

## PREWRITING

### Invention Strategies

You may want to try the following methods for generating ideas that will lead to a thesis statement and supporting details for the paper:

**Freewriting**—writing non-stop, without editing spelling or grammar

**Brainstorming**—jotting down key words and phrases as they enter the writer's mind

**Looping**—circling the central idea of successive freewrites in which one freewrite forms the basis for the next writing loop until the writer finds a clear stance on the topic

**Clustering**—writing and circling the topic in the center of the paper and repeating the process to develop a visual diagram of subtopics

**Questioning**—applying journalist questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

**Outlining**—classifies and divides information to show the main points and supporting ideas and organizes them according to Roman numerals, and lettered or numbered subpoints.

## DRAFTING

### Preparing an Essay

- The **introduction** should engage the reader and compel him or her to continue reading. The writer could add an exciting story, a surprising statistic, an important announcement, or quote a conversation.
- The **thesis statement** (main idea) should let the audience know what the paper is about (see thesis handout). <https://www.swic.edu/thesis-handout-2/>

- The thesis statement should be supported by **ample details and/or convincing research** in the body of the paper.
- The paper should contain **well-developed ideas** to support your points. The paper should also have significant opposing points presented and answered logically.
- If better ideas occur to you as you're writing, simply cross out or change your original ideas.
- The paper should have a **logical organization** that presents information to readers in a way that will make sense.
  - An outline is an excellent way to organize information
- **Every paragraph should be focused on a single topic** and should be consistent with the main idea or thesis of the paper.
- Use transition words and phrases, e.g., “however,” “therefore,” or “for example,” to help your writing **flow**.
- The **voice and tone** of the paper should be appropriate and consistent throughout and should not use colloquial or informal language.
- The paper should contain a clear, well-developed **conclusion**. Previous sentences should not be repeated word-for-word, but summarized and synthesized. You may also want to conclude with a call to action or an assessment of future implications.
- Keep the essay’s **purpose** in mind as you write, and be sure to check that the entire essay is relevant and on topic throughout.