

NOTES TO THE 5 WRITING STEPS

STEP 1 – Pre-writing & Drafting

What you do in Pre-writing

- Choose your topic
- Identify your audience
- Identify your purpose
- Gather supporting details

Strategies for Pre-writing

- Write for a limited amount of time on whatever comes to mind
- Formalized list-making
- Bubble map (also called mapping or webbing)
- Formulate questions you have about the topic then look for answers (research)

Your Audience

- Anyone who is going to “receive” your work

Why you need to know your audience

- Amount of information
- Word choice
- Kinds of details
- Formal/Informal

Purpose

- Why you’re writing
- What you want to accomplish

Examples of Purpose

- Inform – research paper
- Entertain – descriptive essay
- Persuade – persuasive essay
- Explain

Why you need to know your purpose

- Word choice
- Organization
- Kinds of details

STEP 2 – Drafting

Things you do during drafting

- Turn prewriting ideas into sentences
- Group sentences into paragraphs
- Organize the paragraphs based on purpose
- Get something that looks like a formal piece of writing

Main idea

- The point the writing supports

Thesis statement

- One sentence that tells what the entire *essay* is going to be about
- All paragraphs in the essay support the thesis statement
- Determines how many and what kinds of details go in the essay

Topic sentence

- One sentence that tells what the *paragraph* is going to be about
- All sentences in the paragraph support the topic sentence

Style

- Whether the paper is written formally or informally
- Determined by audience and purpose

Organization

- Important decisions to be made during drafting
- Supporting details have to go in an order that makes sense
- Determined by purpose

Methods of Organization

- Chronological – time order
- Spatial order – how details are related to other details; as you become aware of them; always has a starting point
- Compare & contrast – based on similarities and differences
- Emphatic order – based on order of importance

STEP 3 – Revising (content level changes)

Unity

- All details relate to the topic
- All paragraphs in the essay relate to the thesis
- All sentences in the paragraph relate to the topic sentence

Coherence

- Details are arranged in a way that makes sense

Why Revising is Important

- Your writing needs to make sense
- You need to include all necessary details
- You need to get rid of any unnecessary details

STEP 4 - Editing (sentence level changes)

Things you look for during editing

- Grammar (fragments, run-ons, usage errors)
- Mechanics (punctuation, capitalization)
- Spelling

Why editing is important

- Good papers look bad if they have a lot of errors
- Errors get in the way of content
- Editing errors put your teacher in a bad mood

STEP 5 – Presenting

Turning it in – what it is

What you should do

- Print a clean copy – no smudges, stains, etc.
- Flat and neat – not wrinkled or torn
- Stapled in the upper left-hand corner

Why it's important