

## The Writing Process

The way we write depends on the way we think and work, as well as the specific task at hand. However, there are certain general steps that help us achieve our goals and reach our readers. This handout describes each of these steps, but what they look like and when they happen may differ from person to person. What do you already do that works well? What strategies would you like to try? Which step would help you move forward on your current project?

### Assessing



How and what you write can change greatly depending on the context and purpose of the piece. Who are you writing to? How do you want them to feel as they read? What do you want them to think or do by the end? Consider the conventions of this genre or discipline—whether you want to use or defy them.

### Revising



Revision means taking a fresh look, often after a day or so away from the text. There are many components to consider: Does it meet all the assignment's requirements? Is the tone appropriate for the intended audience? Where should you elaborate and where can you be more brief? This is major reconstruction—you might add, delete, and/or move entire paragraphs.

### Brainstorming



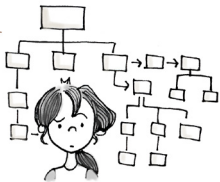
Brainstorming or prewriting is the thinking and planning that comes before you start to write. This could be in the form of a list, a concept map, a focused free-write, or a conversation. This will allow you to get down all your ideas so you can focus on the ones you're most excited about.

### Proofreading



Go through your piece word by word and sentence by sentence, to correct spelling and grammar, clarify sentence structure, refine word choice, and other fine-tuning. This works best after multiple drafts and revisions, when you have a draft you are happy with. All you need to do now is get it ready for sharing.

### Organizing



Organizing your content is crucial to logic and clarity. It's often helpful to create an ordered outline you can use as a guide as you write: checking off points along the way and finding the best place for new ideas. You could also conduct a reverse outline to notice what's missing or out of order in a completed draft.

### Final Draft



Like a sculptor, you have whittled down your mass of ideas into a piece of art. Give yourself a pat on the back, do a little victory dance, and frame your paper in gold—you are finished! Congratulations on braving the long journey, visiting and revisiting these various stages of the writing process.

### Drafting



This is where you put your ideas into full sentences and paragraphs. Don't stress about word count or spelling; instead, focus on getting your thoughts down. You might even try turning off your computer screen in order to resist re-reading and editing until you have a full draft finished.