

Zettelkästen Method:

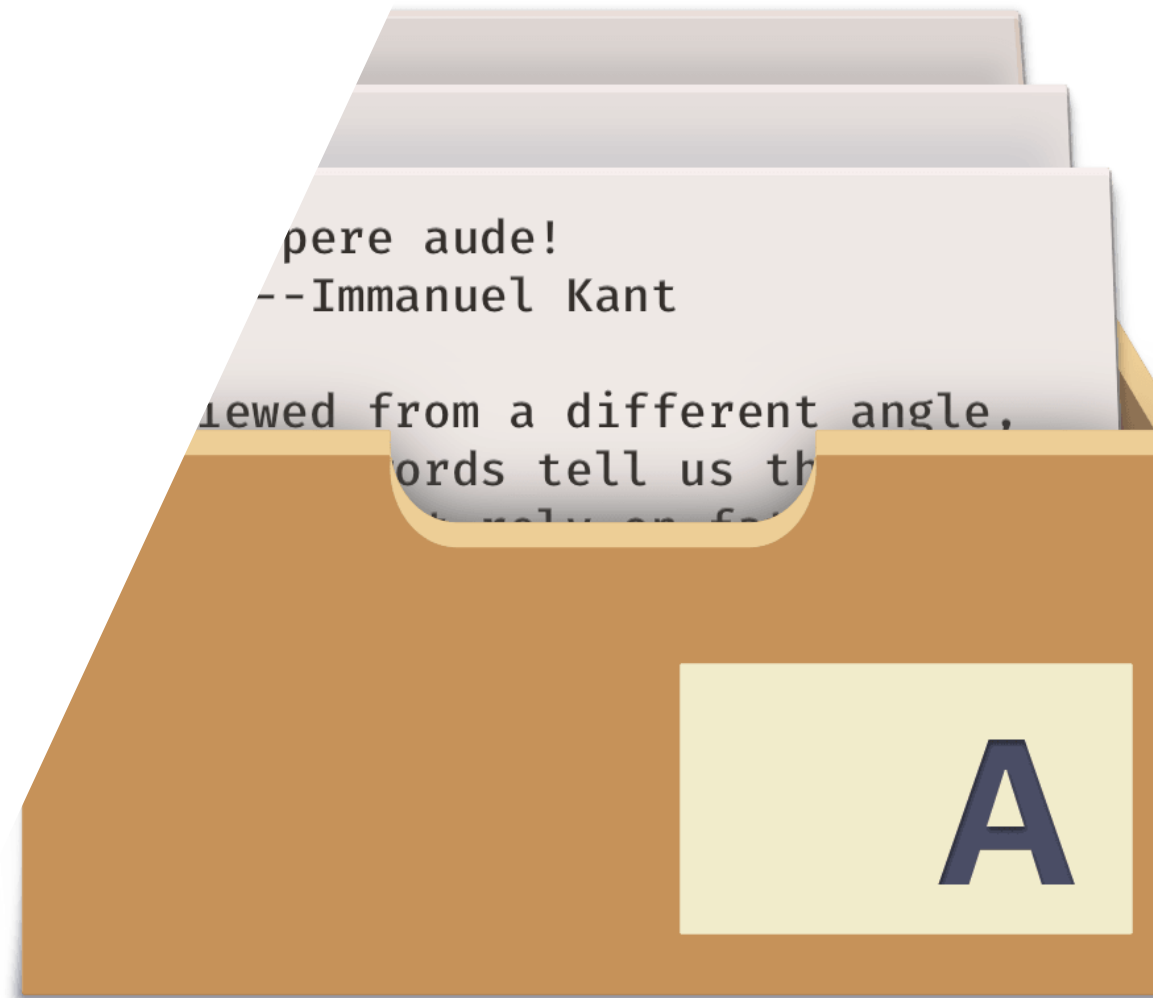
Smart Notes and Writing as Researcher

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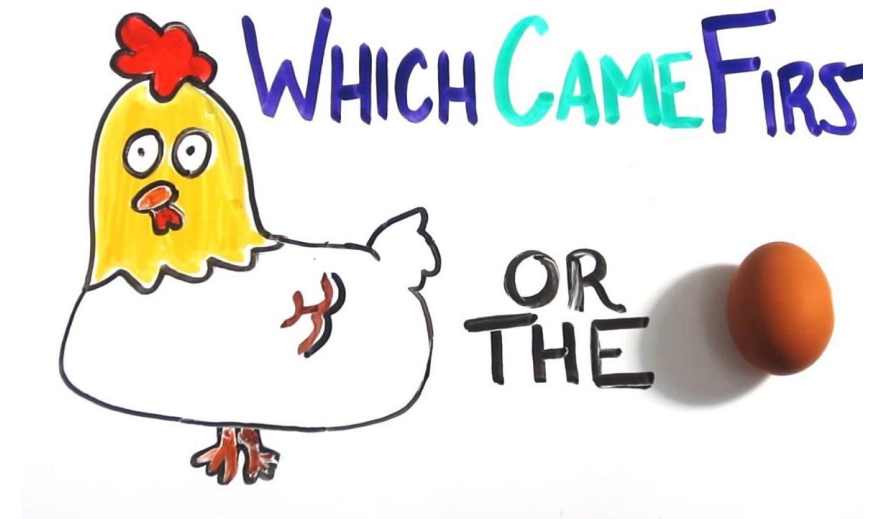
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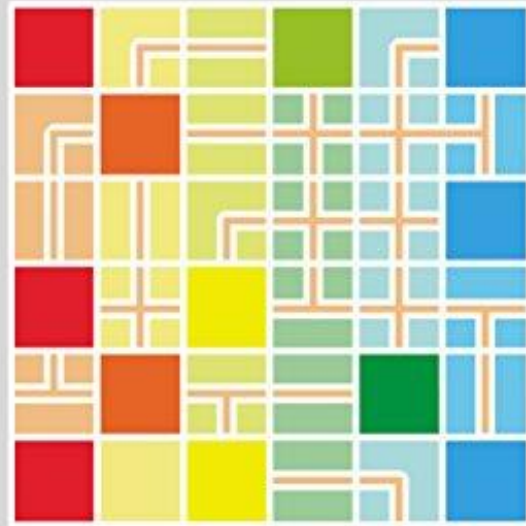
- Research questions?
- Reading papers?



Which comes first?

How to Take Smart Notes

One Simple Technique to Boost
Writing, Learning and Thinking -
for Students, Academics and
Nonfiction Book Writers



Sönke Ahrens

Ahrens, S. (2017). How to take smart notes: One simple technique to boost writing, learning and thinking. *North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.*

Direct download:

b-ok.asia/book/3507651/af7233

5-step towards academic writing

- Make notes in the Zettelkästen (Slip Box) System
- Develop your topics, questions, and research projects bottom up from within the system
- After a while, you will have developed ideas far enough to decide on a topic to write about.
- Turn your notes into a rough draft.
- Edit and proofread your manuscript.

(Ahrens, 2017)



Niklas Luhmann

- German sociologist & system theorist; famous for high academic productivity.
- 70+ books and nearly 400 scholarly articles published on a variety of subjects, including law, economy, politics, art, religion, ecology, mass media, and love.
- Luhmann was famous for his extensive use of the "slip box" or Zettelkästen note-taking method. His slip box has 90,000 index cards for his research, and he credited it for enabling his extraordinarily prolific writing.

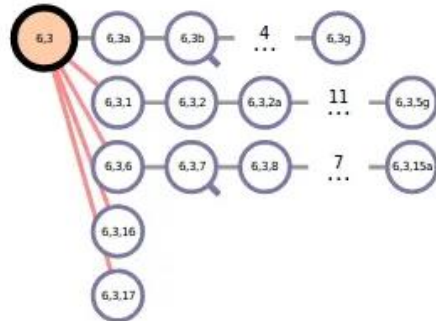
ZK I: Zettel 6,3



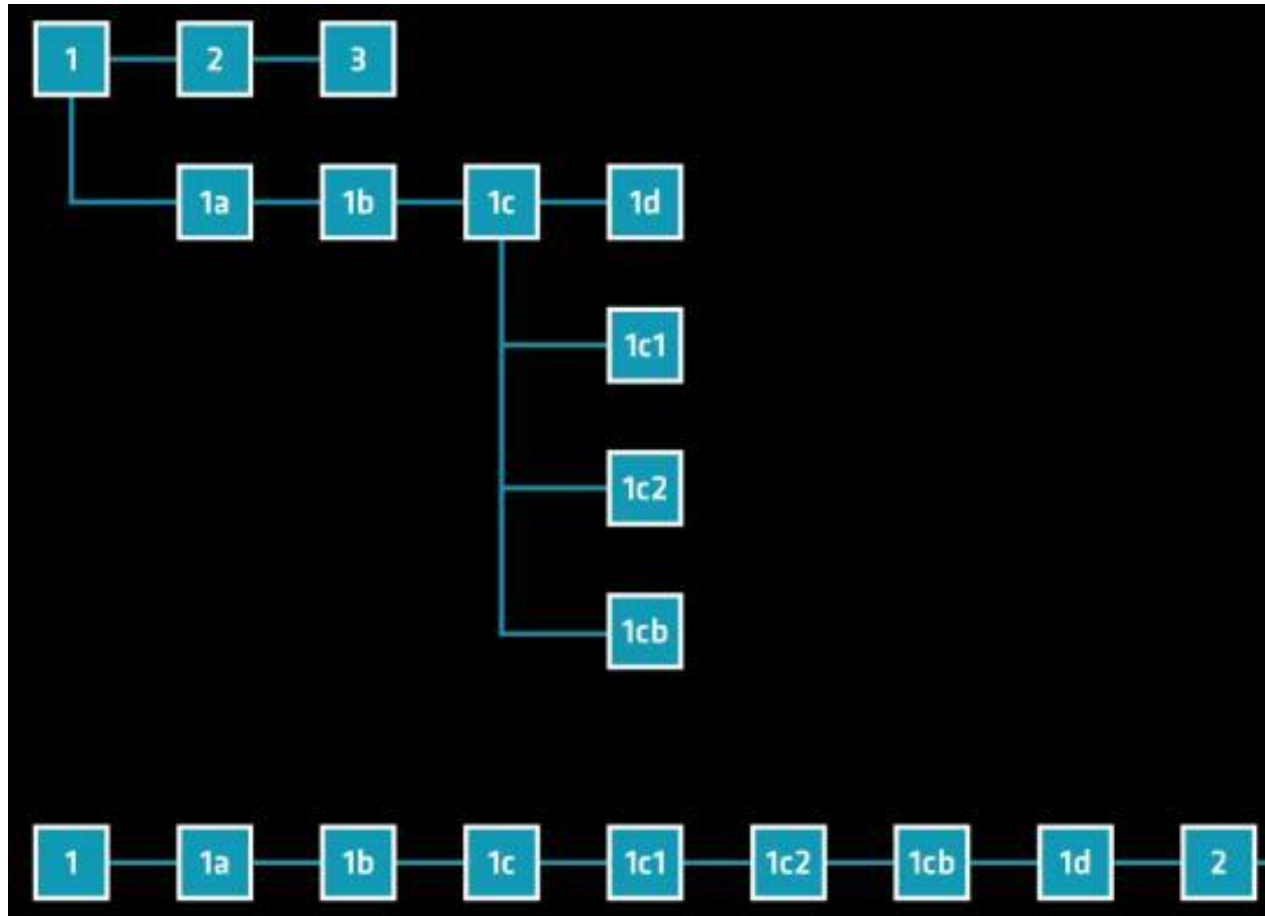
6,3 begriffliche Grundlagen

- 1.) Gleichheit ist ein "Verhältnis, in dem Verschiedenes zueinander steht" (Windelband, S. 8 zit. bei Hesse, S. 172). Darin unterscheiden sich Gleichheit und Identität. Vgl. auch Nef, S. 3ff. mit zahlreichen weiteren Nachweisen 3.
- Daraus folgt, dass es Gleichheit immer nur in bestimmten Beziehungen geben kann. Ein Gleichheitsurteil hat nur Sinn in Bezug auf einen Vergleichsgesichtspunkt. Dieses tertium comparationis muss identisch sein. 1; 4
- Dagegen würde die Übereinstimmung sämtlicher Merkmale einschliesslich der räumlich-zeitlichen Bestimmungen Identität bedeuten. 2
- Absolute Gleichheit kann es deshalb begrifflich nicht ➡

- An ongoing project is digitalizing Luhmann's Slip Box
- View his notes alive [online](#)



Luhmann's Slip Box



- Indexing notes in a nonlinear way using a combination of letters and numbers
- Allow unlimited latticework (grids) to insert notes into the system

Luhmann's Slip Box

- A knowledge management and note-taking method used in research and study.

- A knowledge management and note-taking method used in research and study.



Three tools



SOMETHING TO SCRIBBLE ON/WITH
(E.G., PAPER/PEN; EVERNOTE)



A REFERENCE MANAGEMENT
SYSTEM (E.G., ZOTERO, MENDELEY)



THE SLIP-BOX (E.G., EVERNOTE,
JOPLIN)

(Ahrens, 2017)

Types of notes

Fleeting notes

Literature notes

Permanent notes

Project notes

(Ahrens, 2017)

Take fleet notes [Any time any where]

- Any format you want
- No format is fine as well
- It should be with you all the time to capture ideas

Five steps taking smart notes

1

Step 1: Make an entry of citation

2

Step 2: Read a paper and create literature notes

3

Step 3: Write summary in the entry of citation

4

Step 4: Repeat Step 2&3 to other papers

5

Step 5: Write permanent notes

Five steps taking smart notes

1

Step 1: Make an entry of citation

- Record papers day by day
- Full citation needed
- Leave the space to write summary of the research in your own word when finishing the reading

Five steps taking smart notes

1

Step 1: Make an entry of citation

2

Step 2: Read a paper and create literature notes

- When reading a paper, write down its contents in your own words in different notes
- One note one idea
- No need to directly copy quotes. Instead, use page number and keywords

Five steps taking smart notes

1

Step 1: Make an entry of citation

2

Step 2: Read a paper and create literature notes

3

Step 3: Write summary in the entry of citation

- Once finish reading a paper, write the summary of it in the entry of citation you created before

Five steps taking smart notes

1

Step 1: Make an entry of citation

2

Step 2: Read a paper and create literature notes

3

Step 3: Write summary in the entry of citation

4

Step 4: Repeat Step 2&3 to other papers

- Follow the step 2 and 3 to read other papers

Five steps taking smart notes

- Organize notes from Step 2-4 into permanent notes, relating to your own research topic
 - Organize permanent notes in the slip box
 - File each one behind one or more related notes
 - Add links to related notes
- Make sure you will be able to find the note later
- Execute step 5 at the end of the day

5

Step 5: Write permanent notes

Luhmann's 90,000 cards were accumulated at the speed of 6 cards a day during his career.

Make it a long-term habit



Live Demonstration of my slip box