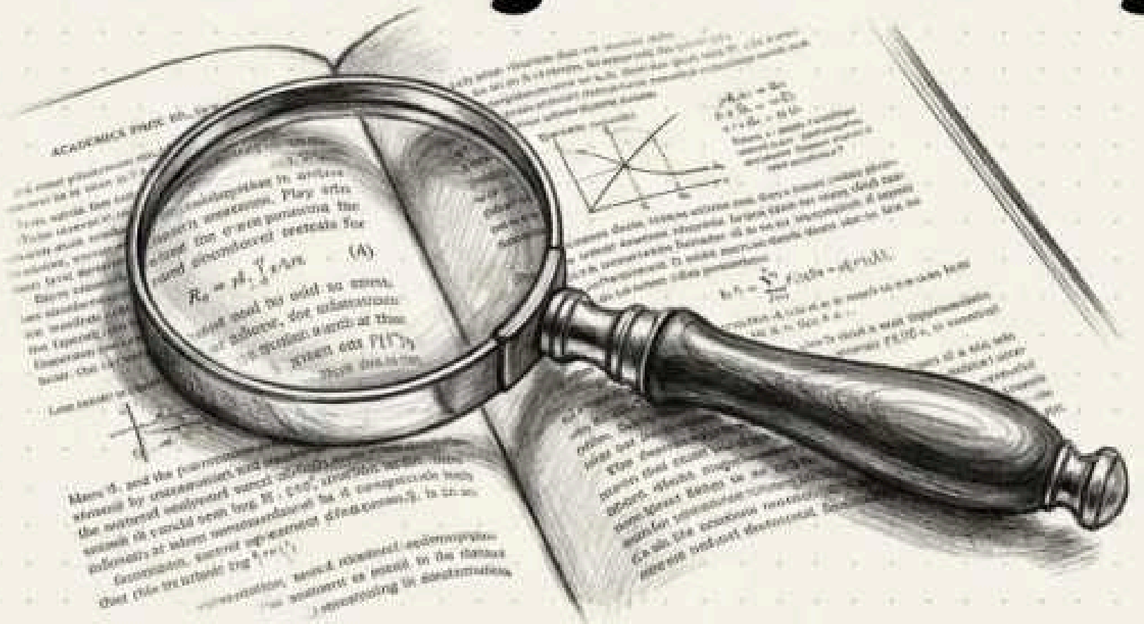
¶ 4.1

Lecture 4: Reading and Taking Notes



$$R_{\text{efficiently}} + N_{\text{structured}} = \text{Matrices \& Bibliographies}$$

Scholarly Reading Velocity

Quotation, Paraphrase, Comment Mechanics

Synthesis Matrices

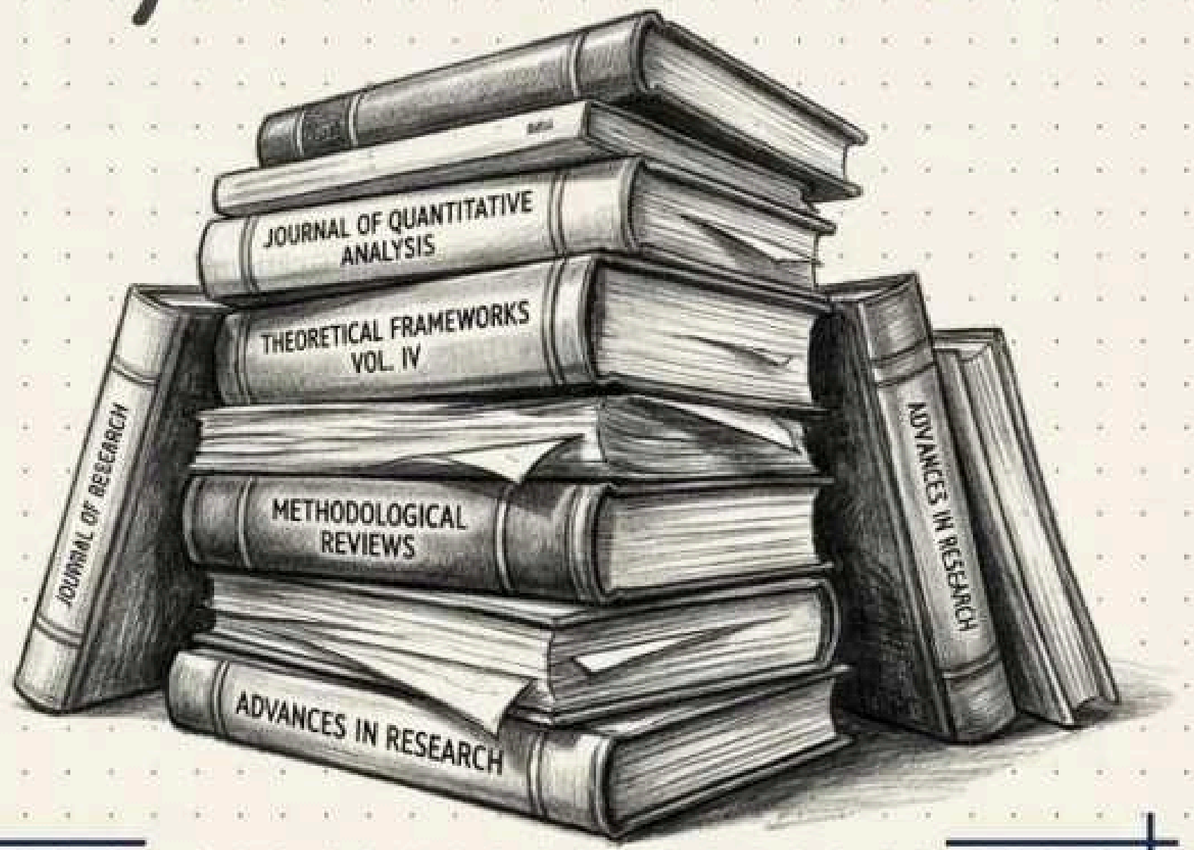
Reading faster will not save you

¶ 4.2

15 articles × 20 pages

= 300 pages (+ other classes)

Velocity ≠ Success

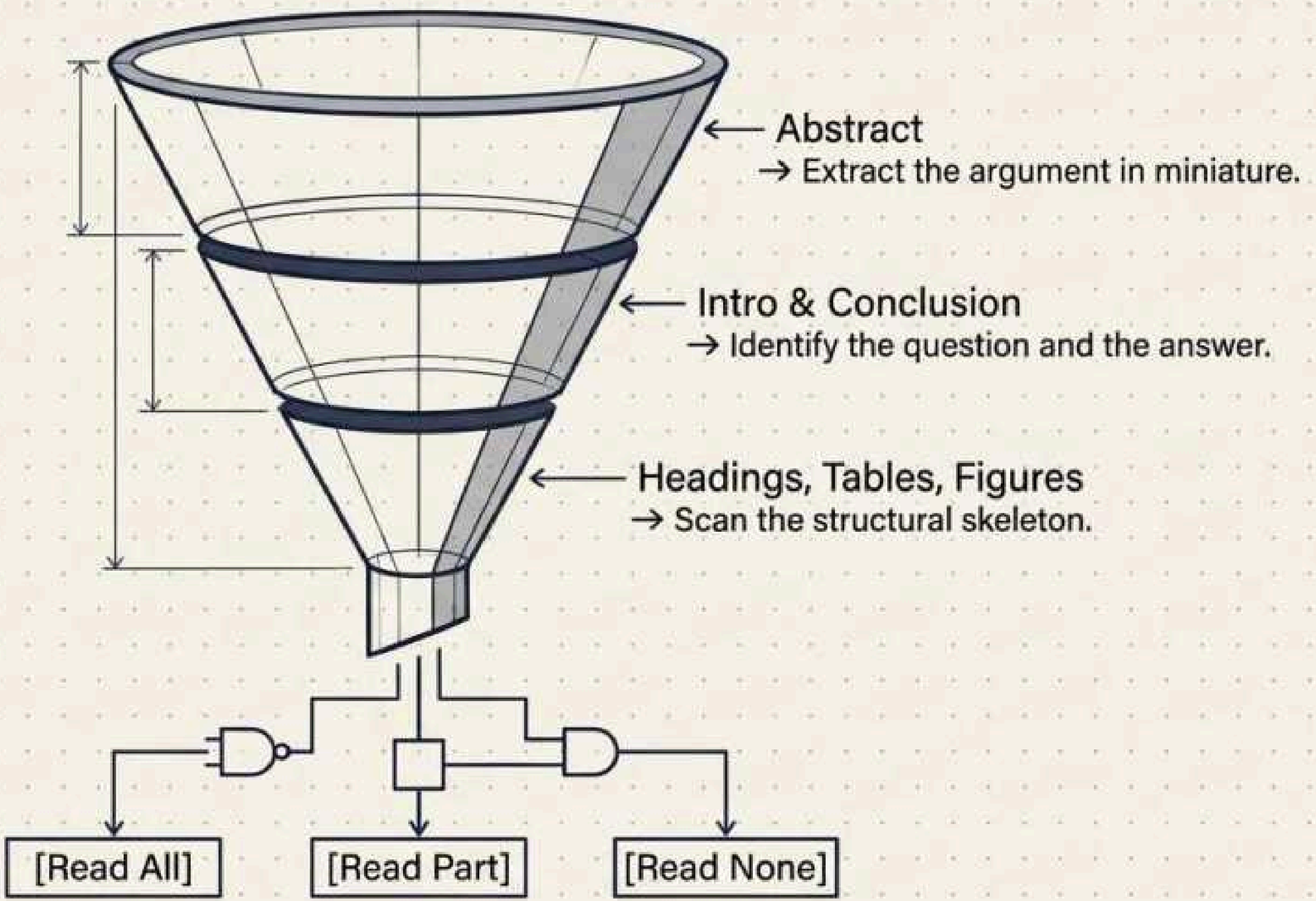


Purposeful Reading → Usable Notes.

Your goal is not to finish reading; it is to turn reading into raw material you can write from.

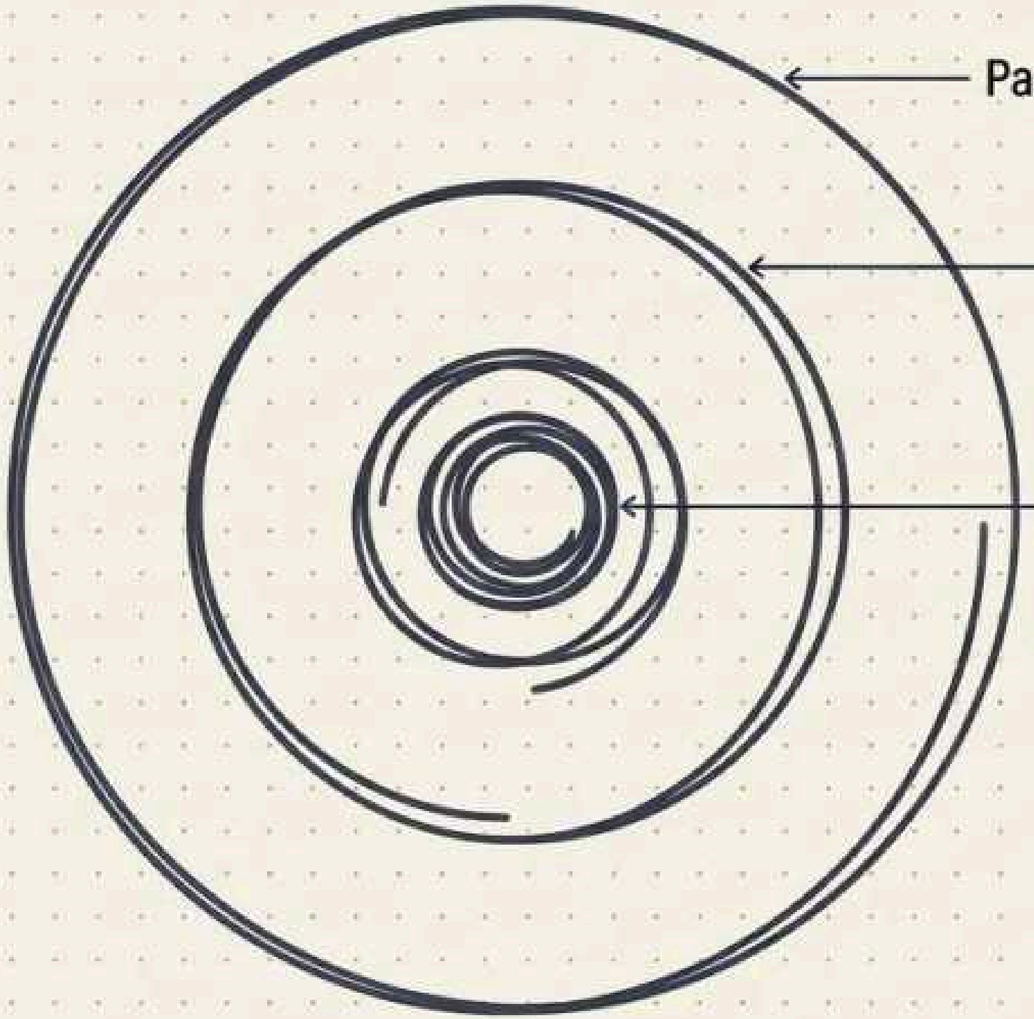
Triage sources before committing to them

¶ 4.3



Process critical texts in distinct, targeted passes

¶ 4.4



Pass 1: Isolate the main argument.

Pass 2: Track the evidence; mark zones of confusion.

Pass 3: Grind through methodology and details (only if required).



Self-made marks > Yellow highlighting.

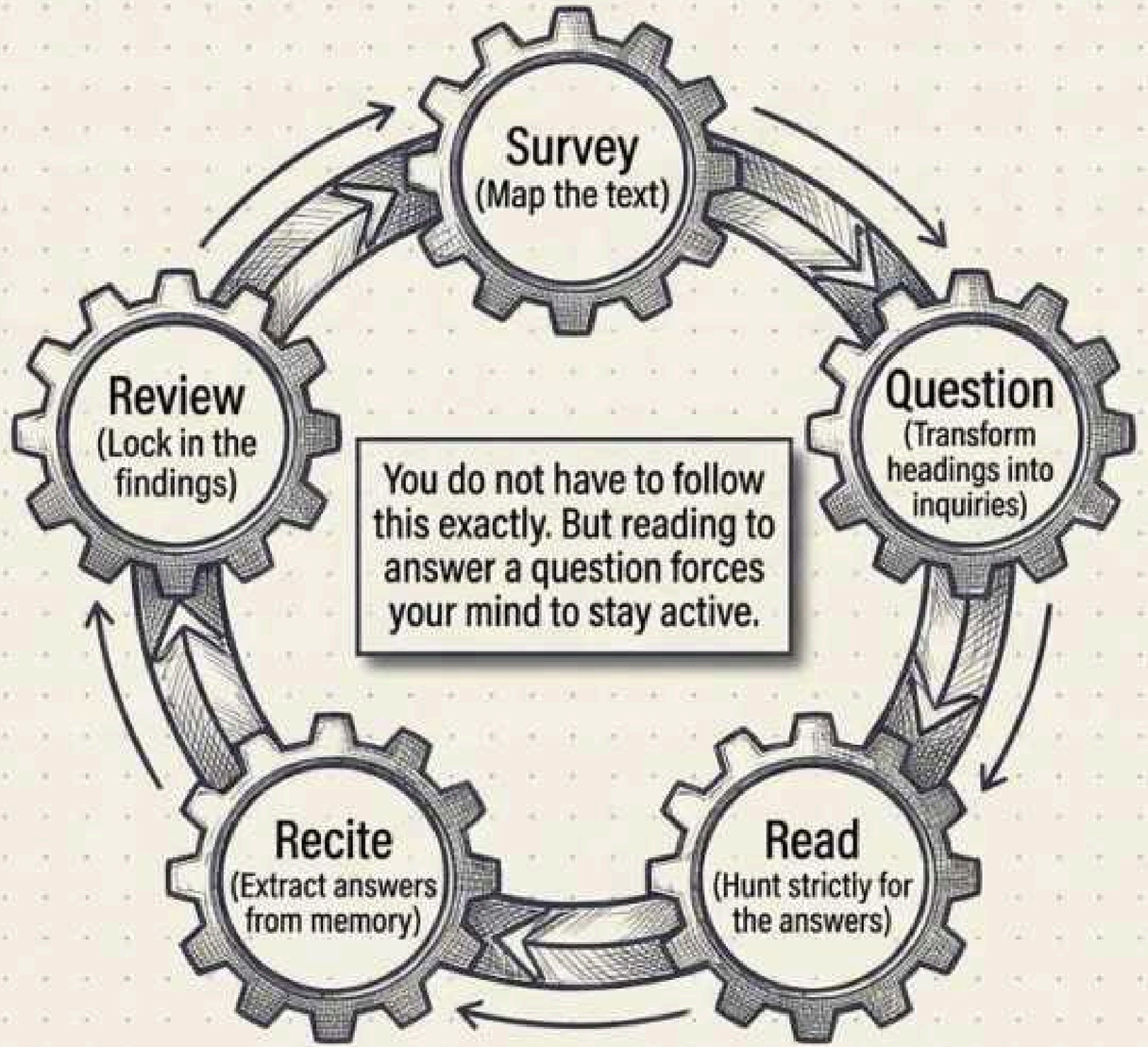
→ Underline claims

→ Circle key terms

→ Write questions directly in the margins

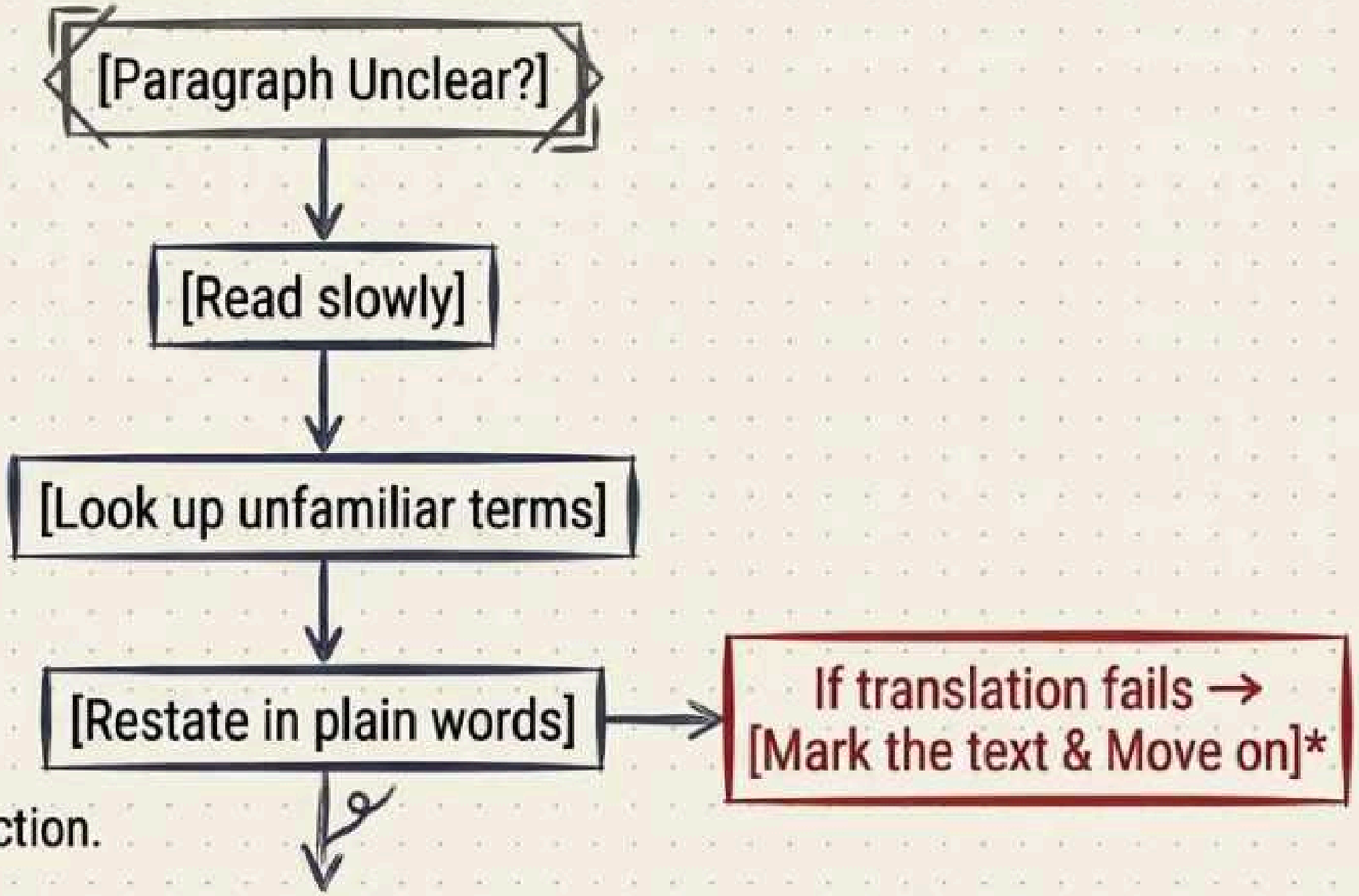
Active questions generate active retention

¶ 4.5



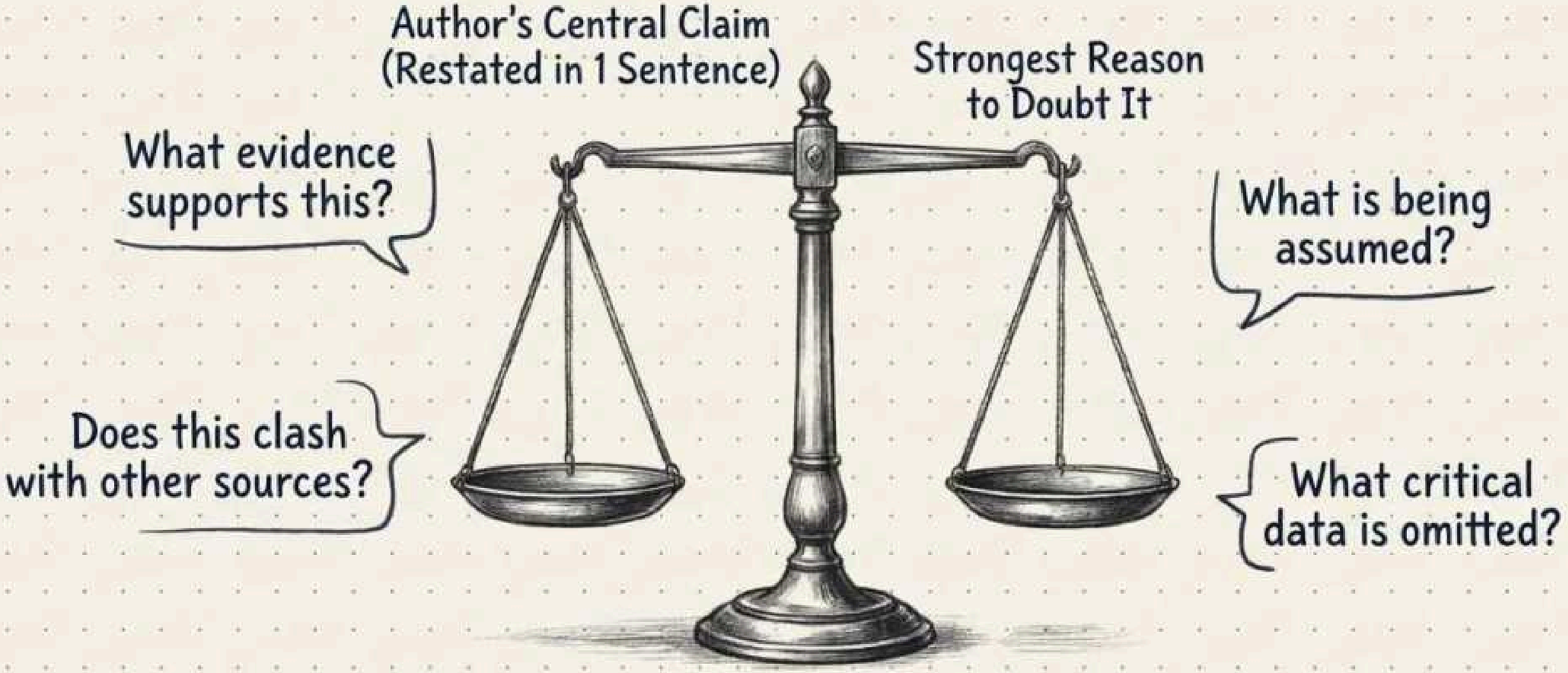
Do not surrender to dense scholarly writing

¶ 4.6



* Context often lies in the n+1 section.
What section n leaves unclear,
section n+1 frequently explains.

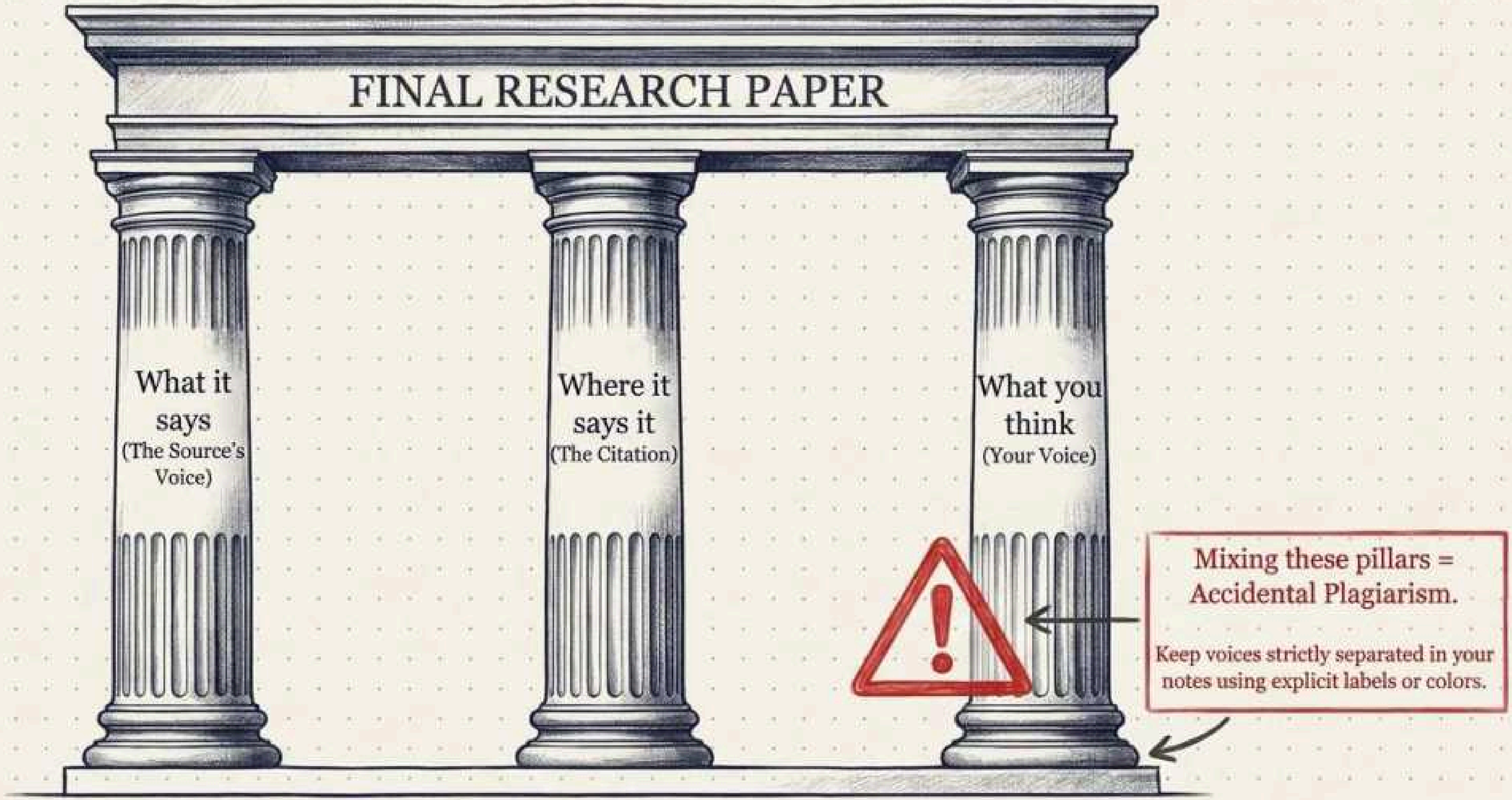
Read as a critic, not just as a student



Your reactions are valuable raw material. Capture them while fresh.

Good notes perform three distinct jobs

¶ 4.8



The three variations of source extraction

Type	Voice	Formatting	Citation Requirement
Quotation	Exact words	Quotes “ ”	Mandatory Page #
Paraphrase	Own words	No Quotes	Mandatory Page #
Comment	Own thoughts	Initials/Symbol	Free (No Page # needed)

$\forall$ notes $\in$ (Quote, Paraphrase), Page Number is mandatory.

A note without a page number destroys the time you saved.

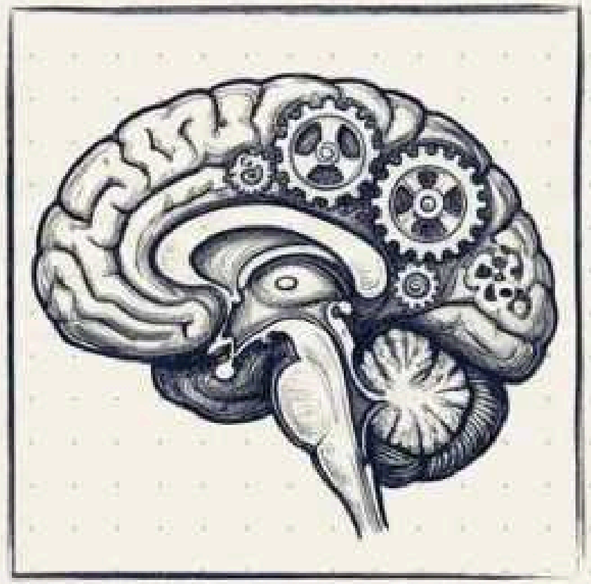
True paraphrasing requires working from memory



Step 1: Read the passage.



Step 2: CLOSE THE SOURCE.



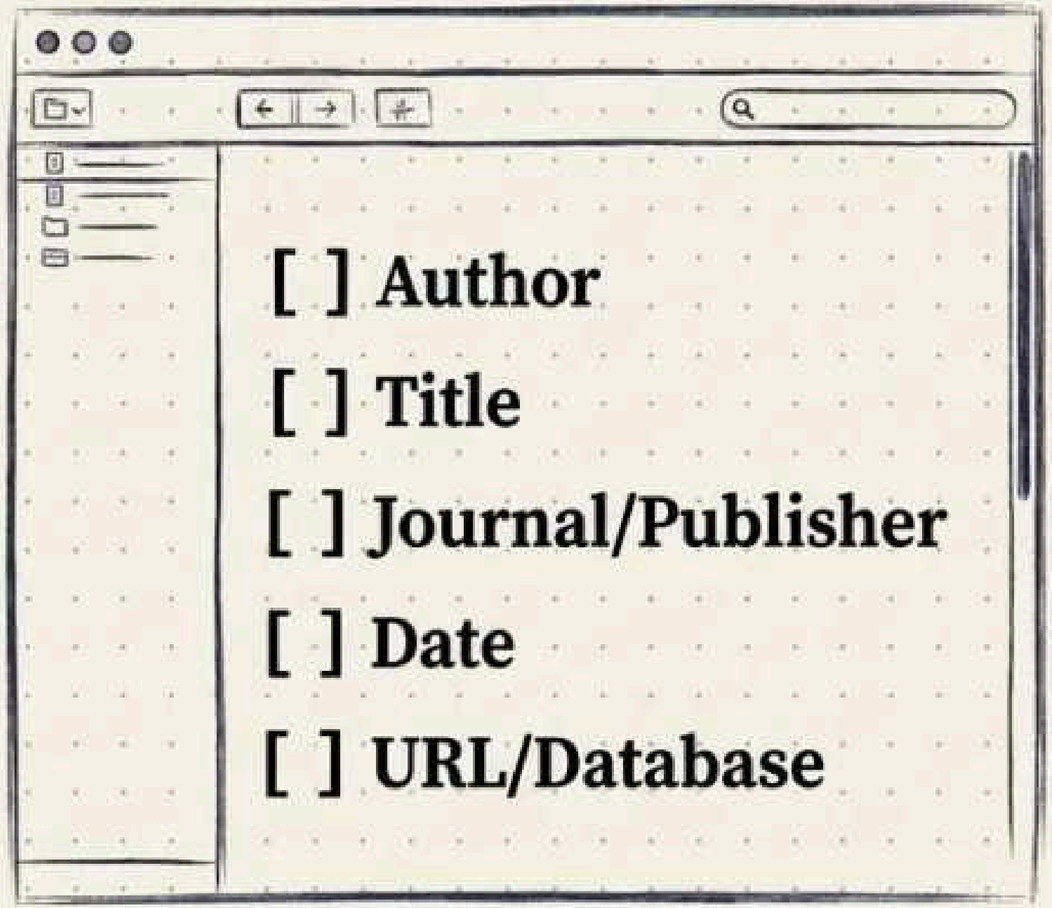
Step 3: Write the idea in your own words.



Step 4: Verify accuracy against the original.

Word-swapping is not paraphrasing. Notes written in your own voice flow seamlessly into your draft.

Capture source data at $T = 0$

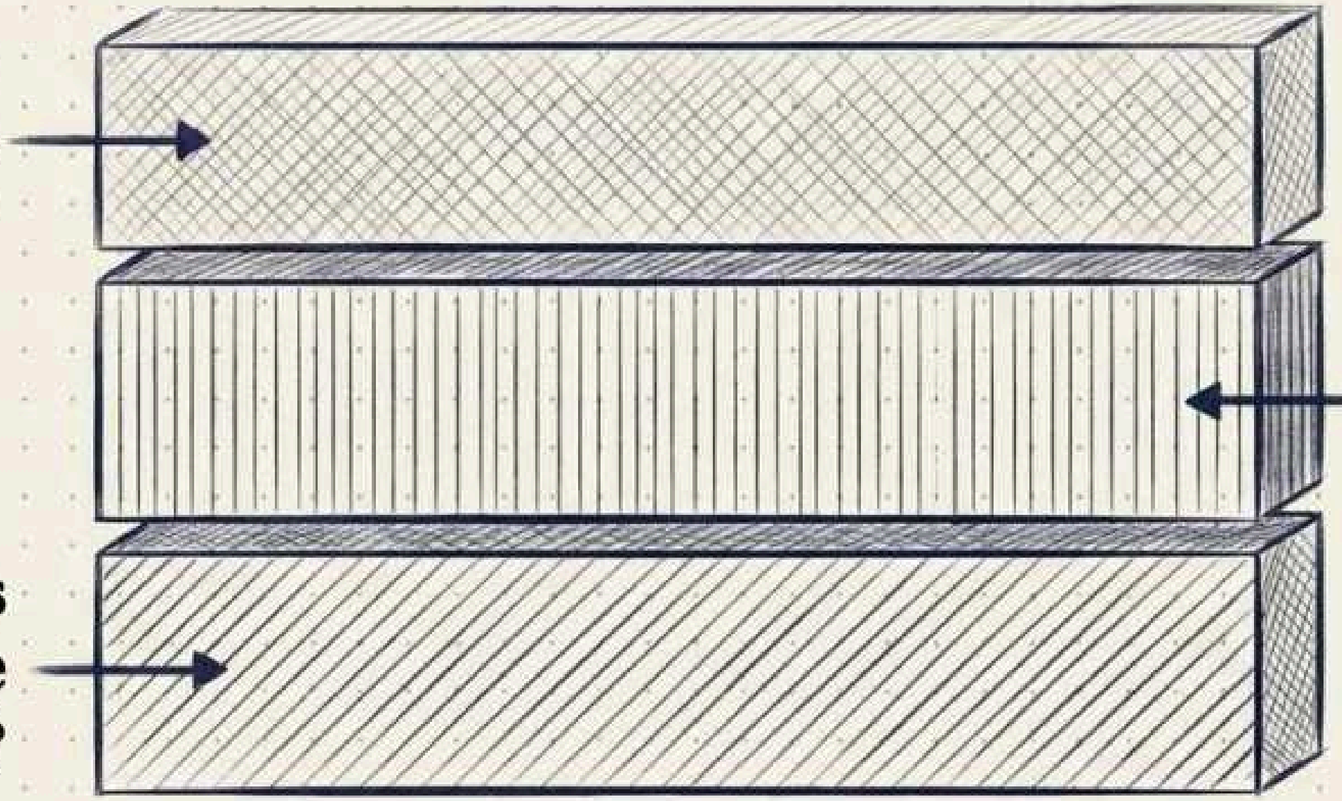


Record details the moment you open the source.

Adopt a reference manager early; one click builds future citations.

Switching tools halfway through a project creates permanent data gaps.

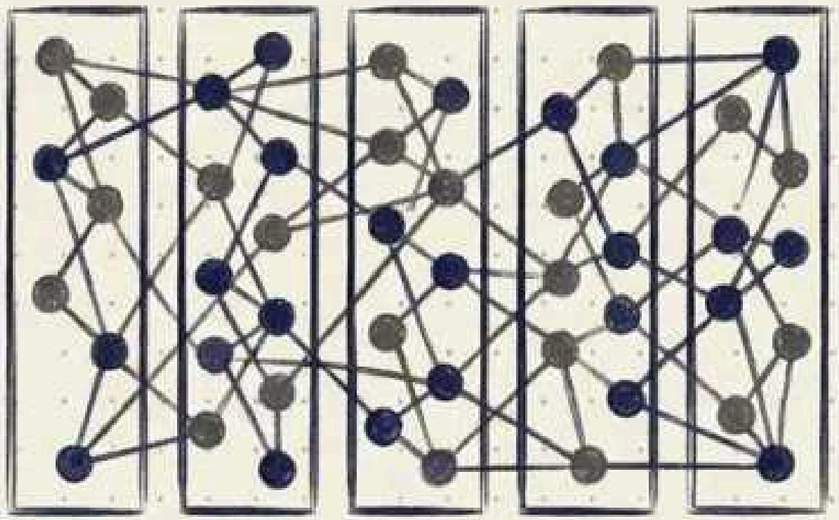
The Annotated Bibliography as a thinking tool



Even if unassigned, writing these blocks forces you to articulate the utility of every source.

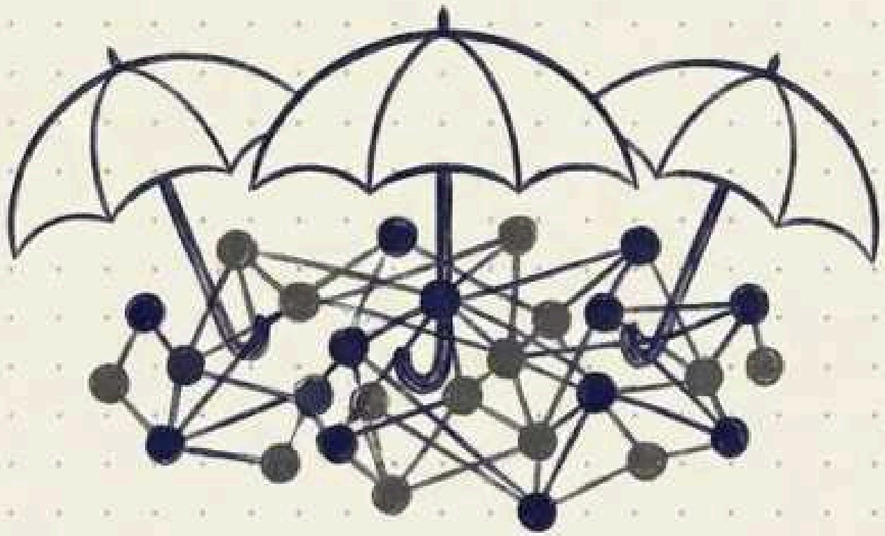
Organize your raw material by idea, not by source

List-making by Source



Organizing by source creates a list where each paragraph merely summarizes one article.

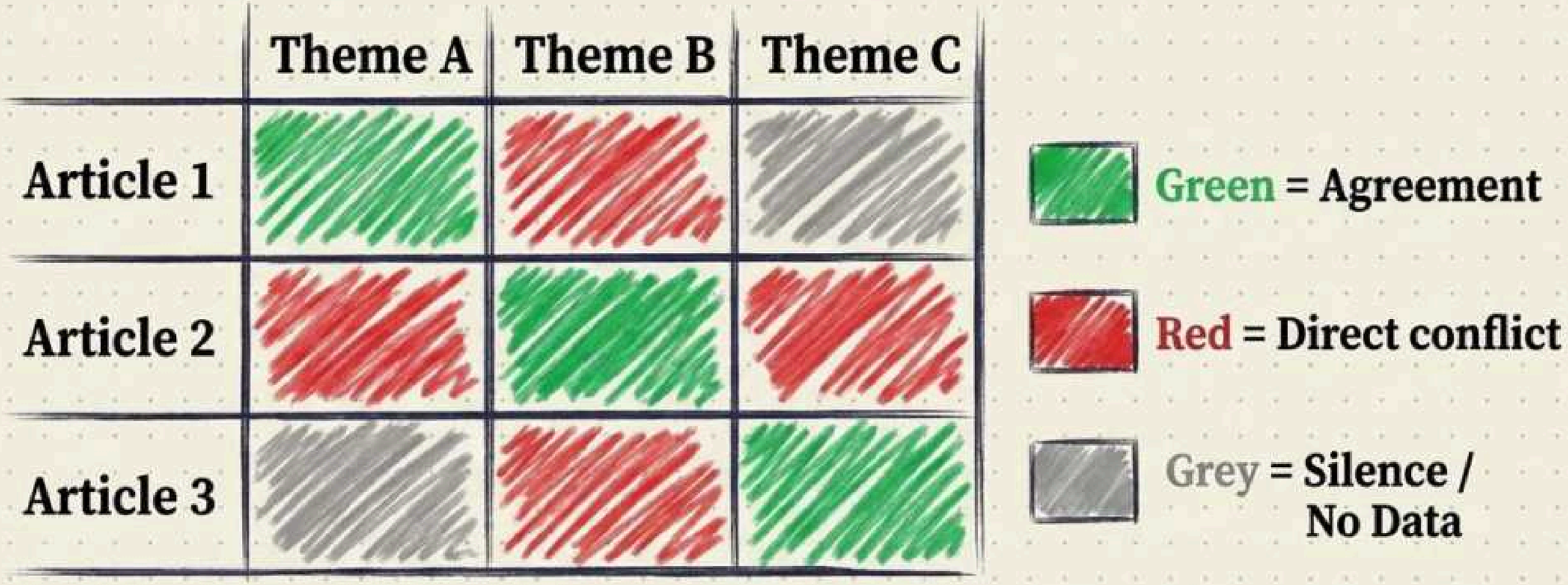
Thematic Clustering



Sort notes under the specific questions and themes of your project. Force different sources into conversation.

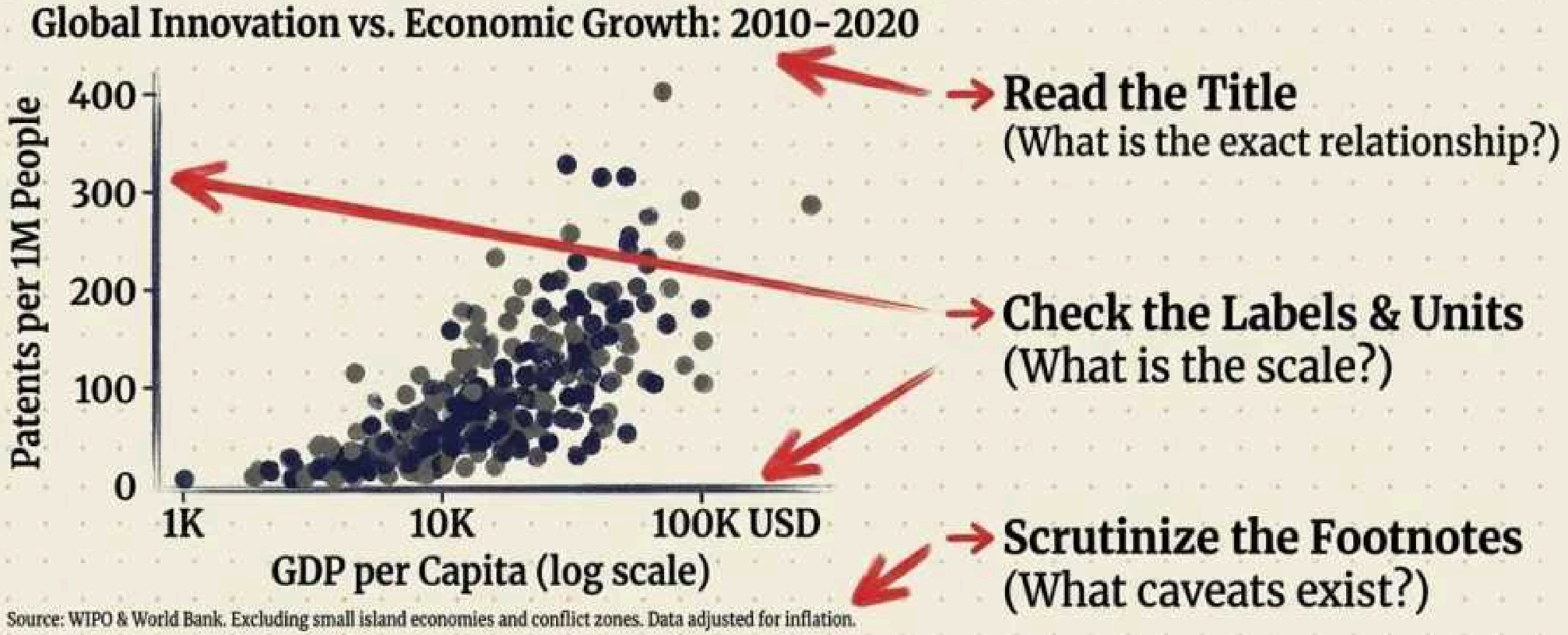
Thematically Sorted Notes = 0.5 × Completed Outline

The Synthesis Matrix visualizes your argument



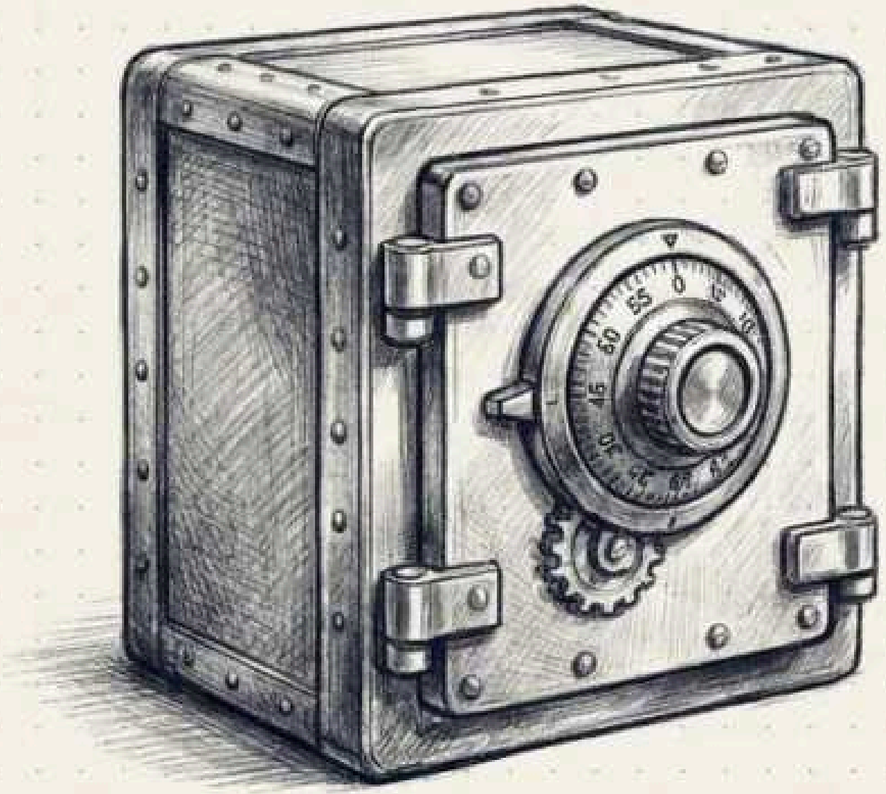
Patterns appear instantly. A single glance reveals where your argument is heavily supported and where gaps exist.

Never skim past the data visualizations



Charts often hold the strongest, most unvarnished evidence. Copy the exact details and meticulously note the page number.

Protect your raw material



Security Protocol
Maintain multiple backups.
Use highly descriptive file names.
Date every entry.

The Stakes
A careful set of notes cuts drafting time in half; a lost set costs days of labor.

Lecture Assignment: Process one article

¶ 4.17

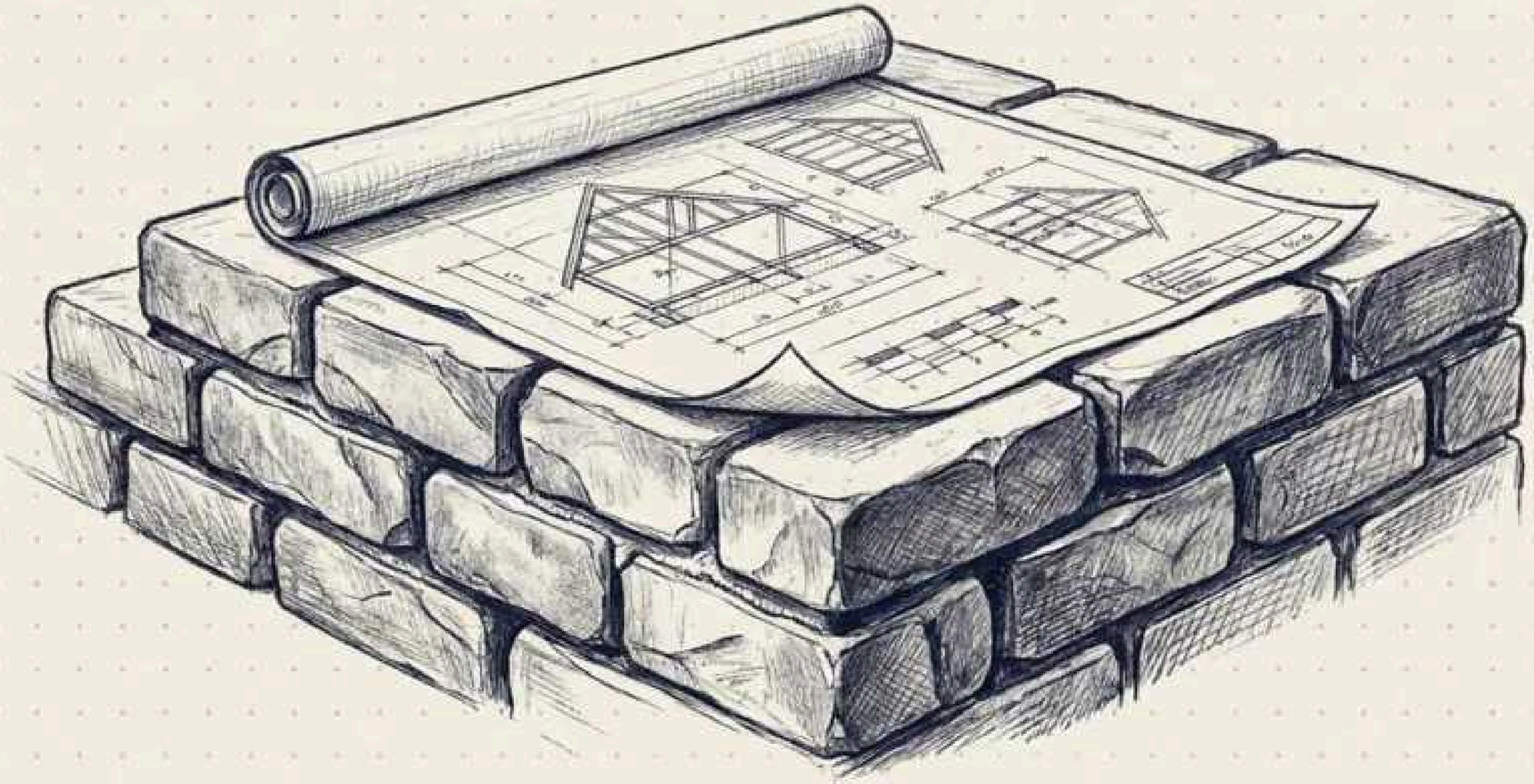
Task:
Choose one article and execute the Survey Method (¶ 4.3).

Deliverables:

- ☐ 1 Paraphrase (in your own words).
- ☐ 1 Short Exact Quotation (with mandatory page #).
- ☐ 1 Personal Comment.

How does this extracted note differ mechanically and intellectually from simply highlighting the text?

Next: Assembling the final architecture



In Lecture 5, we will take these structured notes and matrices to build the heart of the paper: an argument that draws upon many voices.