of this information must always be indicated.

### Why quote?

- To create trust in science, to make one's own text trustworthy.
- To achieve comprehensibility of the ways of knowledge
- Clear separation: the 'own'/the 'foreign'
- Findability of the source

### What does citation involve?

1. The direct or indirect quotation: the information taken over.
2. the reference to the associated source in the form of a short reference, footnote or number: directly with this information (If you have used two or more sources for one piece of information, you do not need to give two or more short references/footnotes/numbers. You can give the sources one after the other).
3. Source reference in the bibliography in the form of the full document

### The direct quote

- Word-for-word, faithful transfer of foreign information (also old spelling, errors, etc.)
- Marking with inverted commas and corresponding evidence
- Emphasis, omissions, changes, additions must be marked.
- Block quotations (longer quotations) should be formatted separately if necessary.
- Mark second-hand quotations: quoted from/quoted in
- Check whether you should translate foreign language quotations

### The indirect quotation

- "Four types of indirect quotation can be distinguished:
- Reproduction of the statement close to the text, so-called paraphrases,
- references to studies or methods described in the literature, for example, without elaborating on them in detail,
- own statements,
- summaries of larger text passages or texts by different authors on similar subjects". (Theuerkauf/Steinmetz 2008, p. 43)
- Short note/footnote/number immediately after the indirect quotation, at best introduce linguistically, before the reference "cf." or "see".



### Short reference in the text

- also known as Harvard citation or American citation style
- an abbreviated out short form of the details of a source
- The abbreviated citation is placed in brackets (please ask whether it is in round or square brackets) in the text directly after the citation.
- A short reference contains the following information surname of author, year of publication, page number
- There are different variants of how the three details are given in the shorthand: 1) name, year, page / 2) name year: page / 3) name year, p. x and many more.
- Abbreviations such as *ibid.* can be used, but rather in the footnote system.
- Be careful whether the reference belongs to the sentence (dot after) or whether the reference refers to several sentences or a paragraph (reference after the last dot).
- In some subjects, the *cf.* in brackets is omitted for indirect quotations; this must be done uniformly.
- A special variant of the abbreviation in the text is the abbreviation of the surname in small caps / capital letters: (MÜL, 1993, p. 17)

### Footnote system

- there is a small superscript number at the end of the citation which refers to the footnote at the bottom of the page.
- Full citation or short citation in the footnote
- Full citation like the full bibliography in the list of sources.
- Short reference like the short reference in the text: Surname, year, page
- in a few subjects, an abbreviated full reference is also used with surname, year, short title, page; this is used after the full reference has been made at the first citation
- The short citation usually contains the following information: Surname of author, year of publication, page number, abbreviation as *ibid.*; the name of the author can be abbreviated in the brackets.
- Be careful whether the reference belongs to the sentence (dot after) or whether the reference refers to several sentences or a paragraph (reference after the last dot).
- Legal texts / information on laws are not placed in the footnote, but are usually found in the text with the reference *According to § xy* and then the corresponding code of law.

### Numbering system

- Number in (square) brackets in the text.
- Number refers to the number in the list of sources, which in turn contains the complete source reference.
- Disadvantage: Statements cannot be correctly classified with the help of the source citation.

sources: Theuerkauf 2012 / Sandberg 2017.



Quoting means reproducing the content-related meaning of texts, information, findings, research results, etc. The content that one has read for one's own work should be shown in one's own text and integrated into one's own context. The rule is that any information taken over must be marked and provided with a source. Anyone who disregards this is committing plagiarism.

The following forms of plagiarism are classified:

- \* *Wording or total plagiarism:* Text passages are taken over word for word and not marked.
- \* *Translation plagiarism:* A text passage is translated and integrated into one's own text without citing the source.
- \* *Content plagiarism or partial plagiarism:* A passage of text is slightly rephrased and reproduced in one's own text without citing the source. Statements from different texts are mixed together and formulated into a separate text section without citing the sources.
- \* *Structural plagiarism:* A table of contents from another text is copied one-to-one. The line of argumentation of another paper is adopted one-to-one.

However, generally known knowledge is exempt from the citation requirement. Knowledge that is generally known can be used in one's own work and does not have to be supported by a source. There is also general knowledge in the sciences or in the individual disciplines that no longer needs to be cited. General subject knowledge includes, for example, elementary technical terms or well-known formulae. You can use your fellow students and the handbooks of your own subject as a guide to identify general knowledge.



## Bibliography or list of sources

In the bibliography, the sources must be cited in full. These complete references contain certain information in order to be able to clearly identify the source. Depending on the subject convention, this information is presented differently in order and detail. You have to look this up in the specifications of your subject/your examiner.

### **Bibliography / List of sources**

- Sort references alphabetically according to the surname of the author/author/editor
- if the names are the same, the first name decides the order
- all names are always given for author teams and editor teams
- First names may be abbreviated; must be uniform
- Names with von do NOT come under v (e.g.: sort under W: Werder, Lutz von)
- within the alphabetical order, sort chronologically (when using several sources by the same author, for example)
- For further structuring by type of media, please refer to the guidelines for your subject.
- Structuring by type of literature (monograph, anthology, handbooks...) is not recommended. Structuring by literature, internet sources, audio sources would be possible.
- Works in which the numbering system is used sort the index either numerically or alphabetically with the additional indication of the number in the text.
- if an institution is the author of a text, the addition ed. is placed in brackets after the name (often applies to online sources)
- The index always comes after the text
- All sources used in the text are included.
- Other or additional sources may not be included in the index
- laws and court judgements are only cited in the text, not in the index
- If you use a citation in your own work, you must ask your examiners whether you have to mention the original source in full in the index. There are different specifications on this in different guides.

Sources: Theuerkauf 2012 / Sandberg 2017.

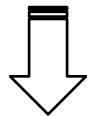
## The active reading process

The process of reading can be thought of as having three major phases. In each of these phases, you have certain tasks to master, in which different reading techniques, materials and work tools can help you.

### Preparing for reading

Prepare your reading process with conscious planning. In this way you avoid reading in the dark and getting bogged down, you prevent distractions and disturbances. On the one hand, set up the external space, find a suitable place to work. But also set the framework for the content, choose texts and the reading order according to specific objectives.

⇒ Prepare to read the most important texts for your work. Make notes for each of the texts, especially on your expectations and questions, context and reading objective.

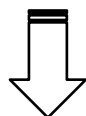


### Select appropriate reading technique and apply it while reading:

While reading, you need to select and apply the reading techniques that are appropriate for your reading goal. This will give you the insights you want and make the transition to writing the raw text easier. With reading techniques, writing is used to process the reading. Therefore, I would like to remind you here once again of the writing process model: on the right you can see that this whole process includes several activities: Reading - Writing - Speaking.

"The linguist and German didactician Fritz Hermanns (1988) wrote so aptly that one:

- by thinking in writing one makes a subject one's own
- gives language to one's own thoughts, and
- value one's own thoughts - especially thoughts about readings - and give them some time". (Grieshammer et al. 2016, p. 59)



### Integrating what you have read into your own text - From reading to writing

The third step is to understand what has been read, to relate it to the positions in other texts and to one's own positions, and finally to integrate it into one's own text.



## Technique: SQ3R method

This oldest and best-known reading technique was developed by Francis Robinson (1970). It includes all 3 points of active reading and consists of the following 5 elements (cf. Kruse 2010, p. 36):

1. **Survey:** Before actually reading the text, you skim it and get an overview of how it is structured. The title, abstract, outline, headings, introduction, chapter summaries and other structuring elements of the text should be taken into account.
2. **Question:** Based on your own prior knowledge, you ask questions about the text. The questions are written down and checked at the end. The questions are especially important to approach the text actively, but also to read selectively and to extract from the text exactly what is of interest.
3. **Read:** The text is read section by section, the important things are noted. This, of course, is what reading is all about.
4. **Recite:** The text is recapitulated section by section and summarised in your own words. The essentials are highlighted.
5. **Review:** The content of the whole text is summarised, whereby the questions formulated before reading can be used as orientation. Mind map elements can also be used here to visualise the structure of the text in a summarised way.

### Evaluation and further work

- Using this text, write a commentary or rough draft on a section of your paper.
- Follow up your questions and thoughts, read further literature referred to in the text.
- If necessary, present the content graphically and relate it to other texts.

### Sources and for further reading

Bünting, Karl-Dieter u. a.: Schreiben im Studium: mit Erfolg. Ein Leitfaden, Berlin (3. Aufl.) 2000, S. 33-35.

Schreibtrainer: Schreibwerkstatt der Universität Essen: <http://www.uni-essen.de/schreibwerkstatt/trainer>

Kruse, Otto: Lesen und Schreiben. Der richtige Umgang mit Texten im Studium. Konstanz: UVK 2010 (UTB).

Stary, Joachim / Kretschmer, Horst: Umgang mit wissenschaftlicher Literatur. Eine Arbeitshilfe für das sozial- und geisteswissenschaftliche Studium. Frankfurt am Main 1994, S. 114-119.





## Technique: Four-column reading

<b>Author:</b> <b>source:</b>			
Original text as	page	My comment	Assignment in my own text
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paraphrase</li><li>• Quote</li><li>• Summary in keywords</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions about the text</li><li>• Critical remarks</li><li>• Noticeable/special?</li><li>• Contradictions to what I have read so far?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fits the aspect x,y,z</li><li>• Fits in the bullet point x,y,z</li><li>• Fits into the introduction</li><li>• Fits in the conclusion</li></ul>



Technique: interview, letter to the author, warning - first access to a text

### **How do warning, letter to the author and interview work and what can you use this technique for?**

Once you have read a text, many thoughts usually run through your head. Some things you can't really grasp yet, you feel contradiction or enthusiasm, you are inspired or exhausted... So it's good to write down your first impressions of the reading, preferably spontaneously in a freewriting session or by taking on a different role, creatively changing the way you write or entering into a fictitious conversation. In this way, you can let off steam and understand the text, passionately identify or distance yourself, formulate criticism, doubts, agreement, questions, mentally classify the text...

### **Instructions:**

Using one of the following ideas, write your first reaction to a text you have read. Let the questions inspire you and just follow your thoughts.

#### **Friendly creative warning: give future readers a friendly warning about the text.**

What makes the text stand out? What do you want to warn future readers about? What do readers need to know beforehand? How is the text structured? Are there any special stylistic features, graphics, drawings, tables? What is special about it?

#### **Letter to the author / e-mail to the author: Write to the author and tell him what you think and your questions.**

What questions or statements are on your mind now that you have read the text? What do you find exciting, interesting? What else can you think of that you would like to pass on to the author?

#### **Interview with the author: Conduct a fictional interview with the author, what does he answer?**

Imagine you meet the author of the text you have just read. You can ask him everything that is still on your mind. You can tell him what you find exciting, which points you would like to disagree with or what you have a different position on. Put yourself in the shoes of the interviewee and answer each question.

### **Evaluation and further work**

And now? Have you left everything out? Then see what exactly bothers you or appeals to you about the text, what you don't understand or what you have a different attitude to.

Read what you have written. What do you notice? Mark interesting passages, good formulations, open questions... What would you like to pick up on in further work?

### **Literature**

Grieshammer, Ella/Liebetanz, Franziska/Peters, Nora/Zegenhagen, Jana: Zukunftsmodell Schreibberatung. Eine Anleitung zur Begleitung von Schreibenden im Studium. 3. Auflage. Baltmannsweiler: Schneider Verlag Hohengehren 2016.

Zegenhagen, Jana/Peters, Nora: Warnung vor kritisch kreativem Peer-Feedback. In: Wymann, Christian (Hrsg.): Praxishandbuch Schreibdidaktik: Übungen zur Vermittlung wissenschaftlicher Schreibkompetenzen. Opladen/Toronto: Barbara Budrich 2019, p. 272-277.

Zegenhagen, Jana: Handout Interview with Author - Critical Examination of Texts



## Follow-up: Referring and questioning

In your own notes, you should always refer to what you have read or to the author, that is: refer. To do this, use verbs of reference:

Research Actions	Constructing knowledge	Discursive actions
to examine to show to demonstrate to prove to compare to discover to test to explore to find out	to start from a question to represent to assume to justify to form a model to conceptualize to name hypothesis	thesis state assert, to postulate to claim to disprove to contradict to bring into discussion to report to someone to refer to to delimit to mention to represent opinion

[vgl. Kruse 2010, S. 44]

Also, connect the text you read with your own thoughts as you read it, reproducing the theses not just objectively, but as statements made by the authors.

- *The authors investigate, show, demonstrate, prove, compare, discover, test, explore, find out, work on, start from the question, present, assume, justify, name, hypothesize, assert, postulate, refute, contradict ...*
- *In the author's opinion, ...*
- *The author takes the position...*
- *The author emphasizes that...*

Texts must also be read critically. This means reflecting on the text and questioning the content. You can then also show critical reading in your own text by using certain formulations:

- However, it is also conceivable that ...
- An alternative view would be ...
- What remains unclear is ...
- Not addressed is ...
- It could also be argued that ...
- It can be argued that ...
- Whether this is generally true is worth considering ...
- The author gives the impression that ...
- The question is whether the author has considered that ...
- Alternatively, the following causes could be assumed ...
- If one considers the author's statement in the context of ... , then ...
- In the author's presentation, the fact ... is not taken into account.
- The author makes a sweeping assertion that for all ...
- The authoring puts forward the thesis without substantiation that....
- Quite rightly, the author emphasizes...



## gap-filling procedure & Moasaik method

The gap-filling procedure helps you to write your raw text and to process ideas, thoughts, arguments from the texts you have read. Through the process, you can let your thoughts flow into your text and detach yourself from the formulations of the texts you have read. With the gap-filling procedure, you first produce a text on a topic of your writing project (e.g. on a chapter or subchapter) based on your own thoughts. While you are writing this raw text, mark places in the text where you want to include evidence from the specialist literature in the form of direct or indirect quotations.

1. First write down your own thoughts on the topic in a continuous text (without looking at the literature or your notes).
2. While writing or afterwards, mark places where you still want to include information from what you have read. This additional information can be supporting or substantiating direct or indirect quotations from the literature.
  - a. If you write by hand, make an X or other symbol.
  - b. If you are writing on the computer, you can use an empty bracket (), for example, or write a document in italics. You can also use the comment function of your word editor.
3. Then fill in the gaps with material from your notes and literature.
4. Revise your text with a look at the literature to avoid thought plagiarism. Mark claims, arguments, etc. that cannot have come from you and specifically look for sources for them.

The mosaic method is a technique for writing raw text and letting a structure emerge in your text. The starting point is your own notes, transcripts, quotations, excerpts etc.. From these, you compose your own text step by step. You can either place your notes, transcripts, quotations, excerpts in your outline, i.e. assign them to the individual chapters. Or you can develop a structure for your text, your chapters, from the notes etc.

### Option 1:

1. Assign your notes, excerpts etc. (text extracts) appropriately to the points of your outline and/or into your (sub)chapters.
2. Connect the text extracts with a few sentences to form a coherent text.
3. Then revise this text so that you express the majority of the direct quotations in your own words, create meaningful transitions and create a flowing text.

### Option 2:

1. Go through your notes, excerpts etc. (text extracts) and formulate a key sentence or the main idea of the respective text extract in the margin.
2. Use these marginal notes to cluster or sort your text extracts. Form main groups and corresponding subgroups.
3. Create an outline from the cluster.
4. Then proceed as with option 1 from point 2.

Be sure to use the text passages to come up with your own formulations and to connect the individual text passages in a meaningful way. To do this, always make a connection in the chapters/sections to your research question and your objective. Formulate a separate question for each individual chapter, which you answer with the help of the text excerpts.

source: Ulrike Lange (2013): Fachtexte – lesen – verstehen – wiedergeben. Paderborn: Schöningh (utb).



## Tips for a good writing flow

what is the best way to deal with disturbing thoughts while writing, i.e. thoughts about everyday life, thoughts about secondary topics, later work steps, good ideas?

- Test different reading and writing places, set up a working space according to your own needs.
- formulate clear goals: set smaller time frames for writing or set a number of pages
- use special symbols to mark unfinished work (you can have these symbols searched for automatically)
- Use uncomplicated places for secondary thoughts (column, file, notebook, sound recording) - so they don't get lost, you stay in the flow (see writing in columns).
- Set font colour to white, switch off automatic spell check; use freewriting to get started, use apps for quick writing
- Write together with others - find a common place, motivate each other
- Put away technical texts and use only the notes, write in small units, then print your text and be happy (for safety and motivation, revise later)

### writing in columns

Writing in columns helps you when you cannot start writing, when you get distracted while writing, when other thoughts come to you while writing that do not belong to your text. You can divide your sheets of paper into three columns. In the middle you write your text of the paper (e.g. the rough draft of single chapters), on the left you write down thoughts that come to you while writing but have nothing to do with your current work, on the right you write down thoughts that have to do with your work but do not belong in the text at this point. Always come back to the middle and to your actual text!

Other thoughts	Text	Thoughts on the text
I'm hungry!  I wonder what the writing centres in the US are like? Could I do an internship there?  Oh man, the Word programme is lame again today. Do I have too many programmes open? How much time do I have to write? Somehow it doesn't want to go by. Where is my centre?	Academic writing is one of the basics of studying in Germany, but writing papers is a problem for many students. From conversations with other students, I conclude that students often don't know exactly how to write an academic text and often don't until their final thesis. This conclusion can also be drawn from the writing counselling service at the Viadrina and its statistics on the students who come to them with writing problems.  One reason for this is that the writing of academic texts is hardly ever discussed or taught at German universities. Yet, in recent years, there has been increased research on why teaching academic writing should be part of the curriculum at university and how writing can be taught. In doing so, German-speaking researchers often refer to the US didactics of writing, because at many universities in the USA, writing has been part of the curriculum for decades.	where does this assumption come from? Evidence  cite Otto Kruse, Gerd Bräuer here.  Proof - which didactics of writing? who? See how chair would like to have evidence and source references



## Tips on writer's block:



Academic writing is a complex process with many requirements. That's why there are many reasons why you can get stuck in the writing process. If you are "operationally blind", talking to friends, fellow students, trained writing advisors or your supervisors can help. Conversations are helpful because someone with an outside perspective can approach you and your writing difficulties in a completely different way, and because it is well known that when you talk, you usually notice where things are getting stuck yourself.

- **Writing consultants** are experts in analysing writing processes and finding the causes of problems. They often also give feedback on parts of the text.
- **Advisors** are experts in the subject, they know the discourse, the text norms, and are usually experienced writers themselves. And they know what they expect from you.

You can also look for the cause yourself, e.g.

- with Exercise 26 Searching for Causes by Scheuermann 2012: with a kind of mind-map, one searches for the reason for one's problem and the appropriate solution ideas in three steps.
- with the chapter "When a writing project is stuck" in Kruse 2007, pp. 255-259: problems around the topic, the planning, the working situation, the structure of the text, the formalities
- with the chapter "If you are stuck" in Frank et al. 2007, pp. 90-94: replace unproductive ideas with productive ones, change perspective, make decisions

## First aid questions:

- Do you still have your aim in mind? → Use your good planning documents, orientate yourself in your annotated outline, what you should write and why.
- Do you understand the content of the texts you read? → Research other reading techniques, other texts.
- Is the topic too personal or too distant for you? → freewriting helps to find out.
- Is your topic too big or do you want too much in your work? → Are topic delimitation, question and annotated outline OK? Compare your work with this and separate yourself from superfluous reading material and from your own text passages (save them for later use).
- Do you feel comfortable in your working environment and with your working and break times?
- What makes you doubt? Write a fictional dialogue in your doubting voice
- Do you expect yourself to produce a ready-to-submit text quickly? Approve a draft, which you then revise thoroughly. You can only edit what is on paper!
- Do you expect too much of yourself? Do your expectations match those of your supervisor?
- of the supervisor? What could take the pressure off you? You could adjust your expectations, negotiate content, postpone interesting discoveries until later or ask for an extension?
- Motivation problem? Remind yourself of the aim of your work! What do you have to say?
- Unpopular work? What personal benefit could you nevertheless derive from it?
- What strengths can you build on? What do others say about your strengths? How have you dealt with negative experiences before? (Scheuermann 2011, exercise 27)



## Deal with critical voices and take good care of yourself

### I've wanted to tell you this for a long time - dealing with your own critical voice

⇒ Fictional dialogue with the inner censor

- Have a imaginary conversation with your inner censor: In a fictional dialogue, this old grumbler now gets the opportunity to express all his doubts, worries and criticisms. Perhaps start like this:

Me: *"Dear inner censor, you've been interrupting me for some time now, so that I can't really get involved in my work. What's the matter with you? Is there something you want to tell me?"*

Censor: *"Thank you for finally asking me. I've been wanting to tell you for a long time that..."*

- Then look at what he actually wants to tell you? What does this doubting voice want to warn you about or even protect you from? What has not been thought through to the end? What does the inner censor want to have secured? Where do you have to go again? And which doubts can you confidently dispel? (cf. Girgensohn, 2007. In her doctoral thesis she discusses her research method with her inner censor).

### What if... Exploring resistance

⇒ If I could do what I wanted to do, I would...

(eine Übung nach Natalie Goldberg 2003 und Scheuermann 2012, S. 75f)

- Continue writing the same sentence starter 10 times. Write quickly and without putting down your pen, exactly what comes to mind spontaneously. Through this rapid, rhythmic writing, you quickly get into the depth of your thoughts.
- See what you can find: What resistances can you discover? What of the "dignity ego" can you implement after all? What do you need for this?

### Activate and protect your personal resources with flattery lists

- With all the writing work, it is important to be aware again and again of what you are actually already good at, what skills you actually already have.
- It is equally important to know what helps you feel good and take good care of yourself.
- For this, you collect in two lists what strengthens you - professionally, methodically & personally, health-wise.

⇒ Flattery lists: Me as a writer: I'm good at that

⇒ Flattery list: Self-care: this is good for me



## flattery lists

Me as a writer: I can do that well.

*I have learned and trained these 30 things, and I can do them well. I can rely on them myself and my teachers and readers can rely on them:*

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*What are you particularly proud of? Mark the five strengths with which you master your current work.*

Self-care: This is good for me.

*These 30 things are good for me, I can relax well with them:*

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*Which five relaxing things would you like to do in the future to ensure your well-being while you are writing?*





## technique: self-motivation

Experience writing joyfully and creatively and not only frustration? Over and over again, writers come to the point where the only prevailing feeling is that they have to write the text now. Or a writing task comes up that you don't really want to do or don't really understand the meaning of. In such situations, this exercise can help you to motivate yourself for the writing task and to approach writing with pleasure again. However, the motivation should not come from outside, such as recognition or even pressure to hand in the work. Rather, your inner motivation should be encouraged. And you can actually learn to do this, even if it is not easy.

*You can use the exercise if you*

- experience writing as frustrating and feel little desire to do it.
- if you cannot motivate yourself for your writing task.
- want to work in a more self-determined way.
- want to look at the benefits of your writing and your writing projects.

*Through this exercise*

- you write with more joy and verve.
- you can let your motivation flow into the texts and so the texts will be better received.
- write more freely and fluently.
- you will gain more quality of life, as you will no longer torture yourself through each writing session.

### Instructions

On a piece of paper, write the heading Personal Benefits and do some focused freewriting on it. Set yourself a timer for 10 minutes and write briskly forwards the whole time without correcting yourself. Do not censor yourself in the process, let all thoughts flow onto paper: What benefits can you get from an unpleasant writing task? What is the benefit of sticking to the writing task now? When the time is up, go through the text and formulate a core sentence, and if it is something like I am learning to do it with joy and creativity despite an unpleasant writing task.

Then develop a goal from this benefit. A clear goal is important for your motivation. Close your eyes and visualise what you want for your writing task. Do you write in a good mood? Do you write relaxed? Are you faster this time? Hold this image in your mind's eye for a moment, save it. Finally, formulate an agreement with yourself and record it in writing. Write down your goal and agree, as in a contract, that you will achieve this goal. Make a commitment to yourself.

### Continue working

- Find out when and how you get into a flow state. In what work and under what conditions do you become deeply immersed in a task and forget everything around you? When does an activity feel fulfilling to you? Try to transfer the insights you gain from this to your writing.
- Get into action. Don't stop at setting the goal, but also set about achieving it. This is how the most motivation is generated. Start small and take 5 minutes each day to write the unloved writing task. Slowly increase the workload.

Literature: Scheuermann, Ulrike: Die Schreibfitness-Mappe. Wien: Linde 2011, p. 118-121.

### What is scientific about scientific writing? (Kruse 2010, p. 58, translated with deepl.com)

It is a bit risky to formulate this in such a way that it is valid for all sciences and humanities. The following aspects would be affirmed by most disciplines:

- *methodically based approach*: A scientific paper must provide information on how the knowledge presented was gained, whether from one's own reflections, from the research of others or from one's own research. The process of gaining knowledge behind the text must therefore be disclosed and reflected upon. It must be comprehensible to others and, if possible, reproducible.
- *objectivity*: scientific statements should be free from subjective judgements and opinions of the investigators. Where opinions and judgements are made, they must be made explicit and justified.
- *systematics*: All knowledge must be linked to the disciplinary (sometimes also interdisciplinary) knowledge system of the subject. Knowledge does not stand alone, but must always be presented and classified in the context of existing knowledge.
- *criticism*: Dogmatism is to be avoided by adopting a sceptical, critical attitude towards knowledge. this does not mean that everything must be criticised, but that all knowledge must be critically examined before to is used.
- *adherence to conventions of presentation*: Conservative is science in relation to textual norms. Established conventions as defined for individual text genres must be adhered to.
- *linguistic an terminological accuracy*: Science requires precise, unambiguous language and use of the terms commonly used in the subject.

### Text comprehensibility and reader orientation can be influenced on 4 levels (Kruse 2007; Theuerkauf 2012; Kühtz 2021)

- *Information*: All relevant information must be available, gaps in understanding must be avoided. Examples and comparisons should be used to clarify content. Digressions should also be avoided. The question and aim must be clear to the reader.
- *Navigation*: There must be a systematic, logical structure in the text. Even within paragraphs, everything must be logically structured. Similar chapters should be structured in a similar way. Clear headings are used, short introductory texts or chapter summaries guide the reader through the text (meta-statements). Readers are navigated through the text by internal and external references. In addition, directories, sentence links through specific phrases, visual highlights, etc., are used. In addition, indexes, sentence links through specific formulations, visual highlights, paragraphs and lists (with more than 3 contents) provide orientation in the text.
- *Visualisation*: Complex interrelationships, processes, abstract models/systems can be presented as graphics. Data are summarised in diagrams or tables for a better overview. The graphics and tables must be referred to explicitly and concretely in the text.
- *Formulation*: Appropriate language must be used in the text:
  - **neutral and objective**: rules on first person use, but also we, gender-sensitive language, avoid metaphors, no figurative language.
  - **clear, correct and precise**: substantiate facts, define technical terms and use them consistently, be careful with foreign words and metaphors, no exaggerations (impressive, deplorable), no relative evaluations without a scale (better than), no uncertainty adverbs (somehow, actually, mostly, approximately), no humanisation, i.e. inanimate things, parts of the work do not act (bacteria lurk everywhere, the graphic explains, the conclusion states), link between sentences with connectors
  - **short and to the point**:
    - Short sentences, avoid multi-clause sentences
    - Simple words, no stilted phrases (in a correct way → correct; a whole lot of → many)
    - avoid filler words (well, in itself, undoubtedly, really, now, certainly, completely, quite, so to speak, also)
    - avoid negative formulations (not rarely → often, not bad → good)



## guiding questions for text revision

### 1. GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR CONTENT REVISION

- Are statements unclear or ambiguous?
- Where is something missing?
- What is contradictory?
- Where could descriptions, case studies or comparisons make the text clearer?
- Where are statements repeated? What distracts from answering the research question and is therefore irrelevant?

#### helpful techniques and information:

- Reader orientation (Scheuermann 2011, Exercise 6 Reader orientation, p. 74f).
- Text feedback from writing advisors, fellow students
- Guide your readers confidently through your text; readers should always be oriented as to where they are in the text and how they can classify the information.

### 2. GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR STRUCTURAL REVISION

- Does the paper keep to what was announced in the introduction?
- Does the conclusion address and answer the question?
- Is there a red thread?
- Are there leaps of thought?
- Is the division of the text into paragraphs logically comprehensible?
- Could transitions between chapters or between individual sections be added?
- Where could paragraphs be added?
- Could more headings and subheadings structure the text more clearly?
- Are some chapters so short that they should be included in another chapter?
- Could a list or table increase readability?

#### helpful techniques and information:

- Restructure: Record the content of your own text and compare it with the plan.
- Create a text path for shorter sections of the text and compare it with the planning.
- Compare contents with typical contents (→ outline) or requirements.

### 3. GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR THE REVISION OF THE SCIENTIFIC NORMS

- At which passages is something asserted that would need to be substantiated? (Example: "There are many migrants living in Germany who feel homeless" - Such a statement must be substantiated by references to literature or own research. Indicators are words like "always", "many", "most", etc.)
- Where is it unclear whose opinion or research result is being reproduced?
- Have quotations been meaningfully integrated into the text? ("Avoid a patchwork of quotations!")
- Have the central terms used in the text been defined?
- Are abbreviations explained the first time they are used?

#### helpful techniques and information:

- Look at and check the guidelines of the university or the supervisor
- Go to a writing consultation



## 6. GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR STYLISTIC REVISION

- Has informal language been avoided?
- Have you avoided using multi-clause sentences?
- Where could sentences be shortened? (There should be a new sentence for each new fact. In general, the most important statements in a sentence should be in the main clause and secondary statements in subordinate clauses.)
- Can word repetitions be avoided? (Attention: Technical terms that have been defined must be kept up, even if they are repeated. You can look for synonyms for other words).
- Shortening potential: Are there unnecessary filler words? Where can words or parts of sentences be deleted without changing the meaning or message?

helpful techniques and information:

- Use formulation guides: <https://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>
- Use dictionaries

## 5. EDIT, CREATE LAYOUT, HAND IN

1. Is the citation style consistent?
2. Is the bibliography complete?
3. Do the headings in the table of contents and in the text match?
4. Do the table of contents and page numbering match?
5. Do the line spacing, margins, font type and size, and citation style meet the required standards?  
These requirements should be clarified with the university lecturers. You can often find information on the homepage of the department.
6. Does the cover page meet the requirements? Do you have to submit a declaration of independence? Are there specifications for the binding?

## 6. AFTER HANDING IN: REJOICE, FLATTER, CELEBRATE, RELAX, START THE NEXT PROJECT 😊

- Fill up your flattery lists!
- If I could do what I wanted, I would...
- write a freewriting and use it to collect new project ideas!
- what inspires you? Make yourself comfortable, go to special places, meet people, do unfamiliar things...



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If you cannot write well, you cannot think well;  
If you cannot think well, others will do your thinking for you.

*(Oscar Wilde)*