

Exploring and Planning

The Writing Process



at The Academic Resource Center

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Prewriting

- **Analyze the assignment or project.* Consider your purpose and audience.
- **Write out your thoughts.* Freewrite, journal, and create maps to discover ideas.
- **Develop and Organize.* Ask questions, research, and outline main ideas.
- **Sharpen your focus.* Identify a central focus and objective.

Drafting

- **Just write!* Write a draft without concern for grammar, spelling, or fine-tuning. Use your prewriting materials (maps, outlines, freewriting), but do not feel bound to them. As you write, new connections and examples will come to you. Include them, and let the developing sense of your topic guide you.
- **Give it time.* Take a few days off so you can review your writing with fresh eyes.

Sharing

- **Identify an interested reader.* Visit the Writing Center, chat with a professor, or ask for feedback from a classmate.
- **Come prepared.* Formulate specific questions you'd like your reading partner to address (i.e., *Is my thesis clear?*). Beforehand, consider ways to develop and improve your project so that you may discuss and debate those potential paths.
- **Make a follow up plan.* Sharing ideas can take place at any stage in the writing process. Try to share your work with an interested reader at more than one stage.

Revising

- **Rewrite with a macro focus.* Pay attention to your guiding idea and its organization and development throughout the essay. Revise for clarity, cohesion, logic, and adequate support.

Proofreading

- **Focus on the details.* Edit for grammar, formatting, punctuation, and spelling.
- **Give your writing one last look.* Read your writing aloud, or print a paper copy, to catch any remaining errors.

Presenting

- **Show your final product.* Turn in your essay to your instructor, create a writing portfolio, email your work to friends and family, or send it to a magazine or journal.

The Writing Process

The best writing doesn't happen overnight. Think of each writing project as a process which develops over time and which incorporates feedback from other writers.

