

Techniques of Scholarship

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Session 4

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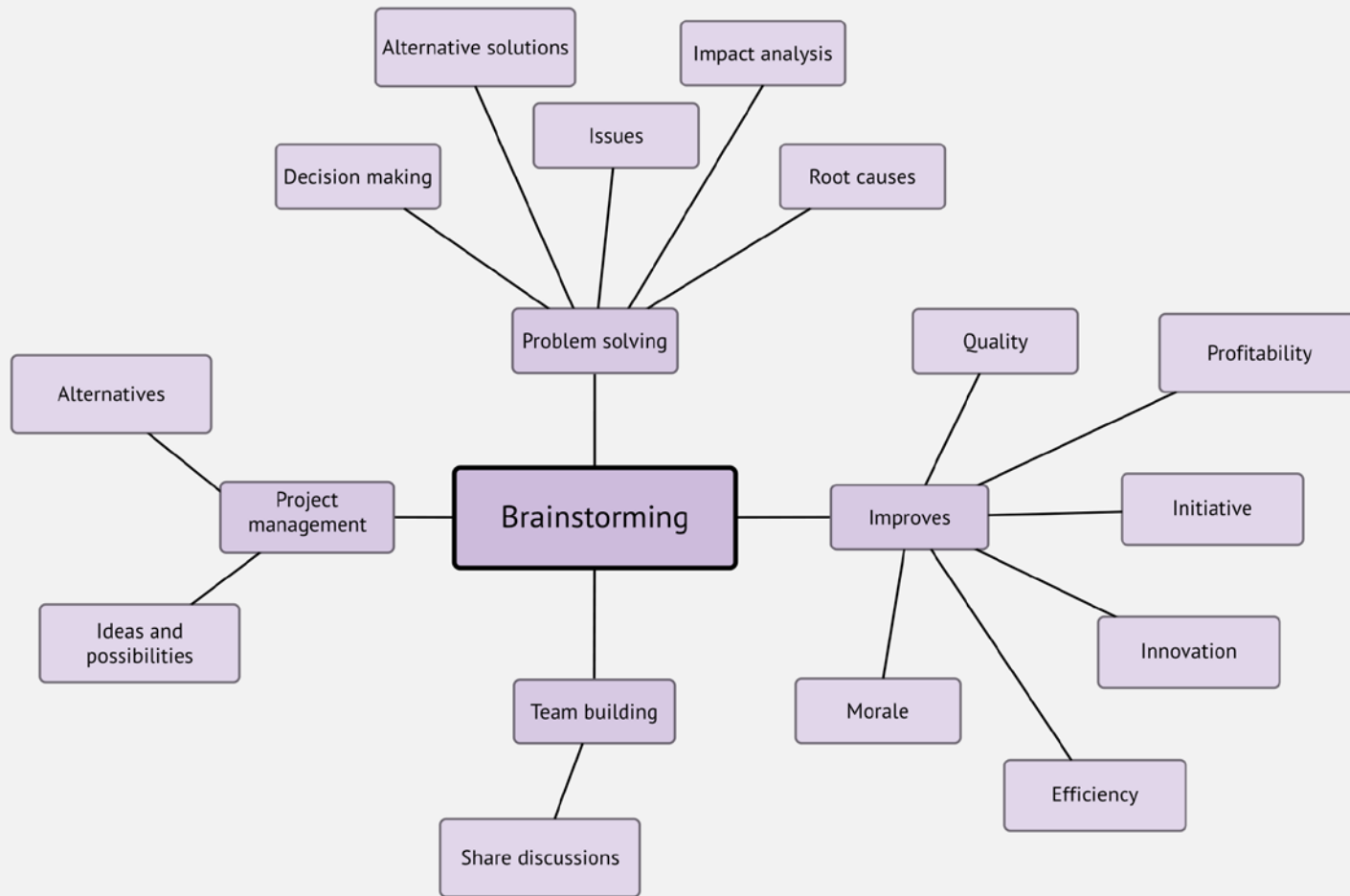
Topics to Be Covered

- Procrastination and Time management
- The Literature Review
- What is a Paragraph?
- Use of words 'I' and 'we' and better ways of phrasing
- Introductions
- Conclusions
- Originality
- Plagiarism: what it is, examples, and how to avoid it

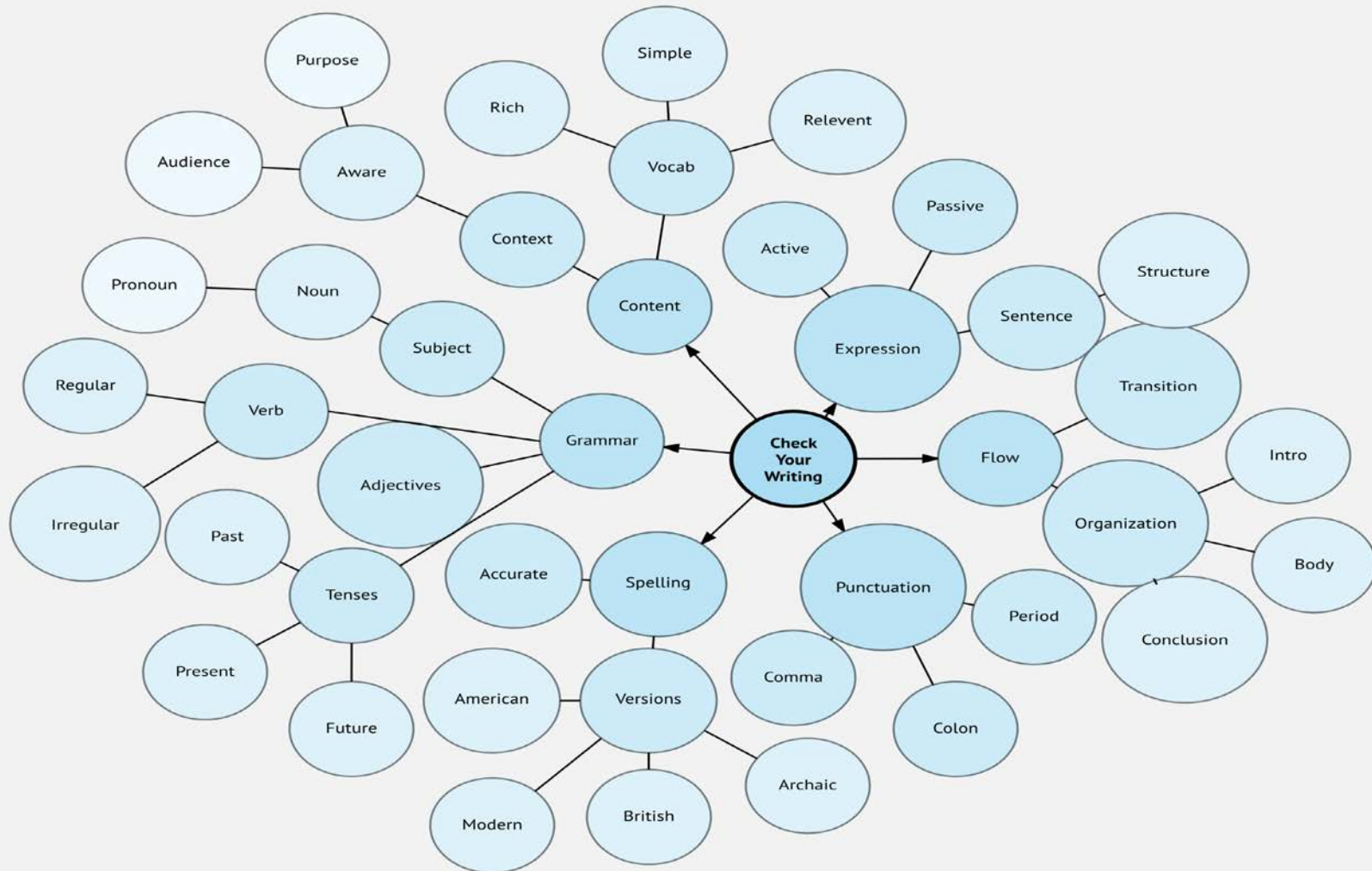
Procrastination and Time Management

- Time management previously discussed in Seminar 1, mins 52:45-59:00
- **To avoid procrastination:**
 - do just one small thing every day; this can lead to re-engaging your interest; force yourself if need be (example: making this powerpoint starts with a list of topics to be covered, then given their own slide, which leads to components of each topic, which leads to....)
 - If you feel stuck, working in a different place (the library, a café etc.) can sometimes help.
 - Stand up and breathe. Then do some mind-mapping.

Mind-mapping and brainstorming



Mind-mapping



Avoiding procrastination and Time Management Advice

- **Mind-mapping and essay planning** (stick a large piece of paper to the wall and mind-map with a marker pen while standing up)
- Start thinking about, researching and writing assignments as early as possible
- Research and **active** reading: make notes on the books/articles you read (noting page-numbers as you go) and start writing/drafting your essay at the earliest possible stage, even if just small sections or paragraphs (writing can help with thinking)
- **If working on an essay**, get relevant books, notes etc. organised and ready the evening before – then you will be ready to start the next day and this often focuses your mind
- When writing, make a plan to write 100/200/500 words **today** and tell yourself you can edit it or throw it out later if necessary (this is a good way to start writing if you have writer's block)

The Literature Review

- Most essays will usually incorporate review of relevant secondary literature into the main body of the essay. A dissertation or thesis will usually have a separate literature review.
- Purpose: what are the important sources to be discussed?
- How are they relevant?
- What previous literature on the topic has been published? (Don't reinvent the wheel; add to its functionality.) Where have others gone and how are you following them?
- Analyse and assess the source and its argument(s) rather than just describing them:
 - are hypotheses well argued and supported by a range of evidence?
 - What are the strengths and weakness of the source?
- Good and bad sources. Why are they good or bad?
 - Using academic sources from reputable publishers.
 - Reading book reviews in academic journals.
 - Check Table of Contents and index(es). Reading the introduction or first chapter and conclusion.
 - Research the author online – are they widely published? Are they an academic and do they hold (or have they previously held) an academic position?

What is a Paragraph?

- **What is not a paragraph?**
 - A paragraph is NOT one or two sentences!
- **Components of a paragraph**
 - A main topic; a development of that topic; all points relevant to that topic
- **How long should a paragraph be?**
 - Generally at least 4 sentences (depending on length) and can be up to ca. 15 sentences depending on sentence length and the depth of the analysis
- Good and bad examples of paragraphs

Using 'I', 'we' and phrasing

- It is better to avoid 'I' if possible - 'we' can be used sparingly.
- Use phrases such as 'This essay will examine/argue/analyse/assess....'
- 'This essay is divided into two parts. The first part will consider..... The second part will examine....'
- 'Overall, it seems reasonable to conclude....'

The Introduction

- **Purpose**
 - Introduce the topic of the essay question and what you plan to investigate to answer the question (do not state your conclusions in the introduction!)
- **Structure**
 - One or two paragraphs, depending on word count
- **Components**
 - The essay question
 - What you will do in the essay
 - Define relevant terms
 - Introduce main characters
 - Place the topic in historical context
- **Timing** – when should you write it?
 - Draft first, then revise after writing the body of the essay
- Previously in Seminar 1, mins 41:22-42:28

Example of a good introduction

The aim of this chapter is to see, first, whether astrology can be called a stochastic art and, second, whether it is in a 'scientific' or in a 'divinatory' way that this 'stochasticism' should be viewed. Lastly, the connection of the stochastic concept with metaphors, poetry and divination will be examined, and how this may be relevant to astrological practice. The target audience for this chapter is not primarily astrologers (though they may be interested in discussion on how astrologers do what they do), but rather those readers who have not considered that astrological perspectives and methods of interpretation have any value. This chapter offers an approach to astrology that takes it out of the realm of the literal and into a different, but no less present, reality: a reality that includes the metaphorical as a valid way of looking at the world.

[Adapted from D. G. Greenbaum, 'Arrows, Aiming and Divination: Astrology as a Stochastic Art', in *Divination: Perspectives for a New Millennium*, ed. Patrick Curry, Farnham, Surrey, 2010, pp. 179-80]

The Conclusion

- **Purpose**
 - To summarise what you did in the essay
- **Structure**
 - Usually one paragraph, depending on word limits
- **Components**
 - Restate the essay question
 - list each of the topics/arguments you raised in the essay, now with their conclusions
- **Timing**
 - The last part to be written in your essay
- Previously in Seminar 1: mins 45:45-49:27

Example of a good conclusion

A lot of ground has been covered in this chapter. We have introduced the idea of astrology as a stochastic art, and given some of the history of the concept of stochastic arts in antiquity. We have defined the word 'stochastic' and the connection of the stochastic arts with targets and goals. We have talked about stochastic arts versus productive arts, and outlined some of the arts most commonly referred to as stochastic, namely medicine, navigation and rhetoric. We have considered what astrological targets and goals might be. We have looked at astrology in relation to the aims of productive and stochastic arts to see where it falls along that continuum. We have looked at the writings of the Hellenistic astrologers for evidence of stochastic methods. Finally, we have examined metaphor and its connection with aiming and divination, particularly in regard to astrology. Throughout, our connective thread has been the metaphor of the archer, which has kept appearing in each of the areas we have explored.

The stochastic concept, the art of conjecturing through signs, has its first associations with divination, as Quintus Cicero tells us. But with Ptolemy and those who follow him, the stochastic seems to lead to science, and it is that association which becomes firmly cemented in the scientific model. It has been the aim of this chapter, however, to show that it is useful, even necessary, to think of the stochastic in astrology as harking back not only to ancient science, but also to its association with divination and the aleatory function. From this association with the symbolic and metaphorical in divination, we find new ways of looking at astrology as an art that uses metaphor and symbolism in its own interpretation.

[Adapted from D. G. Greenbaum, 'Arrows, Aiming and Divination: Astrology as a Stochastic Art', in *Divination: Perspectives for a New Millennium*, ed. Patrick Curry, Farnham, Surrey, 2010, pp. 208-9]

Originality

- **What is originality?**
 - Using (and combining) evidence in new, creative and inventive ways
 - Significant and original insights, hypotheses and arguments (through deep and sustained research and study) based on a wide range of convincing evidence
 - Paradigm shifts
- **How do you find originality?**
 - Start assignments by writing down your own ideas and keep writing down ideas at regular intervals
 - Make sure that you also read widely (secondary literature) so that you know what ideas might be original in the field
- **Academic voice and originality**
 - Identifying your own research questions and topic in your dissertation

Plagiarism

- **What is plagiarism?**

- From the MA Writing Guide, p. 38: ‘Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence.’

- **Examples of plagiarism**

- Unintentional:
 - Citing an author only once but using his work more than once
 - Paraphrasing an author but not citing her
- Intentional:
 - Direct quotation
 - Non-attribution of primary source quotations
 - Paraphrasing
 - Disguising sources

- **How to avoid plagiarism**

- Cite everything that is not yours
- Make sure you attribute all ideas that are not yours to their proper source
- If someone’s idea has contributed to your commentary, acknowledge it
- When in doubt, cite!