

Thinking bundles www.thesiswhisperer.com

This exercise is adapted from advice in two books: "Helping Doctoral Students to write" by Kamler and Thomson and Graff and Birkensteins' "They say / I say", using materials supplied by the academic phrase bank maintained by Manchester university (<http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>)

Thinking and writing are inter-connected activities. Although you can muse about your thesis in the abstract, you can make your thinking more purposeful by using sentence scaffolds. Just like a building scaffold, a sentence scaffold helps you shape your thinking - through writing (no - this isn't plagiarism).

Below are some sentence scaffolds organised into 'thinking bundles' that you can use to prompt you during free writing sessions, or at the start of your chapters. The usefulness of each sentence in the thinking bundle will depend on your discipline, but I have tried to include a variety of sentences to please everyone, from engineers to artists.

Thinking about the literature:

A large and growing body of literature has investigated Numerous scholars have argued that (for example, Smith, 1996; Kelly, 1998; Johnson, 2002). In her seminal study, Mewburn (2010) showed that One question that needs to be asked, however, is

Thinking about method:

Most studies of this phenomena suffer from some serious [*pick one word from the following*] limitations / weaknesses / disadvantages / drawbacks / flaws. It was decided that the best method to adopt for this investigation was This method is [*pick one*] The chief advantage of this method is..... Some limitations of this method that should be noted are.....

Thinking about your contribution:

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that it was also shown that..... The results of this research support the idea that The most important limitation lies in the fact that Further work needs to be done on These findings suggest several courses of action for The findings of this study have a number of important implications for future practice, especially

References:

Kamler, B & Thomson, P (2006) *Helping doctoral students to write*, Routledge, New York.
Graff, G & Birkenstein, K (2010), *They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*, Norton and Company, NY

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