ETH zürich

Coffee Lectures

Collaborative Writing

One for all and all for one?

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18 November 2020, Webinar via Zoom

ETH Library

Objectives

- Knowing the most important strategies to enable cooperation in a collaborative writing process.
- Understanding the impact of the right writing tool to get feedback and improve text quality.

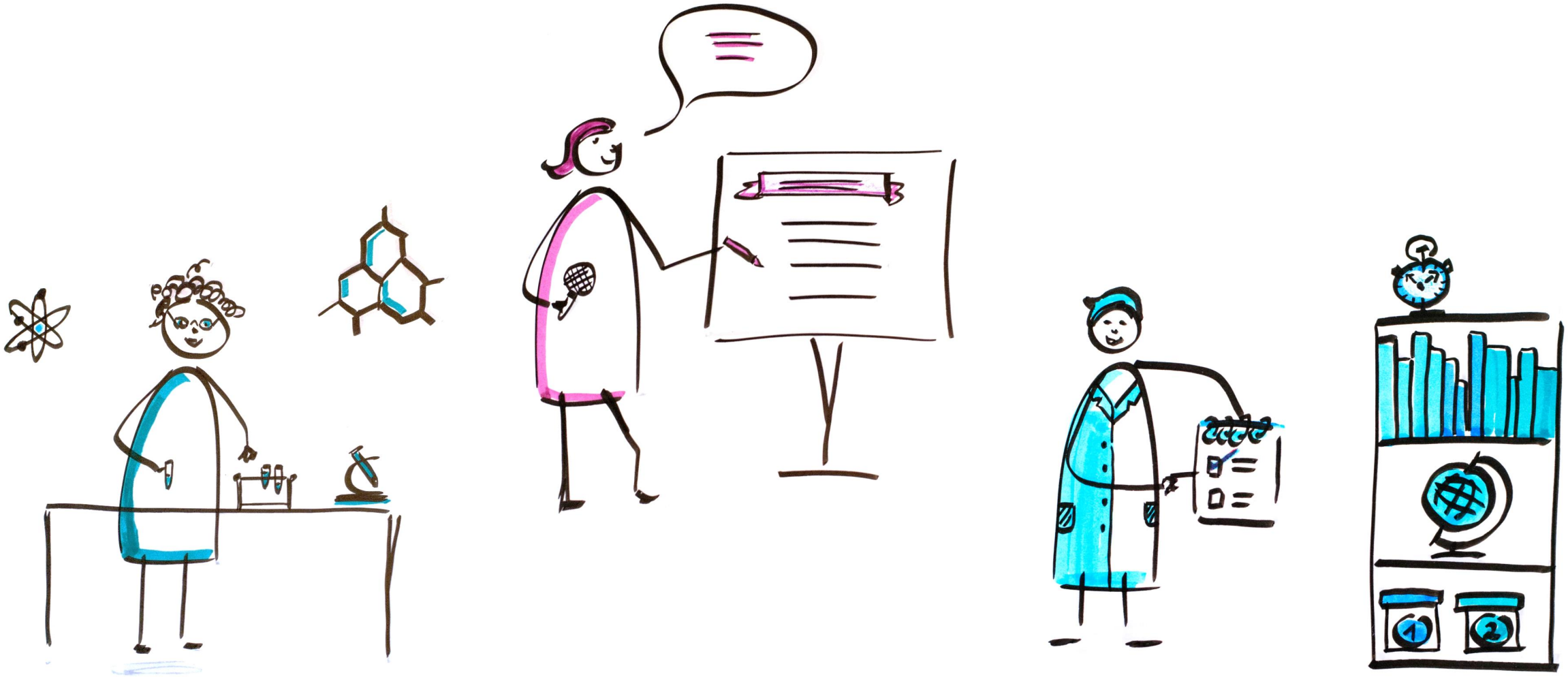
Agenda

Three friends

Their adventures

Their rescuer

Three Musketeers: All for one and one for all



Antha: the Future Nobel Prize Winner

Strengths

Has lots of ideas

Loves doing research

Motivates people

Weaknesses

Writing texts

Portha: the Language Artist

Strengths

Writing texts

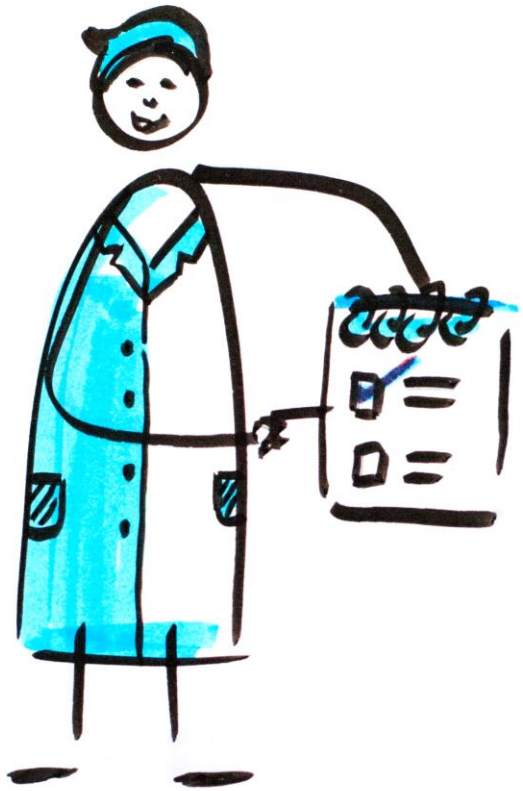
Communicating

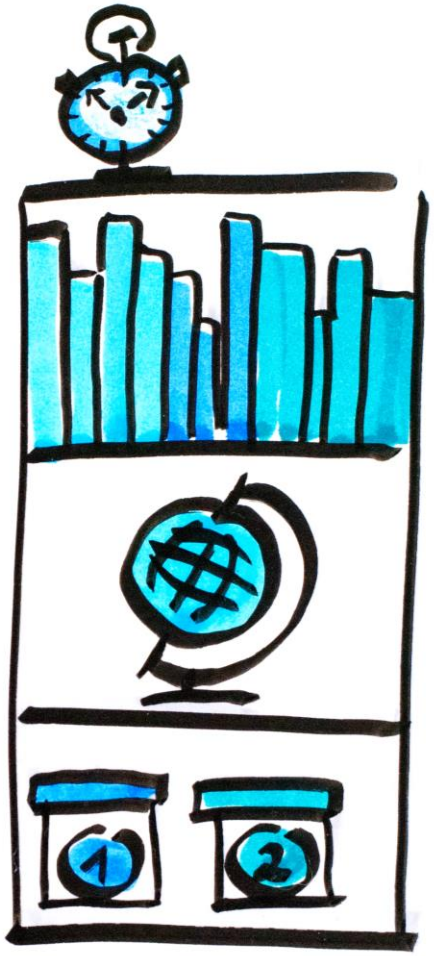
Weaknesses

Scepticism

Poor decisionmaking

Aramis: the Hard Worker





Strengths

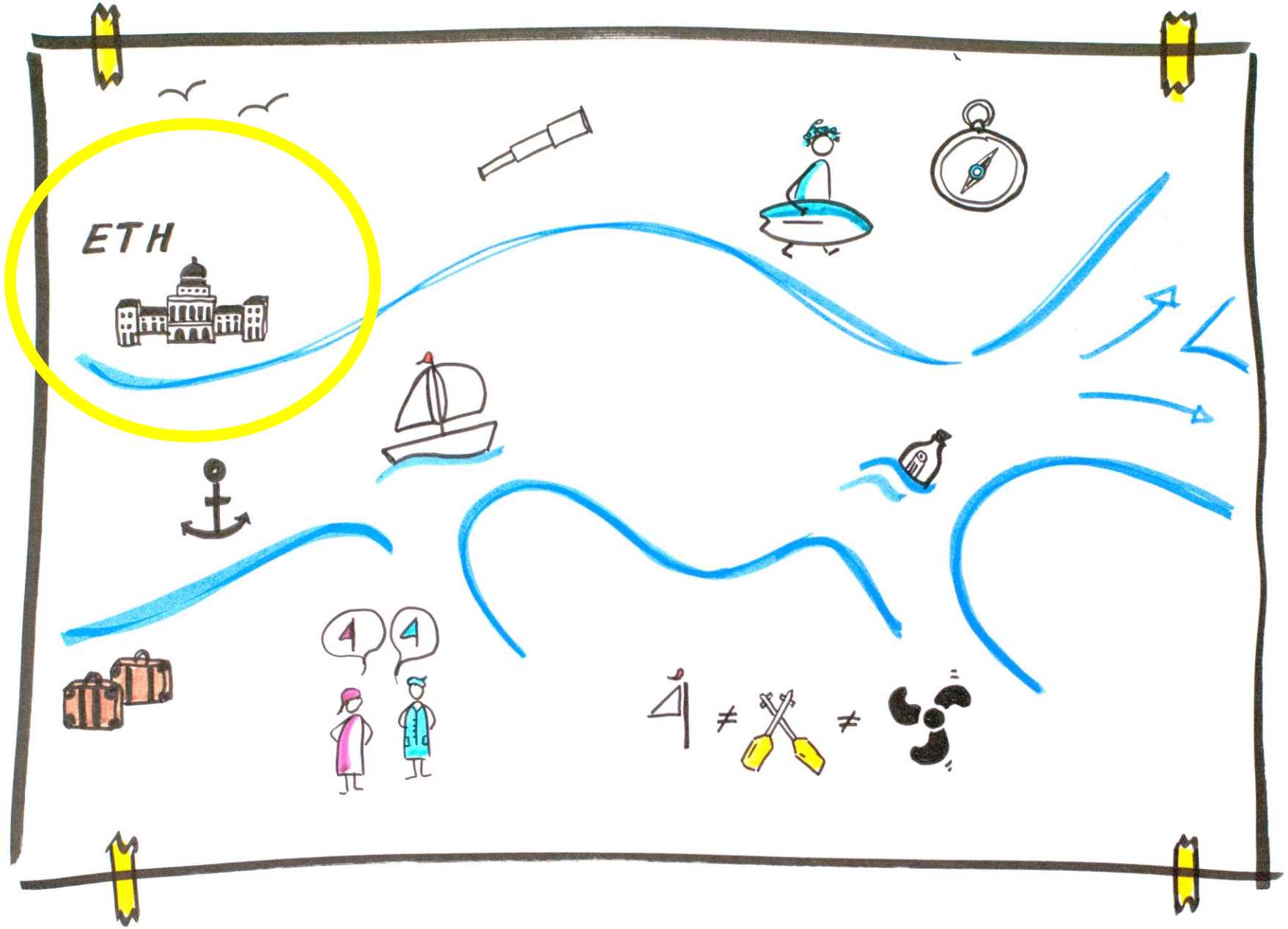
Likes to get things done

Organizing

Weaknesses

Avoids discussions

Heading off towards adventures…



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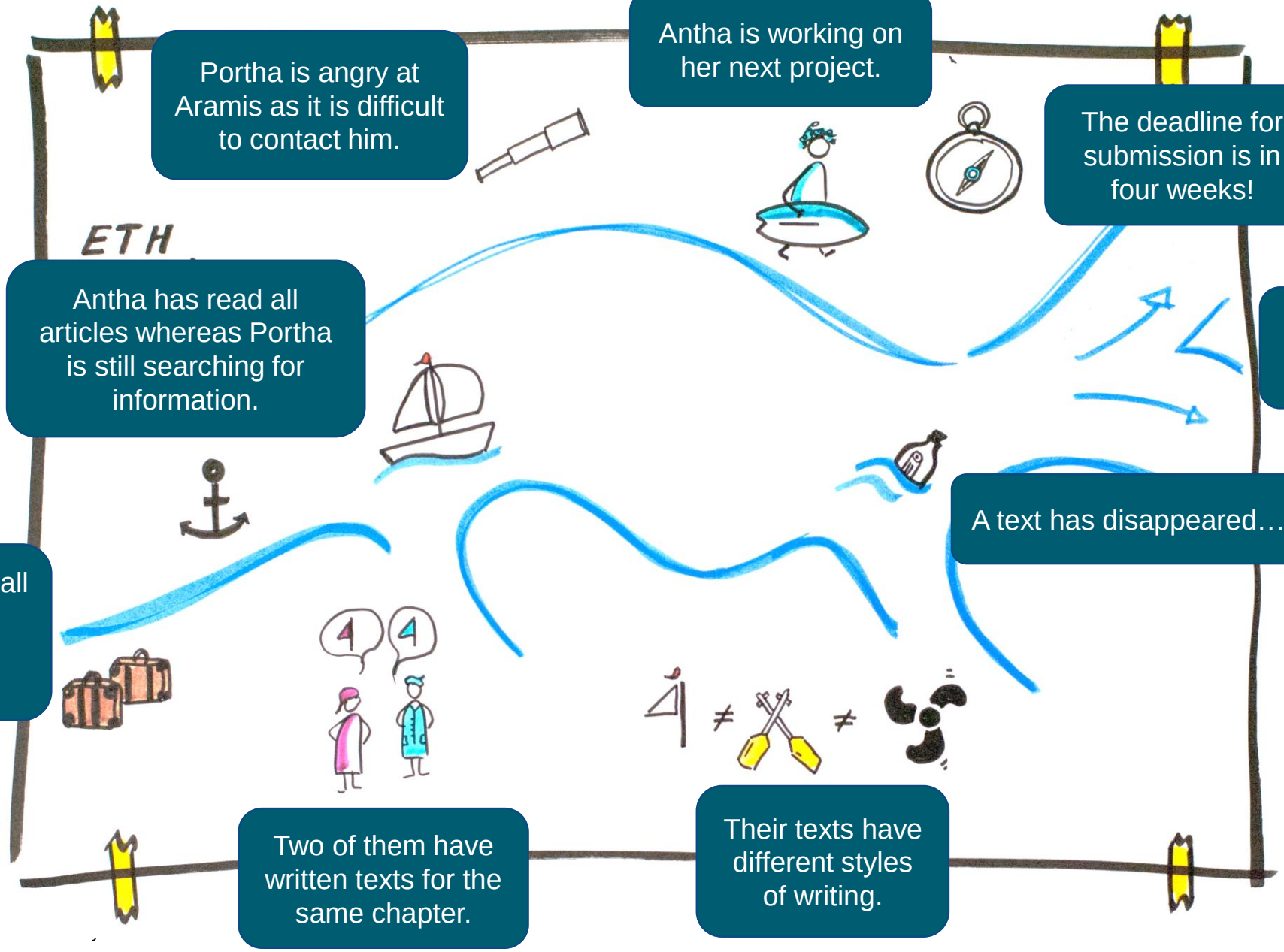


Portha is angry at Aramis as it is difficult to contact him.

Antha is working on her next project.

The deadline for submission is in four weeks!

Antha has read all articles whereas Portha is still searching for information.

Aramis doesn't agree on Portha's results.

A text has disappeared…

Aramis has finished all graphs without informing his colleagues.

Two of them have written texts for the same chapter.

Their texts have different styles of writing.

D‘Artagnan: the Brain

His inside tips for success

- Build a team
- Assign clear tasks
- Set up a timetable
- Choose an appropriate tool for writing
- Give constructive feedback

Become an invincible team

- Get to know each other and build up trust
- Develop a common understanding of your task and the important terms

- Choose a tool for efficient communication and discussions
- Prepare and record meetings

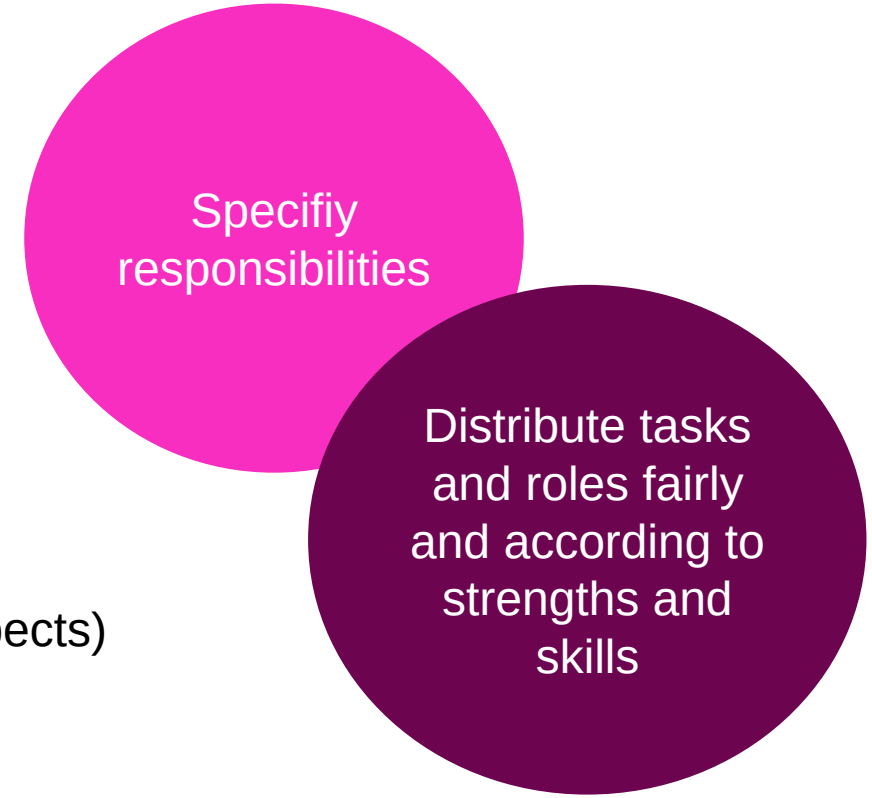
- Clarify and agree on
  - Authorship
  - IT Security, storage location
  - Legal aspects, data protection
  - Costs
  - Etc.

Remember to put things down in writing!

Combine forces thanks to optimal allocation of tasks

Determine together, who will…

- coordinate
- communicate with your supervisor
- search which sources
- read and summarize which texts
- write which text parts
- take care of layout and design (graphs, tables, etc.)
- check which elements (content, language, design, formal aspects)
- etc.



Achieve your goals by setting up a timetable

- Create a project and a work plan
- Draw up a timetable
- Determine milestones and dates at an early stage

Getting and giving feedback requires planning and assigning tasks as well!

Let the writing tool support your team work

Make sure you can…

- jointly access the same document
- jointly write a text
- add purposeful and objective feedback for your peers
- make visible changes and comments
- manage different text versions
- store your files at one central location
- put down all your information, documents and literature
- access from different places and devices

Decide whether you need a second tool for reference management

Choose an appropriate tool for collaborative writing

LaTeX

Overleaf

KNOW

Knowledge
Network Online
Whiteboard

AUTHOREA

GatherContent

penflip

Microsoft Word

Google Docs

Perusall

etherpad

Pages

Gingko

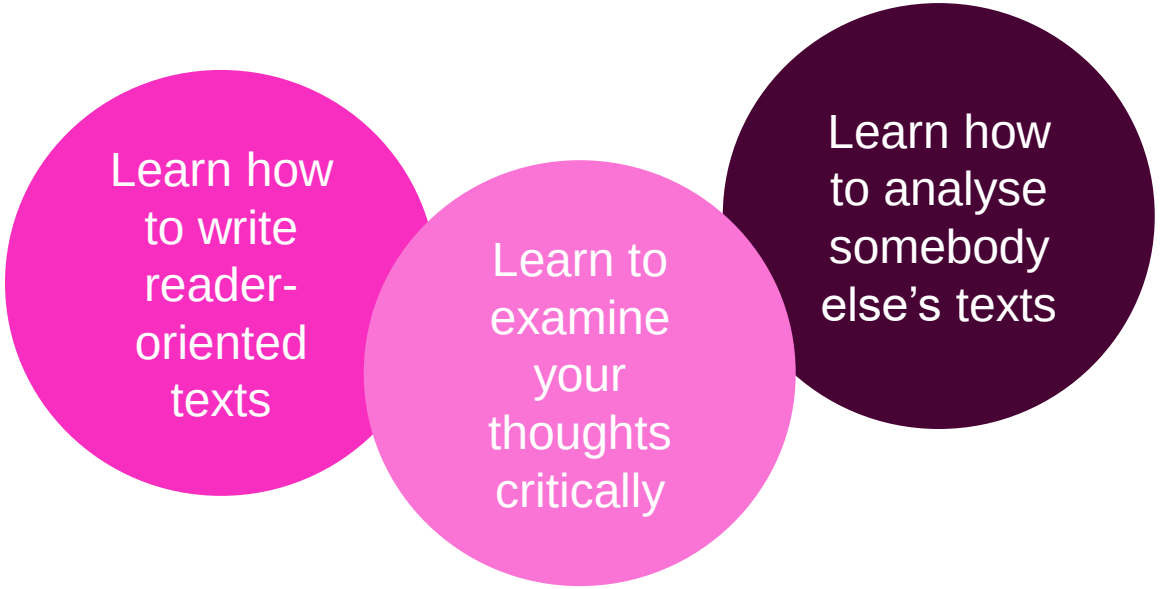
DRAFT

Dropbox Paper

Be creative and successful by giving feedback

Agree on…

- who is going to read which parts of the text
- the order of (proof-)reading
- to which aspects feedback will be given
- how the feedback will be given (tracking mode, colours, comments)



Three Musketeers: All for one and one for all

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Language Centre of UZH and ETH Zurich	www.sprachenzentrum.uzh.ch

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Thanks for your attention!

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