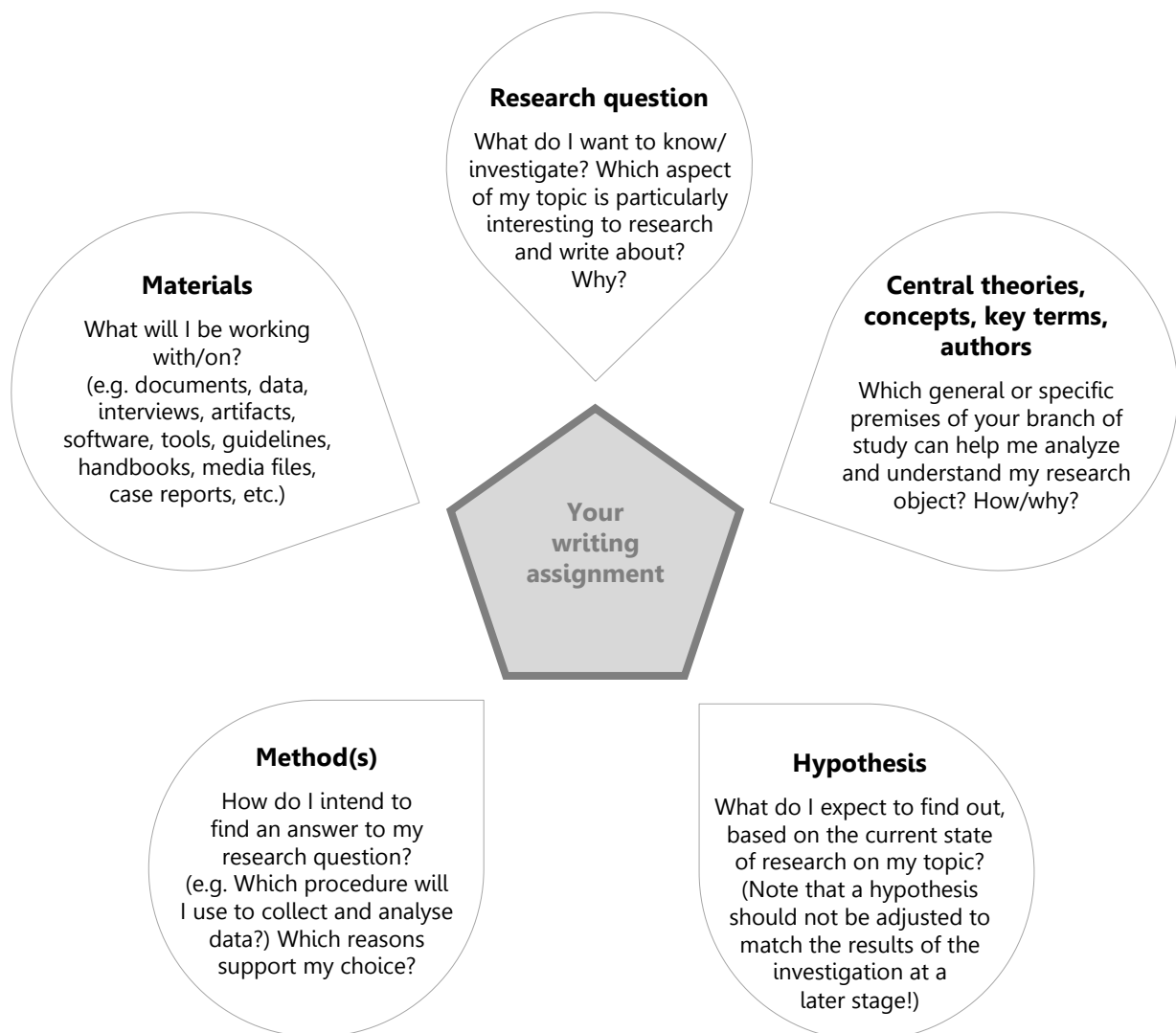


When planning a writing assignment, it is useful to clarify the 'cornerstones' that provide its foundation before starting to write or research in depth.

The following five questions are essential for providing transparency and a clear sense of direction for yourself, your supervisors and your readers. The questions come in no particular order, but rather emerge dynamically from the process of writing:

- What do I want to know/investigate? (**research question**)
- What do I expect to find out, based on the current state of research on my topic? (**hypothesis**)
- How can I find this out? (**method(s)**)
- What can I use as a guide/orientation? (**central theories, concepts, key terms, authors**)
- What will I be working with/on? (**materials**)

The following model by Rienecker/Stray (2005) shows how these questions connect to and often even depend on one another: during the writing process, you will find that if one cornerstone changes, so will another. Each of the cornerstones are equally important.



Translation of this handout by Juliane Homann and Julian Maresch (studierendenWERK BERLIN).

Sources:

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Frank, Andrea, Stefanie Haake and Swantje Lahm. (2007). *Schlüsselkompetenzen: Schreiben in Studium und Beruf*. Stuttgart, Weimar: Verlag J.B. Metzler.

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