

CHARTING

The most important thing about studying a paper is to get hold of the patterns and structure that the author uses. This is to move beyond the content to what actually is in the author's mind.

1. Concentrate on the whole of the paper much as you would a picture. This produces a gestalt for you.
 - a. Scan through the paper (or table of contents, if one). Look for the author's major breaks and subdivisions.
 - b. Run fingers through the paragraphs. See what words, enumerations, etc., jump out at you.
 - c. Go through and number the paragraphs. Lay out the chart.
 - d. Read the conclusion, and the paragraphs before and after the divisions.
 - e. Circle the important words.
 - f. Find key paragraphs where the structure and/or thesis is laid out.
 - g. As yet you are not interested in content but only the topical headings.
2. Relate the paragraphs and topics.
3. Read and sum up the paragraphs. Do not start necessarily with the first paragraph, but those that get the topics up and the structure out. Then complete all paragraphs.
4. Further relate the paragraphs and the topics to refine your structure until a final gestalt comes.
5. In your own words write a brief proposition stating what is in each paragraph, each section of your structure and finally for the whole paper.
6. Retitle the paper and topics in your own words other than the author's.
7. Relate the final topics and propositions to other writers and your own self-understanding.
8. Analyze and criticize the author in relation to #7.

An example of this procedure is shown on the reverse side. Charting should be from left to right in order that your eye may help your mind grasp the structure. The above method and example, which is detailed for illustrative purposes, may look laborious, but actually saves time. With a little practice the summaries be shortened to what is the important thing in the paragraphs and structures.

TOPICAL	I. WHAT IS FAITH?	II. UNIVERSALITY OF FAITH		III. CONJUNCTION OF FAITH AND GOD	
	Fact of Faith	Types of Reliance		Obscuring of Fact	
		Secular	Religious		
SUMMARY OF PARAGRAPHS	<p>1. Faith is not intellectual belief, but is personal, practical, trusting in, reliance on, counting on something., e.g. faith in democracy, people. Existence is implied. Faith is an active thing directed toward something which has power. Intellectual assent does not involve reliance in action.</p>	<p>2. Without such faith we cannot live. We cannot live without knowledge, but not by knowledge without faith. We always rely on something we do not know., e.g. science, social life. Confidence has to go beyond knowledge</p>	<p>3. Religious faith is that life is worth living, i.e., reliance on centers of value to bestow significance and worth on existence. We do not live without a cause, an object of devotion, or something on which we can rely for meaning. All men have faith.</p>	<p>4. We confuse the human process with their institutional organization, e.g., education, politics, religion. Religion as faith that life is worth living is common to all men. No man lives without some purpose, cause or glorification of some god.</p>	<p>5. To have faith and God is one and the same. To believe life is worth living is to always think of it as made worth living by something on which we rely</p>
	PROPOSITIONAL SUMMARY OF STRUCTURE	<p>Faith is a relational term which points to my relying on a not-me to have character and power expected of it.</p>	<p>When I ask the question as an individual "How can I relate?" I see that confidence (faith) always goes beyond knowledge</p>	<p>When I ask the question, "How can I live?" I see that I rely on something to make life worth living.</p>	<p>Faith points to a human activity not an institution.</p>
<p>In order to thrust in life (live) I always have to rely on something I don't know, and when this reliance is on something to make life worth living it is religious faith.</p>					

Religious faith is a relational term which points to that activity wherein I rely on some center value, cause, or purpose to give my life meaning; it is not intellectual belief but has knowledge of its object; and when I depend for meaning upon this reality, it is my God.

THE CHARTING METHOD

PART ONE: THE INITIAL PROCESS

How to get a quick grasp of the whole paper.

Decide to love the paper. Feel of it, ritualize affection, pronounce the author's name.

➤ Explore the entire contents. Look at enunciation, titles, opening and closing paragraphs, words that jump out at you, and guess what the whole paper is about.

Number the paragraphs.

Lay out the chart horizontally on a piece of paper, 1/3 of the way down from the top and number spaces to correspond with paragraphs. Do this very quickly. This is a work chart, not a museum piece.

Scan for structure -- don't read. Look quickly for transitional clues: numerals, italics, words. Ready, at the most, the first 4 words of each paragraph. Record findings on work-chart below the line.

Scan for content; simple topical headings. Read, at most, first and last sentences of each paragraph and scribble findings below the line. Do not necessarily start with the first paragraph, but start where topics emerge easily. Then complete all paragraphs.

PART TWO: THE DEPTH DIALOGUE

How to ask the paper good questions and hear answers.

What meanings and questions are raised by the scan data? Record conclusions above the line/

What are the sections emerging in your chart? What functions do they play: intro, conclusion, transition, etc. Give each section an impressionistic title. Record above the line.

You still have not read the paper.

Where do you need more data? Ask your questions, read in appropriate places, and record findings above the line.

What are the questions you are now raising about both the structure of the paper and the content? Read to complete your picture of the paper and answer your questions, not just to be reading. Keep your side of the dialogue engaged.

Organize your findings into a total picture above the line. Give most paragraphs a title. Title all sections in a consistent way. Give a good title to the whole paper.

Ascertain where the key questions and paragraphs of the paper are for further explanation into the heart of the paper.

THE CHARTING METHOD, cont.

PART THREE: THE FOUR LEVEL PROCESS

The Topical: The impressions of the broad inclusive images of content. Simple answers to the question: "What is this section about?"

The Functional: The external structural relations of all the sections of your chart: introduction, conclusion, main point, etc. Simple answers to the question: "What role does this 'section' play in the paper?"

The Propositional: In your own words, write a brief proposition stating what is in each paragraph, each section of your structure, and finally, the whole paper. The propositions organize the interior content of each paragraph and section. This is a dynamic always in operation when you are charting. Without it, you do not really know what your topical and functional levels mean.

The Existential: This level has to do with what the paper's message is doing to you personally. It is never absent: the good charter is deeply engaged in what he is doing. The following is a helpful way to structure the existential level chart. Turn your chart over and answer these four questions on the back.

1. What shifts in image has this paper provoked for you?
2. What is its personal address to your current life?
3. What positive contribution has this paper made to your self-understanding?
4. What is your critical appraisal of this paper?

PART FOUR: TYPES OF CHARTS

Work Chart - The fast scribbling of data as discusses in the six steps above.

Holding Chart - The careful drawing of a neat chart of all four levels to hold final conclusions.

Teaching Chart - lists data needed for teaching the paper, such as key points, good questions, images, lecturettes, etc.

Art Chart - brands on the brain the structure of life discovered in the structure of the paper. Adding color and heavy lines portrays the full glory of the picture.