

## Campusweite Schreibwerkstatt

### Writing a Draft

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The main goal of a draft is to capture and record your own thoughts and develop them during the writing process. The first draft of your text thus does not need to be written perfectly in one attempt. It is helpful to get rid of such exceeding demands of oneself, as they cause fear whilst sitting in front of a blank sheet of paper. The following strategies shall enable you to tackle your writing task more easily and without too much pressure.

You should use only those tools that you consider appropriate and helpful.

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## Aids for widespread difficulties

1. You have started writing too early and now you feel uncertain with regard to its content, as you are not fully aware of where you want to get at with your text.
  - Take a step back behind the writing process:
    - New research and evaluation of literature
    - Modification of topic/structure
2. You have read too much and now you cannot decide which perspective/position you want to follow and what your own thesis is.
  - Write early, fast, simply, regularly
    - creative/fictional texts on your writing project, e.g.
      - presenting your project for a short film documentary for children
      - newspaper article about your topic
      - benevolent review
      - dialogue with an internal critic
      - counter-text to your own position
    - Freewriting\*
    - Notebook\*
    - Paraphrase and/or write excerpts
3. You want to immediately produce a perfect text regarding content, structure, and style, which is why you dwell on individual abstracts for too long. Thus, you lose your perspective on the text as a whole, or your writing becomes blocked during the process of text production.
  1. write at an early stage, fast, regularly, in simple words (for details see „I've read too much“)
  2. explain to a (fictional) person the topic of your text/your current abstract and film yourself during the process
  3. Score\*
  4. Change your place, time, medium of writing
  5. Plan your time and set limitations
  6. Visualise and explain to others, e.g. with a cluster, mind-map, creative visualization of contents, internal connections, the structure of your text
  7. Look for exchange and feedback
    1. With your supervisor; during office hours
    2. With fellow students
      1. Elevator Pitch\*
      2. Writing Group\*
      3. Structured partner/group interview\*
  8. Prestructure
    1. Text Path\*
    2. Thread\*
    3. TAEL\*

Methods marked with an \* are explained in this handout.

## Freewriting

[see (in German) Scheuermann, Ulrike: Die Schreibfitness-Mappe. 60 Checklisten, Beispiele und Übungen für alle, die beruflich schreiben. Wien: Linde 2011, S. 82f]

### Aims:

- Stop the careful evaluation of ideas before writing them down
- Unleash creative thoughts
- Discover and develop new connections
- Faster and more personal access to a topic
- Using the texts as a source of ideas for your paper or – after careful revision – incorporate it into your final text

### Procedure:

- Write down all thoughts and ideas you have on the topic, of whatever kind they may be. Do not interrupt your writing, keep your writing hand moving all the time.
- Do not read or correct what you have already written. Lose control, follow your thoughts. Deviations are allowed – this text is completely yours and not meant for anyone else to see.
- If you come to dead end, repeat the last words or write “I cannot think of anything“ until you come up with a new thought.
- When the given time is over, finish your last thought.

Tip: When writing on a computer, set the font color to white or turn off the screen, so you cannot read what you are writing.

### *Variation 1: Focus sprint*

1. Write down a headline for your current topic / for the topic you are currently stucked at/ for the beginning of a sentence that you cannot finish.
2. Do a 4 minutes freewriting and try to come back to your topic when you realize your thoughts are deviating.
3. Then, read what you have written, marking central points and commenting on them.
4. Note a conclusion or key sentence under your text.

### *Variation 2: Writing relay*

#### a) Write in depth:

1. Use the key sentence from a focus sprint as a headline for a second focus sprint, whose key sentence you use for a third focus sprint.
2. Note the main point(s) of all three sprints as a last key sentence.

#### b) Write versions:

1. Write three focus sprints with the same headline.
2. Note the main point(s) of all three sprints as a last key sentence.

### Notebook

[vgl. Scheuermann, Ulrike: Die Schreibfitness-Mappe. 60 Checklisten, Beispiele und Übungen für alle, die beruflich schreiben. Wien: Linde 2011, S. 88f; Wolfsberger, Judith: Frei geschrieben. Mut, Freiheit und Strategie für wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeiten. 3. Aufl. Wien u.a.: Böhlau 2010, S. 74f]

Aims:

- Avoiding/overcoming writer's blocks
- Enhancing your motivation through continuous writing
- Dealing with thoughts and emotions surrounding your writing project, especially for extensive projects

Procedure:

- Procure a handy notebook that you can carry with you to make sure you will not lose thoughts that come up while you are on your way. Take notes whenever new ideas come to your mind.
- Write down a hand-written freewriting (10 minutes) on a daily basis and at a fixed time (e.g. before or after working on your text). You can write about everything that is on your mind, e.g. current difficulties, ideas for later stages of your writing process, joy or anger about the state of your writing project.
- Analyse your notes regularly and adapt useful ideas in your text.

### Score

[vgl. Scheuermann, Ulrike: Die Schreibfitness-Mappe. 60 Checklisten, Beispiele und Übungen für alle, die beruflich schreiben. Wien: Linde 2011, S. 104f]

Aims:

- writing fluently while keeping the focus on your thoughts
- Delaying revision to a later stage
- Reflecting about the reasons why you cancel your writing and how to avoid this

Procedure:

Think about possible reasons why you come to a halt while writing.

1. Determine special symbols for each reason, e.g.:

Typo	*
inappropriate or missing expression	#
variations for wording	/
stylistic problems	&
missing phrases	---
unclear or missing content	??
missing quotation/source	->
contradictory thoughts	<>

2. Whenever you come to a halt while writing your draft, quickly think about the reason and add the appropriate symbol. Also add comments/doubts/disgressions between these symbols or at the page margin.
3. While revising your text later, proceed according to the symbols. You can delete them once they have been clarified or have become obsolete.

## Elevator Pitch

### Aims:

- Clarifying contents
- Being precise about central arguments and presenting them in a convincing order
- Getting feedback for your writing project

### Procedure:

- Imagine you coincidentally meet the university president in an elevator. For the duration of the ride (2 min), you have the unique possibility of convincing him/her to grant you a scholarship for your writing project.
  - Prepare for the conversation by taking notes about...
    - what your listener should remember
    - what your project is about
    - why it is relevant
    - your objectives
    - how you can bring across your arguments in a precise, structured and convincing way.
1. Look for an interview partner that will play the role of the university president.
  2. Explain to him/her in exactly 2 minutes what your writing project is about. Use a stopwatch!
  3. Your partner should take notes:
    - What do I know about the writing project?
    - Does it seem worthwhile?
    - Does it seem realistic/manageable?
    - Which points were convincing, which were not?
    - Will I fund it?
  4. Your partner (the president) tells you his/her judgement, always giving reasons.
  5. Write down suggestions or ideas that you consider useful for your writing project

## Writing Group

[vgl. Haas, Sarah: „Writing groups“, in: Draheim, Kristin/Liebetanz, Franziska/Vogler-Lipp, Stefanie (Hg.): Schreiben(d) lernen im Team. Ein Seminarkonzept für innovative Hochschullehre. Wiesbaden: Springer VS 2012, 43-54; Wolfsberger, Judith: Frei geschrieben. Mut, Freiheit und Strategie für wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeiten. 3. Aufl. Wien u.a.: Böhlau 2010, S. 188ff]

### Aim:

- Enhancing your motivation through regular writing meetings

### Procedure:

- Form a writing group and determine your tasks. You can choose between several possibilities:
  - compulsory or optional participation
  - teachers/tutors/a group member/changing group members head the group

### Possible tasks:

- work individually on longer texts, with a fixed time for several parts as well as fixed page counts. At every meeting, check your progress and set new aims (e.g. online, with posters visualizing your writing path with a pin for each group member, ...)
- co-write a text
- give feedback to different stages of work
- search for creative writing tasks/occasions/environments and write in a non-scientific way

### **Structured Partner or Group Interview**

[Anlehnung an: Clementi, Adelheid/Hoyer-Neuhold, Andrea/Schörner, Barbara: „Worum geht es eigentlich? Das Analysegespräch als Methode zur Präzisierung von Problemstellungen wissenschaftlicher Schreibvorhaben“, in: Kissling, Walter/Perko, Gudrun (Hg.): Wissenschaftliches Schreiben in der Hochschullehre. Reflexionen, Desiderate, Konzepte. Innsbruck: Studienverlag 2006, S. 139-146]

#### **Aims:**

- clarifying contents, aims, progress status, procedure and difficulties
- receiving feedback for your project

#### **Vorgehensweise:**

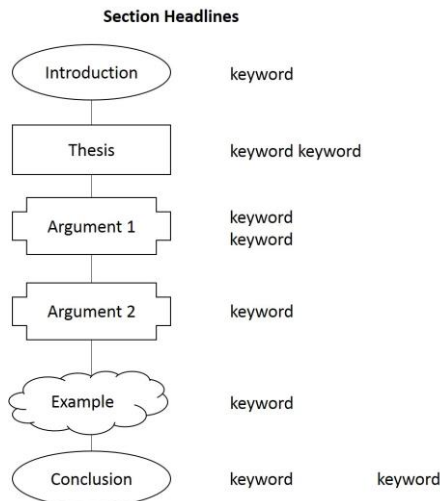
- ask one or several persons to interview you about the following questions:
  - What is your writing project about, what do you want to show?
  - What about the topic/the question is especially interesting?
  - What would be the best result possible?
  - What have you achieved so far?
  - What lies ahead of you?
  - What is your next step?
  - Which difficulties could occur?
  - How is your work structured?
  - What is your most recent chapter about?
- Follow a strictly structured conversation with changing roles of speaker and hearer to speak freely and not to get interrupted by quick interjections.
  1. During the conversation, your interviewer should make you talk and think while he/herself stays in the background. He/she can use the questions cited above or bring in his/her own ideas/doubts/questions.
  2. After the conversation, your interviewer will give you a thorough feedback about his/her impressions and ideas that could help you.
  3. You can write down helpful ideas in order to keep them in mind.

## Text Path

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

### Aims:

- creating a detailed plan for a chapter or section of your text
- reassuring yourself before writing a draft
- easier start into your draft
- creating a clear, reader-oriented structure

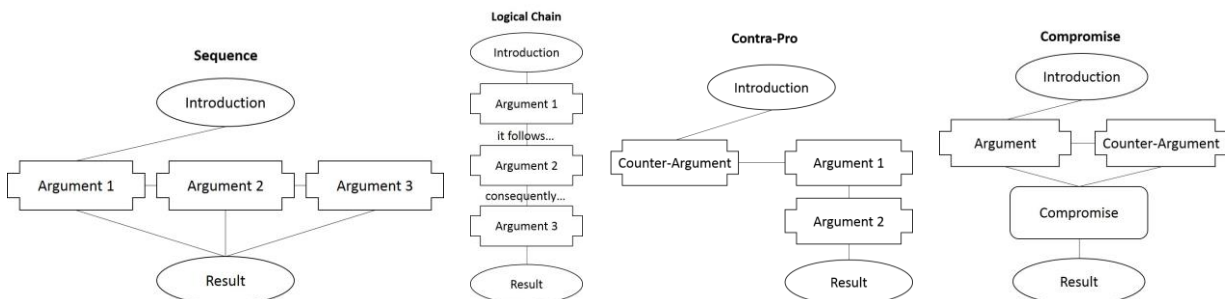


### Procedure:

- Take a sheet of paper and write down a headline for your chapter/section.
- On the left half of the page, note structuring elements for your chapter/section (e.g. thesis, argument 1, example...) one beneath the other
- Draw different borders around the elements, (e.g., square=thesis; cross=argument; ellipse=introduction or transition; cloud=example; or use different colors). Connect them.
- On the right half of the page, write down a few key points for each structural element.

*Variation:* If you have not worked out your structural elements, use the card method before creating a text path: Write down possible elements on separate cards. Move, complement or delete cards as long as you are satisfied with the result

### Structures of Argumentation (suggestions)



### **Red Thread**

[vgl. Scheuermann, Ulrike: Die Schreibfitness-Mappe. 60 Checklisten, Beispiele und Übungen für alle, die beruflich schreiben. Wien: Linde 2011, S. 96]

#### Aims:

- creating a detailed overview at an early stage as a guidance during your first draft
- elaborating your central thoughts
- easier start into writing your draft
- creating a clear, reader-oriented structure

#### Procedure:

1. Look at the storyboard of your writing project on a PC.
2. Write down three sentences about central points under every (sub)head as fast as possible. If you are lacking information, note suggestions or free hypotheses.
3. Print the document and hang it near your workplace.

### **TAET**

[vgl. von Werder, Lutz/Schulte-Steinicke, Barbara/Schulte, Brigitte: Weg mit der Schreibstörung und Lesestress. Zur Praxis und Psychologie des Schreib- und Lesecoachings. Baltmannsweiler: Schneider 2001, S. 44f.]

#### Aim:

- developing a thesis and/or hypotheses

#### Procedure:

- Set every hypothesis into the beginning of a new section of your text. From each hypothesis, you can deduce the following structure:
  1. **T**hesis
  2. **A**rguments
  3. **E**xamples and proofs
  4. **T**ransition to the next section/chapter