



The Golden Thread

This technique lets you take an intermediate step between structuring and drafting which can help you find your way into producing text. You may also notice that in some places, your structure is not yet conclusive or that important steps in your argumentation are missing.

This is how it works:

- Have your outline ready and reserve about 20 to 30 minutes.
- Decide whether you want to write by hand or on a computer. If you write by hand, distribute the headings of your outline on several sheets of paper so that you have enough space in between to develop your golden thread.
- Write two to three sentences quickly for each item in your outline. Summarise the main statements you will make in this section.
- Write in full sentences, but do it intuitively and quickly. It is a good idea to use quite a simple language that is easy for you to produce. Do not interrupt your writing flow to look something up or to ponder. Write down the first thing you think of and invent content if need be because you still lack some information. This technique is about creating a coherent short version of your text that can serve as a guideline when you write the actual text.

If you notice that it is very difficult for you to write about some items in your outline, consider whether your outline or your argumentation are not quite coherent here or whether you still lack too much information. What could be a more conclusive structure, or how and when do you want to fill in the gaps in the information you have?

Keep this golden thread and look at it regularly so that you do not get lost in detail while writing your draft but can create a coherent text.

This guide was developed in very close reference to:

Ulrike Scheuermann (2012): Schreibdenken, Schreiben als Denk- und Lernwerkzeug nutzen und vermitteln. Opladen und Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich. p. 86f.
Translation from German by Stefanie Everke Buchanan.

