

“ Act and reflect – but never at the same time! (*Steven Pressfield*)
Act: Free writing (given previous knowledge of what you want to write about & after having written the outline). No re-reading or perfecting sentences allowed.
Reflect: Add references, edit the text, re-read. ”

Brainstorming Phase

ABSTRACT TRIAS

1. Topic and its relevance to the field (broad)

2. Yet unsolved pressing problem / gap you discovered (Hero Narrative!)

3. Your solution to the problem

(4.) Conclusion...

This research will show/contribute XY to the discussion/field of AB (relevance again, what are the important outcomes of this research

WORKING TITLE

→ title engineering for the actual title on the next paper later

RESEARCH QUESTION

HYPOTHESIS

Most relevant literature to include

→ focus on essentials only! name just a few items (no web-searching Google scholar again, you already know what needs to be in there because you have completed the research phase – now is the phase where you just write it down, not do new research, remember?)



FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

Word count

Intended Audience what are this audience's main interests in your topic? What might you focus on more to please them?

Intended Journal as above but also: citation style, formal requirements

IF IT'S PART OF A BOOK

where is it placed? – do the chapter create a continuous argument?

Chapter before (main idea)

Current chapter to write (main idea)

Chapter after (main idea)

KEYWORDS / BUZZWORDS

be sure to use relevant keywords so your paper will be found

TITLE

make sure the title contains those buzzwords and be as concrete as possible about what the paper is about (if relevant, include topic, place, time, material, method and focus/issue at hand), in an immediately understandable way. Don't make it too long but rather include one more keyword if unsure. **Search-engine optimize (SEO) the title!**

SCHEDULE

Word count required:

will often be 7000-10.000 words for a scholarly article of 10–15 pages

No. of 1h time blocks for free writing:

a 1h free writing session easily yields 1000 words of raw draft

SESSIONS: WHAT? WHEN?

1. **[rightaway]** Outline and Intro/Abstract
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

-
- **1 session backing up with references**
 - **2 sessions editing the text (flow, logic of argument, etc.)**
 - **1 session of proof-reading** probably around 1h per session depending how thoroughly you do it



Outline

INTRO

Write out the abstract trias as an abstract / introductory sentence. All this information (and maybe also all keywords / key pieces of info like when, where what data from the title are adressed so people immediatly have a clear picture what it's about and what the goals are.

Outline the order of the argument: How are you going to show the problem and the solution? What methods are used? What are the materials?

TOPIC & LITERATURE REVIEW

MATERIALS

- Sources / Examples
- 1-2 images for visualiation purposes How do they figure into the argument?

METHODS

THE PROBLEM EXPLAINED/SHOWN

Show, don't tell!

THE SOLUTION DEMONSTRATED

CONCLUSION

1. What has been done? (recap intro / abstract)
2. What was the problem and how was it solved?
3. What was demonstrated using the given method and why did that make sense?
4. Repeat the results very clearly
5. What new questions came up? – What is still open for further research?
6. Final sentence: What big relevant area did this contribute new important perspectives to?

BENEFIT / ABSTRACT

What's the benefit other people get from reading your paper? How did your solution help them? (Possible Applications)

Which new insights can be drawn from it without doubt? How were these insights generated?

Use the Abstract Trias and this summary of results to write the abstract:

1. "XY has been a (un)known problem in area AB for a long time."
2. "as can be seen in Sources XY" = example used.
3. This paper proposes to XY to solve the problem.
4. It has been shown that...
5. This is beneficial to others because / they should use it in their research because it helps them reach a goal (possible application / more general relevance and applicability).



Article outline template 2.0: Execute

1) DISCUSSION OF SOURCES

Write the discussion of sources first:

- it's what's easiest for you → avoid procrastinating
- It shapes all the rest of your argument
- You can start writing without getting distracted by references
- You need to prepare your source material and image evidence anyway

Sources → lead to methods → lead to visualization.

2) PRELIMINARIES

After this, write the preliminary explanations:

- Having written the source discussion already, you should know exactly what has to go in here.
- Also, you likely won't waste time looking stuff up that you don't need.
- Same goes for the literature review which follows now.
- This has to happen after the greatest bit of the writing is already done because now you might get distracted doing references or looking things up again.

THEMATIC FOCUS

Write down field, relevant subfields and discourses around the keywords you defined above.

- **keywords used:**

- **field(s):**

- **subfield(s):**

- **time and place:**

- **method:**

- **related discourses:**

- **key terms to be defined:**

1 reference or definition for each item listed here.

3) LITERATURE REVIEW

Reduce this to the thematic focus you just defined. Add nothing which doesn't belong to this!

- **Field:** In history of science, rhetorics of secrecy have become a major topic in the discussion of the so-called Scientific Revolution. (cite 1-2 references for the rhetoric of secrecy and 1 definition/references for the Scientific Revolution, maybe footnote.)
- **Subfield:** Secrecy is a central aspect in books of secrets.

situate the topic within the broader view of it / your field. **Create a line of 'predecessors'** in which your new work will be the crowing jewel. Of course, you've read them all (that's important to show off here too).

This part gives you security and might also already contain buzzwords and definitions.

Reduce pseudo-intellectual background (Foucault, Bourdieu whatever) **to a minimum** of max. 1-2 references in a footnote unless it's actually relevant/discussed. Maybe still cite it to be sure reviewers don't complain; have it as a finishing touch but spend no unnecessary time!

4) INTRO TEMPLATE

What the Problem is and why it's relevant to a broad field (urgent problem / gap in literature). The framing is what's most important here:

1. **relevance** – understandable / makes sense to laypeople who don't know your (sub-)field at all! (reviewers might not be from your field! → "Alchemy has been a central part of European cultural history and history of science since its introduction as a *novitas* in the Middle Ages.")
2. clear description of **problem** and method to **solution**
3. **sources** used to illustrate
4. W-questions

- [thematic focus / keywords] has been relevant in [broad field/subfield] (establish relevance/context):

- However [urgent problem] is still unaddressed:

- pertinent to [time/place]:

- hero narrative how you'll solve this problem now:

- method:

- related discourses / keywords:

- W-questions (who, where, when, what, why):

1. who:

2. when:

3. where:

4. what:

5. why:

1 reference or definition for each item listed here.

METHOD

Which method do you use? Why is it appropriate? How does it work and exactly what does it output as results? (What do the results mean? How much interpretation do the results need or do they 'speak' on their own?) How does this result figure into answering your research question? (which is often more abstracted than the analysis of sources...)

GRANT-PROPOSAL MODE: COME UP WITH PROJECT IDEAS

1. What's the topic of the call / funding scheme?
2. What part of your research / new stuff that would interest you would vaguely fit into this topic?
3. Why is this topic important to the general public or objectives of the call?
4. What buzzwords are used in the call?
5. What are current fancy buzzwords in your field?
6. Can you combine both those pools of buzzwords and fit them into your topic or fit your topic around them in a convincing way?

At the end, go to the 'Take the ad apart' section and make sure to tweak your idea so it fits the call perfectly (!!!). No half-assing!



GRANT-PROPOSAL MODE: FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

CALCULATE COSTS

→ what are the personell costs? travel, workshops?

GOALS OF THE FUNDING PROGRAMME

→ what are the goals of the funding programme (stated and otherwise, make calls, do what you have to do to find out as much as you possibly can!

WORK PACKAGES

→ make work pages for each quarter (at least), if it's less than a year, probably better in 1-2 month packages. Maybe add milestones (conference, presentation, preliminary publication, submission,...)

REVIEWERS

→ can you find out *who* will review the project? if yes, find out about their tastes. Otherwise, think about what type of person would review for this funding scheme? (do what you have to do to find out as much as you possibly can!)

Would it be independent international experts who know the details of your field or is it likely someone from the institution who might not know anything about your field?

This gives you information on how many definitions to include and how detailed you can get. But to be sure, always include definitions of everything which could be only mildly unclear, in an elegant-sneaky way. Just to be sure.

WHY YOU AND THEM?

1. find arguments why you are perfect for this funding scheme and project (with your qualifications)
2. how the funding scheme is perfect for the project (tick all the boxes)
3. find out how you can benefit the institution and why they can benefit from you.

GRANT-PROPOSAL MODE: TAKE APART THE AD

1. Use this space to note down every single little criterium mentioned in the ad/text.
2. write them down, look up the definitions if necessary
3. come up with a project (description) to tick every single box!
4. do you even fit the requirements? If one doesn't fit so much, go out of your way to find an explanation why you're still a good fit! (get creative)
5. Call them to ask about every single bit which is left unclear (these calls often reveal much more of the real intentions behind the call than you might have otherwise known!)
6. maybe even ask what fields the reviewers likely will be from.
7. find out everything about the interests of the grant-granting institution! if you don't fit in, they won't take you, even if the project is good!

