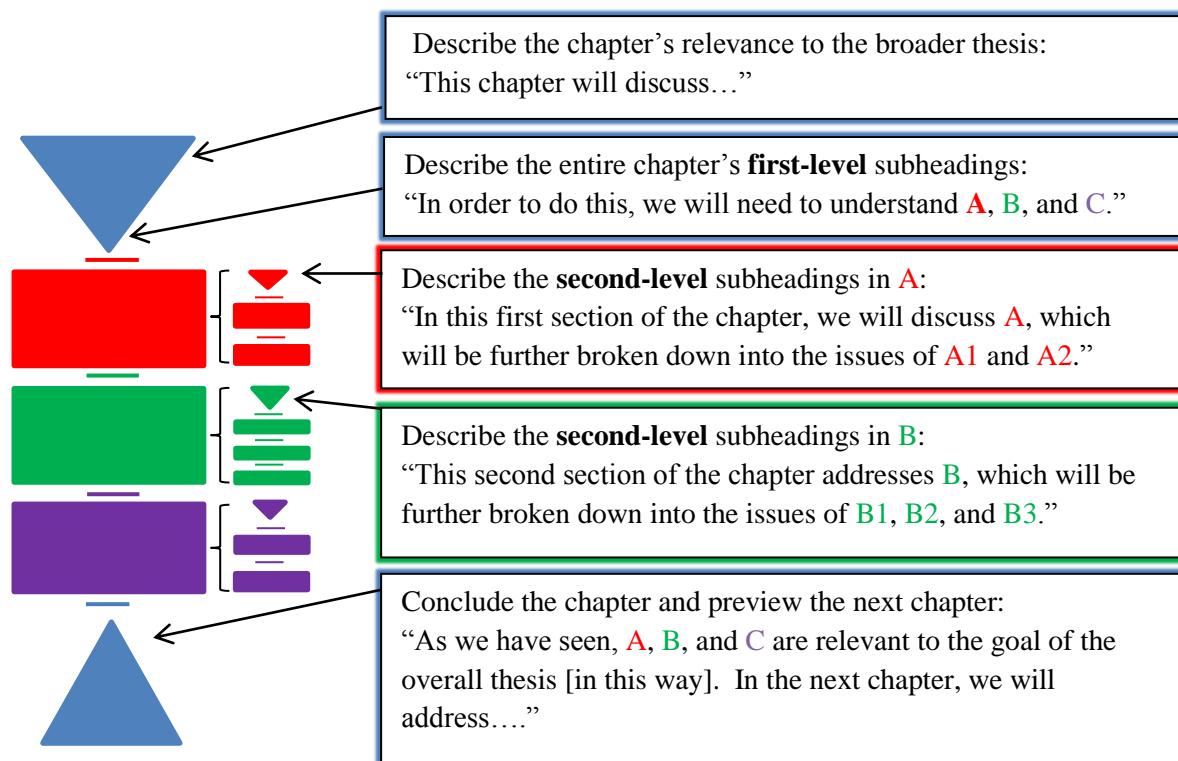


Organizing Thesis Chapters with Subheadings

When struggling with how to organize the content of larger texts such as thesis chapters, it is important to realize that the organizational principles of shorter texts still apply:

- Have a claim/goal/argument for the chapter (even if it is kind of “soft,” such as the importance of understanding the existing literature).
- Indicate the organization of the chapter in the chapter’s introductory section.
- Maintain approximate proportion between the sub-sections and avoid unmotivated subheadings.

If you can envision that each chapter is really made out of smaller themes, it is easy to stitch them together using explicit cues to the reader: topic sentences and subheadings. Below you can see how and where to do this. (Triangles represent paragraphs dedicated to organizational cues; horizontal lines represent subheadings; rectangles represent chapter content):



Although the seminary allows for up to four levels of subheadings, you should use the third and fourth levels sparingly and employ the same “depth” of subheadings equally across sections of chapters.

Consult page 16 of *The Shortcut* for subheading formats.