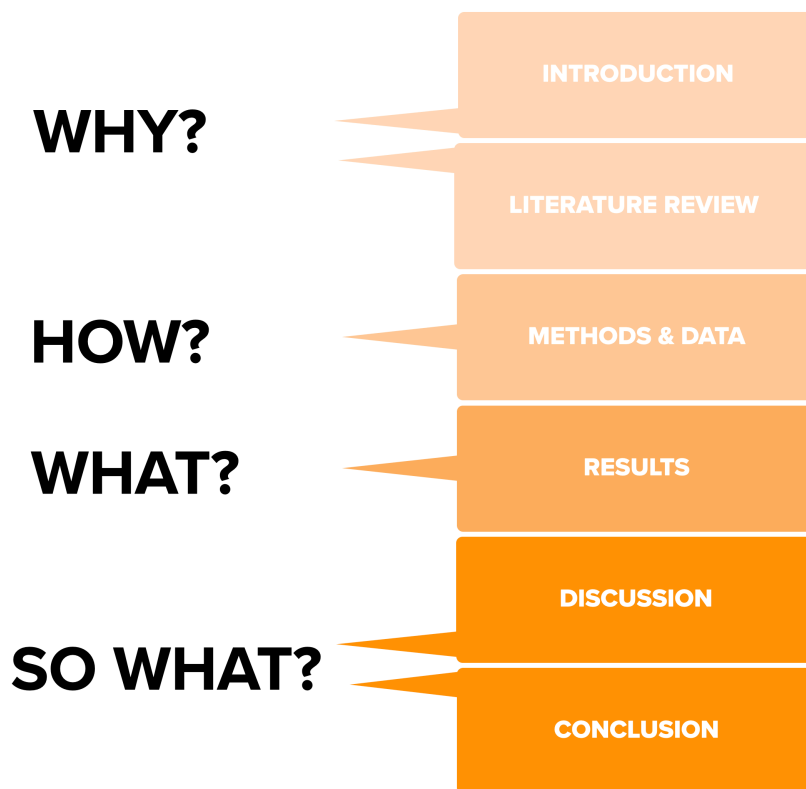


BEING UNDERSTOOD IS CRITICAL

- Above all else, the readers of your thesis have to understand what your thesis is about, what you have done, and what are the outcomes of your thesis.
- But being understood is also critical while you are still doing your thesis.



So called IMRAD - structure typical to academic papers

Structuring the work helps you to keep your thoughts in order and also to communicate with others.

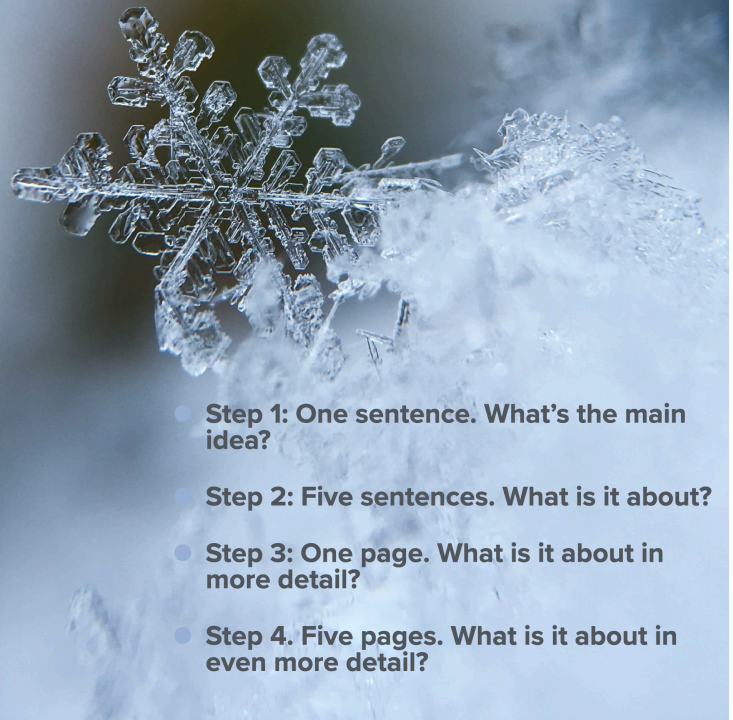
Template for academic structure. It guides you in the writing process already in the planning phase to explain and justify **WHY** the work is worth doing and **HOW** you think you might do it.

Once you have conducted your research, you can explain **WHAT** are the results of your research and **WHAT** they mean.

One way to clarify your thoughts is to start writing to pour everything that you know about your topic onto the paper, and then use that text as a guide for reading and research. This method is called f.e. Process writing or writer-based text.

Suitable for those who feel very comfortable reading and editing their own text.

Snowflake writing



- Step 1: One sentence. What's the main idea?
- Step 2: Five sentences. What is it about?
- Step 3: One page. What is it about in more detail?
- Step 4: Five pages. What is it about in even more detail?

- Snowflake writing is an example of a structured writing method useful with a thesis.
- The idea is to start with just one sentence that articulates the main idea of the thesis and then expand that one sentence to paragraphs and pages by adding details and context.

A vintage black Corona typewriter is positioned on the right side of a dark, textured wooden surface. The typewriter's keyboard, with white keys and gold lettering, is visible. The brand name 'CORONA' is printed in gold on the front of the machine. The background consists of horizontal wooden planks with a natural grain pattern.

Step 1: Write the main idea in one sentence

Use at least 1-2 days to articulate the main idea of your thesis in one sentence.

Result of this first step can be in the form of a question or a statement, or a hypothesis.

Photo by Patrick Fore on Unsplash

Example of research question: How should a folk dance association organise its activities?

Example of a statement: It is beneficial for a knitwear designer to understand the programming of knitting machines.

Example of a hypothesis (rare in ARTS): Particular kind of facilitated workshop is more fruitful for evaluating designs, as opposed to the traditional manner

Step 2: Answer with one sentence/question

Sentence 1: What is the main question or statement?

Sentence 2: Why is this important or interesting?

Sentence 3: How is this going to be studied?

Sentence 4: What could the results be like?

Sentence 5: What else is there to this topic?

- In the next step, the one-sentence main idea is expanded by answering five questions with five sentences.
- Answering these questions will produce a very good starting point for your thesis plans.

Photo by Patrick Fore on Unsplash

Step 3: One page

Each sentence is expanded to short paragraphs, filling one page

Step 4: Five pages

Write one page for each of the five paragraphs

Photo by Patrick Fore on Unsplash

Steps 5-12

Step 5: Edit and rewrite texts of steps 1-3

Step 6: Edit and rewrite texts of step 4

Step 7: Based on texts, outline a table of contents

Step 8: First draft of the thesis manuscript

Step 9: Organise and edit text into chapters

Step 10: Get feedback for the text

Step 11: Edit and rewrite with the help of feedback and your increased understanding of your research

Step 12: Proofreading, language check

Photo by Patrick Fore on Unsplash

Academic writing styles

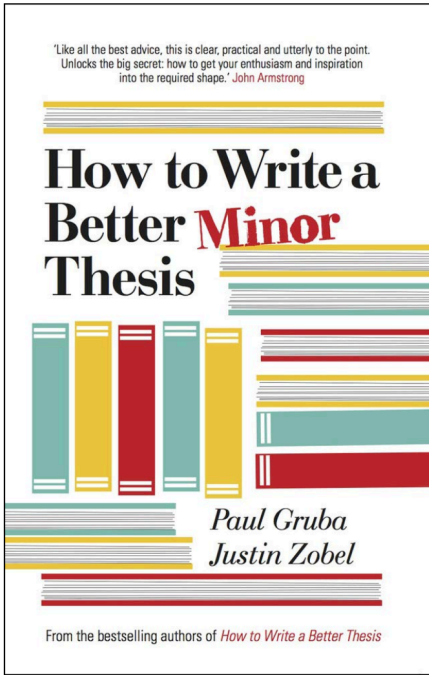
Different writing styles
(e.g. Objective-
subjective differences)

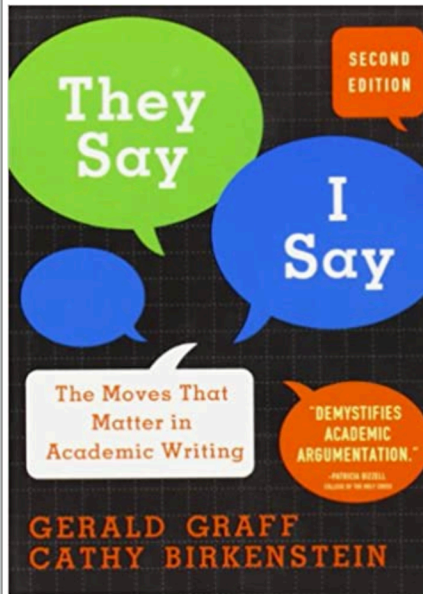
Different citation
styles (Harvard, APA,
Chicago...)

Different voices ("I
argue..."; "It can be
argued..."; "Chun
(2018) argues...")

Key is to be consistent

Check out the
Language Centre
services





"They say, I say" Templates

Adapted with changes from: Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say/ I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. New York: Norton, 2010

The following templates and transitions, adapted from Graff and Birkenstein, will help you present your thesis, supporting evidence as well as opposing evidence in a clear, straightforward manner. Remember to cite all of your sources, both in-text and in your works cited/ bibliography page at the end of your paper. These templates can help you structure your sentences and help you get your ideas and evidence across to your reader.

When Introducing Standard Views:

- Many psychologists think that _____
- The status quo has it that _____
- Many people assume that _____

When Introducing Quotations:

- X claims " _____" (in-text citation)
- According to X " _____" (in-text citation)
- X states " _____" (in-text citation)

When Explaining Quotations:

- In essence, X is saying _____ (paraphrase and cite)
- What X means is that _____ (paraphrase and cite)
- In saying _____ X urges us to _____ (paraphrase and cite)

When Signaling Who is Saying What:

- Article X explores _____ while Article Y considers _____

When Disagreeing, with Reasons:

- I disagree with X, because I think he/she/they overlooks _____
- X's belief about _____ rests on the faulty assumption that _____. Furthermore, research shows _____

*Adapted with changes from: Kurt R. Schmeller Library, *The Research Process Guidebook* 2015-2016

According to both X and Y

- X argues that students should _____
- My own view, however, is that _____

When Capturing Authorial Action (e.g. in summary):

- X agrees that _____
- X concedes that _____
- X observes that _____
- X claims that _____
- X argues that _____
- X demonstrates that _____
- X reminds us that _____

When Adding Metacommentary:

- What this means is _____
- In sum _____
- Put in another way _____
- X's point is not _____ but rather _____

HONESTLY, THESIS

- You should be transparent in your thesis: very clear and honest about the argumentation, methodology and results of your thesis.
- In the Thesis Plan Proposal, this means competent handling of the literature about your topic.

"Literature review" or "Situating the argument"?

"Literature review" means that you have read all that has been written about a certain topic, you understand the differences between the views, and give a learned opinion about the value of each of the views

Literature reviews are extremely useful for thesis writers to read.

MA thesis can be a literature review, but then there is no room for anything else.

it is better to take it easier and settle on finding good sources and "situate your argument" with a handful of texts.

Google Scholar is a service to find articles. It also tells how much a particular article has been cited. Check those articles that have been most cited because they are the classics and key sources of the topic that you are reading about.

Why write about texts?

- To paint the context
- To draw the boundaries
- To clarify and challenge
- To take part

- To show that you understand and are able to explain and justify the key concepts, questions and methods in your thesis plan proposal (and thesis)
- To make your argument clear and to challenge your own thinking
- To learn about and participate in "design discourse" = the issues that design people are writing about

Evaluation of sources

"JUFO"-portal evaluates academic journals and publishers.

<https://jfp.csc.fi/en/web/haku/julkaisukanavahaku>

Known (academic) publisher, organisation or expert.

Based on research and objective.

Scholar.google and library's Primo portal

"JUFO"-portal evaluates academic journals and publishers. Rule of thumb: it is not there, it's not a peer-reviewed source. The majority of publications in JUFO are on level 1, the basic level. Levels 2 and 3 are awarded to a limited number of academic journals, conferences and book publishers of the highest quality and impact. Level 0 is for publications that have been evaluated but do not meet all the level 1 criteria.

Rule of thumb: known (academic) publisher, organisation or expert can be trusted

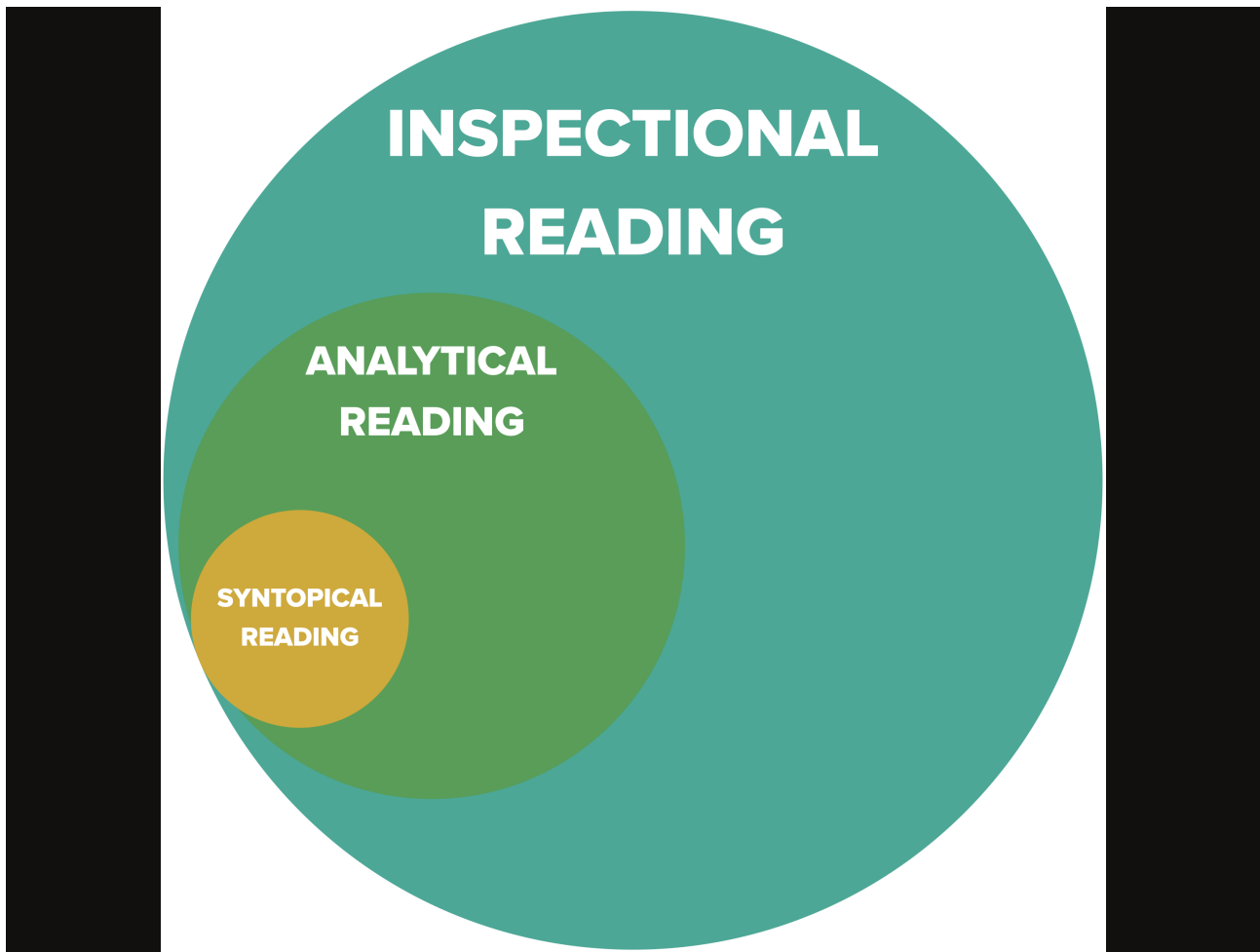
The content is based on research and objective. Opinions are clearly stated. The topic is discussed from several points of view.

Scholar.google and library's Primo portal

Types of literature to read

- "Theoretical" and methodological literature
- Background literature
- (Design) examples

- "Theoretical" and methodological literature. Read these to define your key concepts and discussions, to position your thesis and to justify methods.
- Background literature. Read these to tell about the history, discussions and previous work, real-life applications etc.
- (Design) examples. Read these to illustrate the different aspects of the topic, benchmarking, and providing insights and inspiration.



There are three levels of reading that you should utilise.

Rule of thumb: in the beginning, most reading should be inspectional, then analytical reading for the majority of literature that you utilise in your thesis, and only a few key pieces read synoptically.

All of these reading styles are needed when you build an understanding of the topic of your thesis.

Inspectional reading means that you skim a book or text to evaluate whether it is useful to you. Check at least the table of contents, index and abstract.

Analytical reading means serious reading: you really jump into the book and read it carefully (or at least some chapters). Remember to make notes and record full reference!

Very helpful is to read by writing notes. Remember that you are not reading for a book exam! You are reading to develop your own argument in the thesis.

Synoptical reading is also called comparative reading, and the result is typically a literature review or solid context for your argument. This means that you are reading not only one text but several and coming up with a synthesis. It is a demanding way of reading, so decide wisely where to focus so that you don't have to do heavy synoptical reading

Writing about data & methods

Another important part of the Thesis where transparency and honesty are crucial is the way you write about data and methods.

focus on telling all necessary aspects of what you have done with whom so that the reader will learn the scope of your research, why you did what you did and what you did to the results of your research.

Typically, the Data and Method -chapter in the thesis is a short one because the writing is technical and descriptive rather than elaborated narrative.

Citing

- One of the key features of an academic thesis is that you ground your own work with research and thinking done by others. This is done by citing the sources on which you base your work.
- Aalto University or ARTS does not have recommendations about which citing style one should use, so it is a matter of taste, but whatever style you use, use it consistently and don't change the style.

Requirements for using images in a thesis

1

All contributors must be mentioned, for example, the photographer, architect, visual artist and performing artist. Provide the author information even if you have taken the picture yourself.

2

If there are identifiable people in a picture, the picture contains personal data. Personal data should be dealt with in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). For more information see the section "Photographs as Personal Information" in the Guide.

A Images made by others

By citing under Section 25 of the Copyright Act, unless the terms of use prohibit it. In this case, the borrowed image must be public, the citing connected to the text, the text being a critical or a scientific presentation, and the purpose non-commercial. If the terms of the provision are not met, it may be possible to quote the picture under the general clause of Section 22.

By citing under Section 22 of the Copyright Act, if the terms of use do not prohibit it. The borrowed image must be public and the quote in accordance with proper usage to the extent necessary for the purpose. The right to quote the image is narrowly interpreted, that is, there must be a very good reason why the image may be used without the permission of the rights holder.

Permitting Creative Commons licence (for example, CC BY 4.0) or other permission, such as permission granted by the rights holder in an e-mail.

B Self-produced images

You may use the images freely, provided their content does not violate the rights of others.

When an image is utilised in a thesis using citation regulations or a permitting licence (such as CC BY 4.0), you can publish the thesis in a university's open electronic publishing archive, for example.

If the platform is something else, such as social media, the platform's terms of use have to be taken into account. When uploading to a social media site, the user gives virtually unlimited copyright to the service provider and the user's own publishing rights must be at least as extensive. The material published under the CC BY licence can be shared in social media, whereas the material published under the quotation regulation cannot.

- Check instructions about correct citing on the Internet, including TPO's MyCourses
- About citing, check library's guide to copyright and citing. You can find the link in our MyCourses, in section "useful stuff".

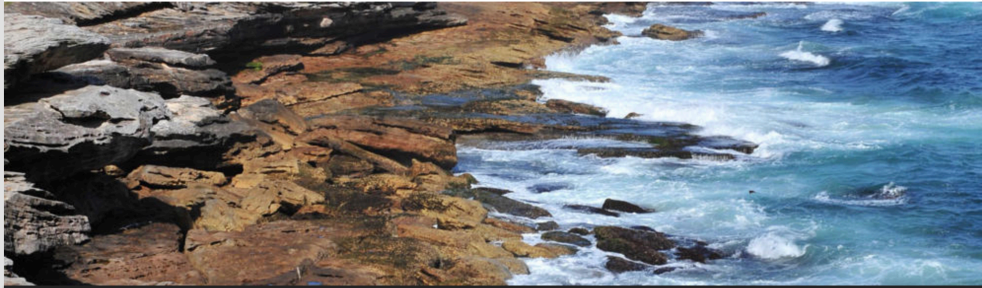
Visualisation:

<https://libguides.aalto.fi/c.php?g=659426&p=4654817>

Writing about Design

Principles and tips for design-oriented research

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Research designs: Identifying the right methods for the study

Posted on [April 17, 2022](#)

In this, slightly longer text, I address a topic that I have wished to explain a long time: how good research plans can be created.

Research designs

Which methods should I use in my study? This is a question that one must answer in each and every study, from simple courseworks to complex PhD theses that may take several years to complete. The question about the right methods is often hard to solve. This article aims to give ideas on how to survive in this task.

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- [How to define a research question or a design problem](#)

– DoD Senior Lecturer Antti Salovaara has written about research design and academic writing. The advice in Antti's blog is detailed and practical so take a look on it if you have trouble in, for example, designing your thesis structure and coming up with good research questions and methods. The link is in the MyCourses Useful Stuff -page.

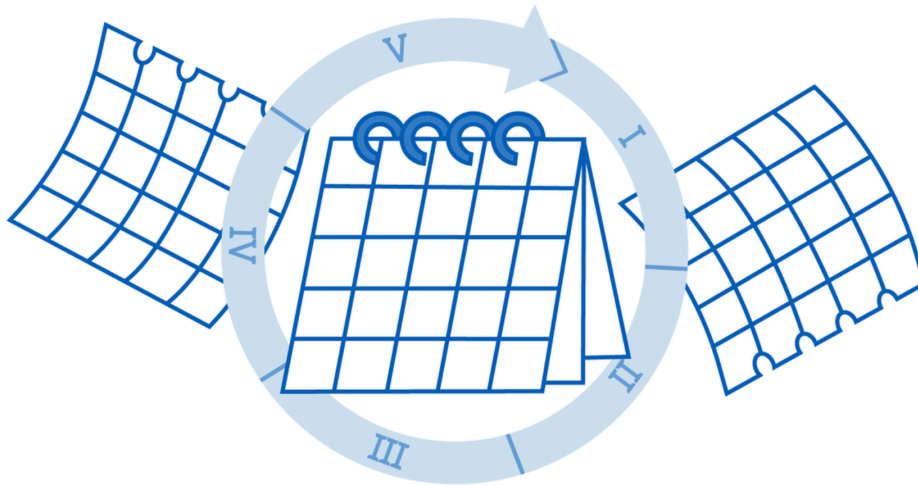
For thesis-writing: Theses & Tomatoes on Mondays

Students

Are you feeling stuck with your thesis? Or are you just finding it hard to get into a good writing routine? Maybe you are unsure of what the next step should be or how to get started on a new chapter? Do you feel lonely in your thesis work? Would you like to work in a shared space with others in the same situation?

<https://www.aalto.fi/fi/tapahtumat/theses-tomatoes-opinnaytetyontekijoille>

Or search for Thesis tomatoes Aalto



- there is a joint zoom for thesis writers if you feel that you'd benefit from having a scheduled writing time.