



## The Triad

Developing your own research question is one of the particular requirements of academic writing at a university. Many topics are interesting, but hard to grasp if they remain vague. This worksheet helps you to develop a more concrete research question.

**Please complete the following sentences:**

**1. Name the topic (= what do I want to write about?)**

„I examine / work on / write about ...“

**2. Integrate your research question (= what do I want to know?)**

„... because I want to understand / find out / comprehend ...“

**3. Define your goal (= why do I want to know that?)**

„... in order to critically examine / determine / to check ...“

**Now change what you wrote under 2 into a question:**

**Now change what you wrote under 3 into a statement starting with:**

„The aim of this paper is to ...“

**From this aim, you can now formulate a hypothesis starting with:**

„I assume that ...“

You can repeat this technique until you feel that you have a good grasp of your research question and your hypothesis.

These sentences can form elements of a research proposal or a rough draft. They are also an excellent preparation for an office hour with your lecturer, or for developing your topic further with friends or fellow students.

Closely based on:

Ella Grieshammer, Franziska Liebetanz, Nora Peters and Jana Zegenhagen (2012). *Zukunftsmodell Schreibberatung: Eine Anleitung zur Begleitung von Schreibenden im Studium*. Baltmannsweiler: Schneider Verlag Hohengehren, p. 178f., who refer to Gabriela Ruhmann's triad and Sven Arnold's extension of the exercise. Translation from German by Stefanie Everke Buchanan.