

WHAT KIND OF LEARNER ARE YOU?

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2

I work best on my own
I prefer to be told what to do
I like detailed instruction
I prefer to work in a routine
I like everything neat

3

I don't want to show my work until
completed
I need encouragement to keep
going!
I like to finish one piece before
starting another
I learn most by reading
I learn best by instruction

4

I prefer to work with others
I like freedom and choice of work
I like working out things for myself
I like variety of work
I work in bursts of activity

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I work best in creative mess
I like feedback from others
I am good at self-motivation
I work on several things at once
I learn most by action
I learn best through seeing examples

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WHAT KIND OF WRITER ARE YOU?

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- Balanced
- Objective
- Engaged
- Focused on central question

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Research intense

Analytical

Scientific

Methodologically focused

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Opinionated

Biased

Free thinking

Unstructured

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Academic writing:

Producing a balanced piece of writing

Present with 'neutrality' when it is necessary

Is there such a thing as neutrality?

Issues of subjectivity and objectivity

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Bringing in a range of perspectives for a discussion, ensuring there is no inherent bias

Constructing an argument – planning your viewpoint

Personal perspectives: where are they relevant, how can they be utilised

Language – accuracy and grammar – structure of written work [beginning, middle, end]

Referencing all elements of work, from quotations to the thoughts of others.

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Styles of work:

journalistic (in different forms)

academic (essays, reports, reviews)

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Organisation and planning:

Build a structure for your work

Don't just start writing

Allow sufficient time for planning and research

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The strength of your work: precision, keeping in word limits, references

Consider opening comments and conclusions

Provide a bibliography – demonstrate your reading!

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Essays: are not autobiographies

Are not opinion columns from newspapers (especially tabloids)

Should provide a measure of analysis

Should demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of a subject

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Refining writing approaches:

Read academic books and journals (and take appropriate notes)

Read a daily broadsheet newspaper

Listen to radio news (especially for subject specific stories) i.e. BBC Radio 4, BBC World Service, LBC News

Practice writing skills

If you use AI, only apply it as a research assistant (alongside Library databases, Google Scholar, etc.)

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Writing essentials:

Use a word processing package [Word, Google Docs]

Consider using voice recognition software ...

- 12 pitch font (Times New Roman, Georgia, Verdana, Arial)
- AVOID Comic Sans
- Don't decorate your essay!

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- Image and chart use: consider copyright, is it essential to your argument? Provide attribution at all times, including URL.
- double space/1.5 space your essays
- don't use italics for quotes
- use endnotes/footnotes for references
- Check module/UWTSD style guides

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Build notes/writing around your planning outlines

Spell check and grammar check your work (!)

Print out drafts - don't rely on screen reading

Read it aloud to yourself (does it make sense?)

Allow sufficient time for proofing

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Other points

Back up your data securely (not just on a thumb drive!) i.e. OneDrive, iCloud

Make a back-up of every draft

Invest in a good laptop/tablet if you can ...

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Essay writing



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Completion of work

When is the work due?

How long will it take to check?

How much time is needed for drafting?

Preparation of the bibliography also needs time.

REMEMBER

DEADLINE FOR ASSIGNMENT

ESTIMATED TIME YOU GIVE TO A TASK

REAL TIME THE TASK TOOK

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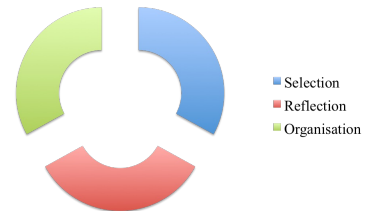
How many drafts are needed?

How long will each one take?

How much time is needed to improve drafts?

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Organising your Information



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Research

How long to ...

interpret information?

assemble material?

plan what is needed?

work out methodology?

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Strategy

Reflection

Discussion

Analysis of questions

Expectations of task

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Key points

- Always use quotation marks for anything taken from another source.
- Always reference it appropriately.
- Any ideas from other sources should also be referenced.
- Avoid copying out chunks of text and pasting them into essays as 'research'.
- Don't cut and paste AI generated material.
- Don't use essay banks.
- Avoid (deliberate or otherwise) plagiarism.

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IT literacy and appropriate AI use: AI is fully embedded in search across platforms. It can help as a research assistant for seeking sources but check their veracity. Always cite from the original source.

Referencing and formatting knowledge

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Note taking

Bullet points

Clarity

Consider typing notes on laptops/tablets (as long as they don't distract you from the lecture i.e. through checking social media!!) - consider lecture etiquette, and not distracting others with your social media use.

Don't try to write everything down: isolate key points only

Different coloured pens/fonts to highlight key areas

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Research:

Distinguish:

- Essential reading
- Useful reading
- Additional reading

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General issues

Time management

Turning devices off

Is surfing the web 'research'?

Is screen reading the same as print reading?

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General issues

Networking & sharing material online
Are creativity and the 'traditional skills' of academia lost?

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General issues

Source reliability.
Managing data appropriately.
What does IT bring to *your* research?

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Note taking

Is not a dictation exercise

Understand the difference between lectures and personal reading

Listening and taking notes requires concentration over extended periods

Watch out for information overload

Consider how notes are to be used

Develop note taking skills

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Note taking skills

- Listen to a news bulletin
- Write down the key points
- Recreate a version of the bulletin

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Note taking skills

- Watch a TV documentary
- Write down the key points
- Write a review of the documentary

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Note taking skills

Use A4 pre-punched file paper

Don't write full sentences – use HEADINGS and KEY WORDS

Leave lots of space for subsequent comments

Use coloured pens, visual aids, highlighters

Keep your notes intact in one place

File the pages

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Make full notes on books and sources i.e.

author name,

book title,

publisher,

library number

Use citation software

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Make selective notes on your reading

Use page numbers for key sources

Use a book's index to acquire information rapidly

Avoid duplicating information

Separate pages for each section/subject

AI can provide an indication of a book's value but remember to read the book – don't rely on an AI summary.

Consider using a laptop/tablet to take notes

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Recording lectures

Get permission from lecturer (don't assume)

Recording can inhibit conversation in class – especially recordings of Q&As

Don't post recordings onto social media

Are recordings an excuse not to make notes – will you listen again?

Audio recording may be OK using tape recorders [could use voice recognition software to transcribe notes]

Not all lectures are worth recording: better to watch/listen and participate. Video recording not usual practice

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Other recording methods

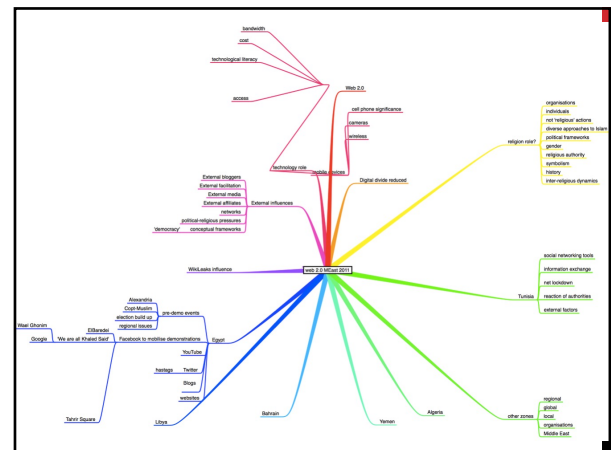
Mindmaps

Record your data diagrammatically

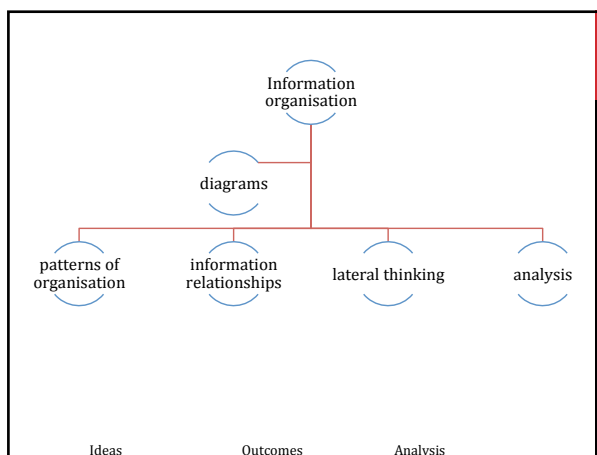
See the work of Tony Buzan re mindmaps

Allow you to record, remember, clarify points, develop ideas

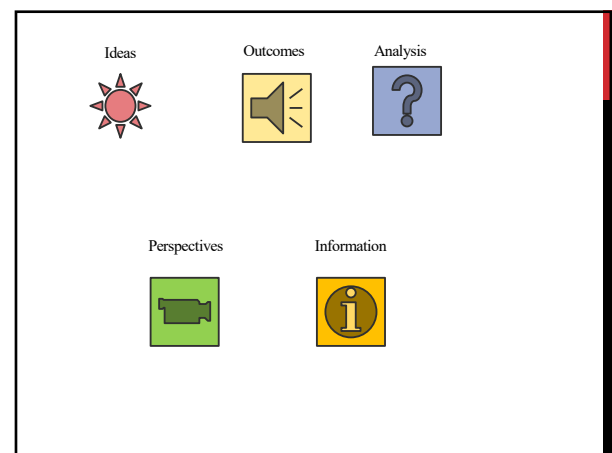
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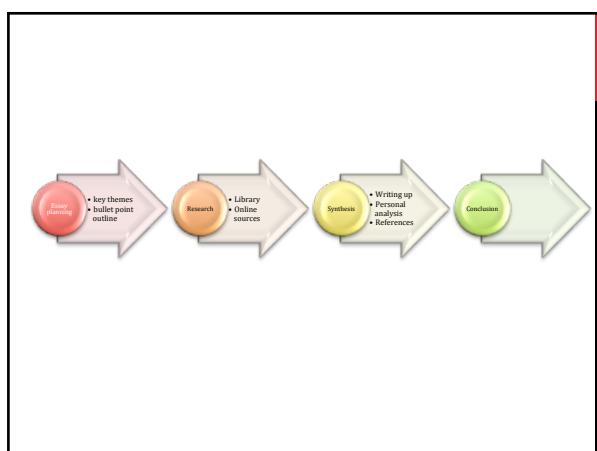
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Powerpoint

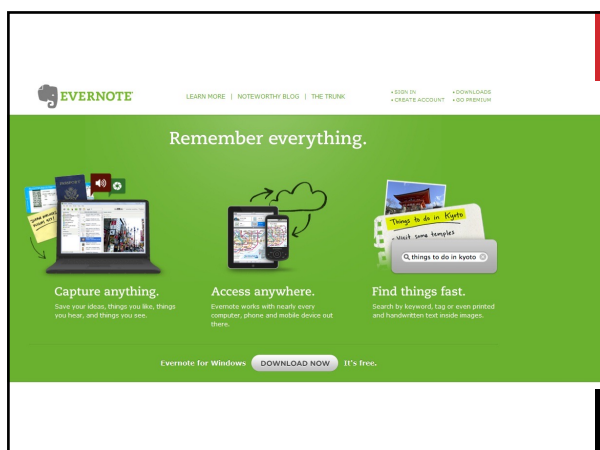
practical element: PowerPoint

Slides as a method of recording data

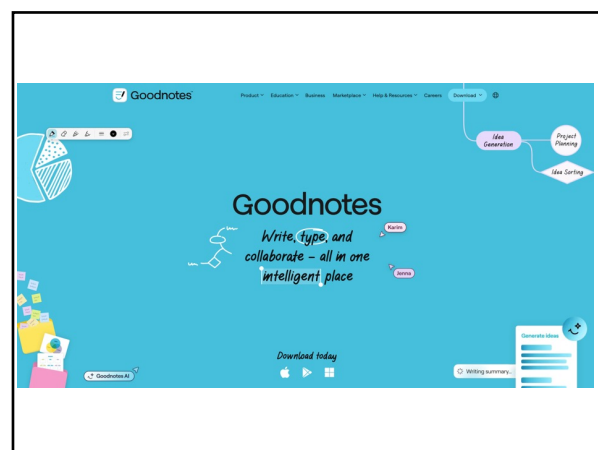
Incorporate pictures and graphics

Can use them for notation/presentation

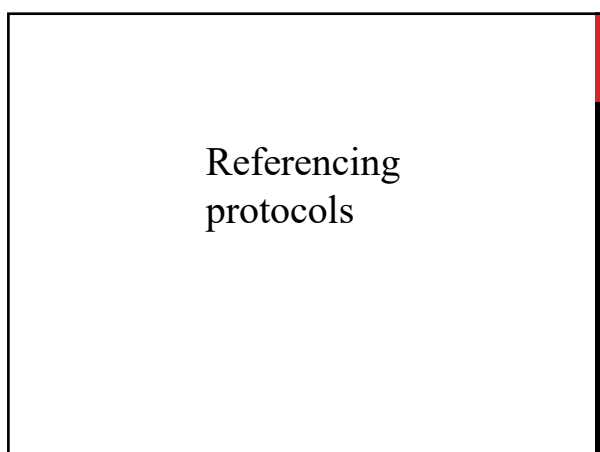
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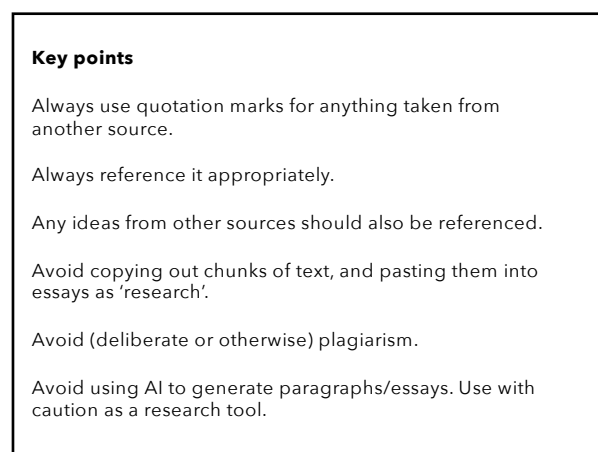
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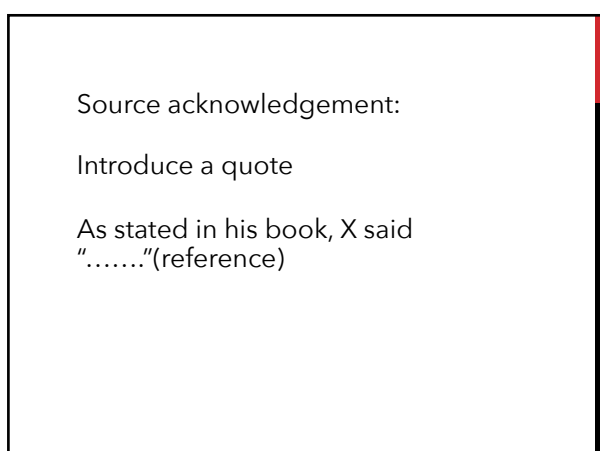
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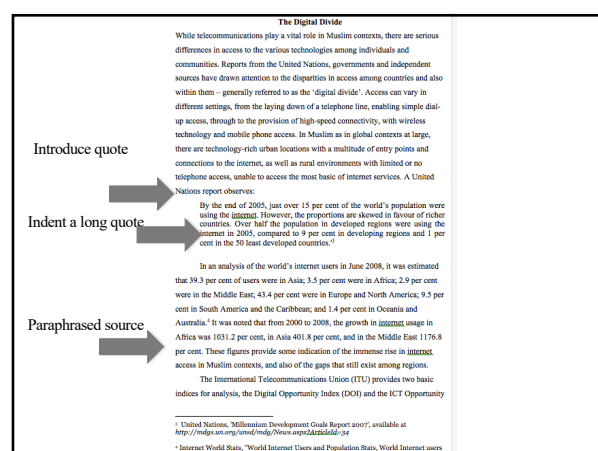
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Don't italicize quotes

Introduce them:

Introductory phrases (examples)

According to A ...

G makes the point ...

Writing in 2025 ...

It was noted in B that

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Referencing protocols

Footnotes¹

Footnotes allow for rapid access to information about books, key points, other related information (that may be a digression from the main text).²

¹ This is a footnote, at the end of a page of text

² This is another footnote

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Endnotes

Endnotes are similar to footnotes. However, the information is collected at the end of a chapter or section of text.

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¹ Coincidentally, the cloud(s) can also refer to *al-Sahab* ("the cloud"), the long-standing publicity arm and computer network established by al-Qaeda to promote and produce their multimedia output.

² An extensive chart demonstrating this online diversity can be found on the Virtually Islamic site (Bunt, 2009c).

³ It has to be said that all shades of religious perspective have taken advantage of this medium: thus, the online sermons and religious opinions of US born 'jihadi' Anwar al-Awlaki (discussed below) is a further example of the ways in which different types of Islamic dialogue can be propagated via the Web.

⁴ The word *ijtihad* can be synonymous with 'renewal' and 'reform' within certain Islamic contexts - although 're-evaluation' and 're-alignment' may be appropriate alternatives: the terms have several levels of meaning and relevance, depending on context.

⁵ A *fatwa* can be generally defined as a 'religious opinion'. There are variances in terms of the extent to which such opinions are followed, often dependent on the source, subject and context in which the fatwa emerged.

⁶ The term cell phone is used here. It is recognised that not all cell phones are smart phones with 3G/4G+ access, and that there are differentials in terms of access and service levels in and within diverse contexts.

⁷ The question is from an external source, and is answered by Siddiqui.

⁸ AskImam, Islamicity, IslamOnline, Islam Q&A and OnIslam are prominent examples of the

Assalamunnaala of such services from different Muslim perspectives. Drawing on traditional

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Harvard Style Referencing

For some, as with other aspects of everyday life, it is perfectly natural to consult the Internet for a religious opinion, Islamic information, or to interact with members of a network (informal and formal). The influence of 'Sheikh Google' has challenged traditional networks of authority, and raised concerns regarding influence and impact on communities and individuals (Al Hashemi, B.A. and Ghazal, R., 2012). As a channel of information distribution, the application of social networking tools provides immediacy in terms of connecting to followers, and a sense of identity for those participating. The reduced digital divide, particularly in relation to the expansion of cell phone networks and broadband usage, reflects in this increasing influence of cyber Islamic environments, while recognising that significant sectors still remain untouched – at least directly – from this discourse and participation.

Islamic ideas of the sacred manifest themselves in complex and diverse ways in cyberspace, reflecting the continuum of understandings located in the 'real world'. The World Wide Web, social networking resources, chat-rooms, photo upload sites, wikis, podcasts, blogs, mapping tools and video sites such as YouTube are typical resources that have been applied to represent aspects of Islam and Muslim expression (Bunt, 2000, 66-103). Generic tools such as Flickr, YouTube, Google Maps, Twitter and Facebook have been increasingly integrated into cyber Islamic environments. These offer a 'sticky' multimedia experience for users, who utilize a seamless multiplicity of interfaces and devices to access and interact with content – often located in the cloud.

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References

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- Ackerman, S., 2011. Watch: Osama's Blooper Reel, Courtesy of Navy SEALs, Wired, *Wired* [online]. Available at <<http://www.wired.com/dangerroom>> [accessed 7 May 2011]
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- Al Hashemi, B.A. and Ghazal, R., 2012. Grand Mufti calls for dialogue about the Internet, The National [online], 20 February 2012. Available at: <<http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/grand-mufti-calls-for-dialogue-about-the-internet>> [accessed 20 February 2012]
- Al-Husaini, I.S., 2004. Words of Tawheed Appearing on a Mobile Screen, *IslamOnline* [online]. Available at: <http://www.islamonline.net/serlet/Satellite?pagename=IslamOnline-English-Ask_Scholar/FatwaE&cid=1119503545250> [accessed 24 September 2004]
- Al-Malahem Media of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula [online], 2010. *Inspire* Issue 1, [accessed July 2010]

60

Bunt, G. R. (2000). Virtually Islamic: computer-mediated communication and cyber Islamic environments. Cardiff, University of Wales Press.

Can add page numbers (i.e. for a quotation)

Bunt, G. R. (2000). Virtually Islamic: computer-mediated communication and cyber Islamic environments, Cardiff, University of Wales Press., 97-99

Shorten this for next reference in listing:

Bunt (2000), 104-107

Other systems are available; formats vary depending on the subject matter being referenced

Consult the referencing guide for variations in content/subject matter.

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Website

Sistani.org [online] 2012. Grand Ayatollah Sistani. Available at <<http://www.sistani.org>> [accessed 13 October 2012]

Or

Sistani.org, 2012. Grand Ayatollah Sistani. Available at <http://www.sistani.org> [accessed 13 October 2012]

62

Article

Economist, [online], 2012, 'The smart way to Mecca', 13 Feb 2012 <<http://www.economist.com/blogs/babbage/2012/02/helping-pilgrims>> [accessed 15 February 2012]

63

Chapter

Ernst, C.W., 2005, 'Ideological and Technological Transformations of Contemporary Sufism', in cooke, m. & Lawrence, B.B., *Muslim Networks from Hajj to Hip Hop*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 191-207

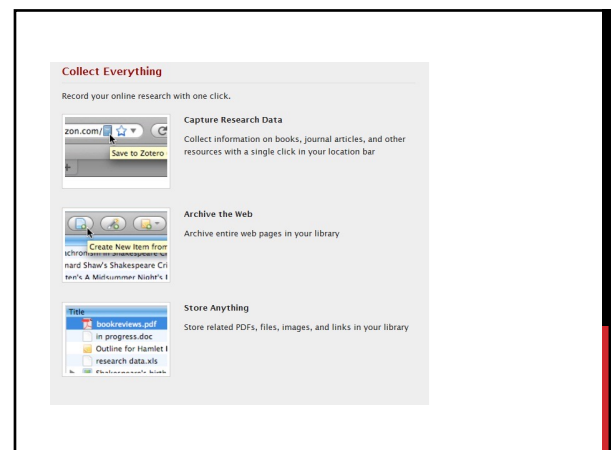
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