

THE WRITING PROCESS

The Writing Process is a multi-step method for composing text-based documents and projects.

The writing process consists of three steps:

1. Prewriting
2. Drafting
3. Rewriting (a.k.a., Revision)

Prewriting consists of several different methods for brainstorming content to be placed into the document (e.g., freelist, freewriting, clustering, etc.) Prewriting may also consist of planning basic organization strategies (e.g., outlining, use of graphic organizers, etc.).

Drafting consists of the actual creation of a coherent draft, which may contain a product good enough to publish.

Rewriting consists of different methods for “perfecting” the paper. Rewriting may include adjustments to the different language units contained within the document: individual words, sentences, paragraphs, and the overall document. Rewriting typically includes changes to the organization as well. Rewriting may also include the additional steps of editing and/or proofreading of the document, where the author or a peer reviews the work to correct errors.

Prewriting is the initial or first step of the writing process. In Prewriting, the author brainstorms or pre-plans content for the document or project. The author may also plan a basic arrangement or organization for the document or project.

PREWRITING

Prewriting consists of a few different methods for brainstorming content: Freelist, Freewriting, and Clustering.

Prewriting consists of a few different methods for organizing content: Outlining, Flowcharting, and Mapping.

FREELISTING

Freelisting refers to the idea of listing all of the topic matter that comes to mind. In other words, make a “grocery list” of everything that should be included in the document. No time limits exist in freelist, which can be accomplished over a few minutes to a few days to a few months depending on the deadline of the document/project.

Example: (Assignment: What Are the Major Elements of Classical Music?)

Melody

Harmony

Chords

Volume

Tone

Instrumentation

Vocalization
High Elements
Low Elements
Movement
Solos
Accompaniment
Duets
Quartets
Orchestras
Bands
Beat
Rhythm
Tempo
Time Signature/Meter
Dynamics
Crescendos
Consonance
Dissonance
Themes
Lyrics

FREEWITING

Freewriting refers to the practice of doing a short burst of writing (for about 15-20 minutes) without stopping for grammar, structure, spelling, or other “finished” qualities. The idea is to “dump” your ideas onto the page as fast as you can.

Example: (Assignment: Is Private Healthcare Better Than Public Healthcare?)
Public health care is a wonderful thing for everyone. It is a great thing because everyone gets to see the doctor. This has a wonderful effect on the whole population because infections are controlled, people are not sick, and spreading disease. The downside of the public option is that taxation must be increased oftentimes to pay for the system and everyone must participate in paying for a share of the public plan. This means that everyone has to pay for everyone else and themselves. The upside is that everyone is covered. Private healthcare is good because it allows those with money to have things like private rooms, private doctors, and private care, which can be personalized or customized in ways that can only be imagined. Paying for specialized procedures without doctor's consent may be one of the best things about private healthcare. Plastic surgery is an example of how private healthcare works. If you want to adjust your physical features, you simply pay the doctor to do it. No one else pays for it. You can elect to pay for a private suite for recovery and have a private nurse. In a more public situation, you would have to share a room, share a doctor, share a nurse, and would not have many of the customized options. The sad thing is that we are already in the era of private healthcare where people have to pay to get the services they need, oftentimes out of pocket. If you are not rich, then you don't have access to the care you might want or need. Also, if you want health care you need to have insurance, and if you don't have insurance, your access to healthcare is limited. Right

now, the rich can get whatever they need, while the poor hardly get what they need. The downside of this is that people are not getting vaccinated or getting diseases cured, so everyone could be walking around sick and spreading illness. In a system where everyone is covered then disease and illness are more controlled.

CLUSTERING

Clustering is a method of visualizing things that one needs to write about. In a typical cluster, one places the main idea in a circle in the center of the page. Next, the writer needs to use lines and other circles to connect more ideas (like sub-ideas) to the main idea.

OUTLINING

Outlining is a simple method for organizing the contents of a document. Two types of outlines exist: a half outline (which uses simple words to define different sections of the paper and content) and a whole outline (which uses complete sentences to different sections of the paper and content).

Half-Outline

1. Topic
 - 1.1. Subtopic
 - 1.2. Subtopic
2. Topic
 - 2.1. Subtopic
 - 2.2.1. Detail
 - 2.2.2. Detail
 - 2.2. Subtopic
3. Topic

Whole-Outline

1. First sentence of the first paragraph.
 - 1.1. Second sentence of the first paragraph
 - 1.2. Third sentence of the first paragraph* First sentence of the second paragraph
- 2.1. Second sentence of the second paragraph
 - 2.2.1. Supporting Sentence/Idea
 - 2.2.2. Supporting Sentence/Idea
- 2.2. Third sentence of the second paragraph
2. First Sentence of the third paragraph

USE OF GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

The internet is full of various graphic organizers to help you plan and organize your writing. Surf the web to find some useful organizers which might be helpful for you.

DRAFTING

Drafting refers to the task of creating the most basic form of the document. Three basic approaches for drafting are explained:

FOCUSED DRAFTING

Write your document from beginning to end and include all of the content needed in a single sitting.

ZERO DRAFTING

Just start your draft without any expectations or without an ending in mind. Leave holes for things you can write about later. Try to resist the urge to write an introduction or conclusion (unless, of course, you find it easy to do so). Next, once you have finished your draft, fill-in or complete the holes in content. Finally, work to add your introduction and conclusion.

SPORATIC DRAFTING

Instead of writing your draft in a single sitting, try to break up the task into smaller writing sessions spread throughout the day, week, or even month (depending on the project). Write your document for a few minutes, then take a break. Come back to your draft later, write for a few more minutes, then take a break.

REWRITING

CHANGING THE ORGANIZATION

One of the first things to consider in revising is how to order the ideas. Ask yourself: Are the contents in a form that is suitable for the audience? Do I like the order of ideas? Could I reorder the ideas in the document?

CHANGING THE UNITS

Changing content on the different levels/units of writing is another method for revising the document/project.

Words

- * Can I upgrade words?* Can I use better words?
- * Are there words that I can cut?

Sentences

- * Are my sentences strong?* Can I reword certain sentences?
- * Can I add new sentences or cut sentences?

Paragraphs

- * Does each paragraph start well? Do I have main topic sentences?* Is each paragraph supported well?
- * Do I have sentences that conclude the paragraphs or transition to the next ideas?

Document

- * Is the document in proper form?* Does the document follow a source-documentation system format?

PROOFREAD THE DOCUMENT

Proofread your document by starting with a basic run of a spell-check application. Use a grammar-check application. Next, read your document aloud and look for areas where the wording is problematic (you'll notice these areas when you stumble in the reading). Certain areas may need to be "smoothed out" or changed to help the "flow" of words or ideas.

PEER REVIEW

Have another reader review your work and make suggestions in terms of content. Ask them if they like the document/project, and if not, why not? Ask them specifically what could be changed to improve the document/project?

COMPUTER-AIDED REVIEW

Another method for revision, even proofreading (beyond the basic spell- and grammar-check), is to consider using artificial intelligence. Many platforms offer substantial revision tools. For example, Google Gemini (a free A.I. application) offers wonderful feedback. Similarly, many different applications can help you to proofread and edit your document (Chat GPT, Goblin Tools, etc.). One limitation: Do not let the application write your work. You should always write/create your own content.