

The Writing Process

Have you ever sat and stared at a blank sheet of paper? You just couldn't think of anything to write or didn't know where to begin. This is not unusual. Many people have the same problem. The following steps, however, can help you fill that blank paper with wonderful words.

#1 Prewriting - Prewriting is sometimes called **brainstorming**. It is the step in which you think about what and why you are writing. You choose a purpose and an audience. You choose a **topic** and make a list of your ideas. Then you organize your ideas so they make sense. Many writers use outlines or graphic organizers.

Suppose you must eat a worm sandwich for lunch. You decide to write about it in your journal. Use the organizer to help you prewrite.



Nouns I might use: _____

Verbs I might use: _____

Adjectives I might use: _____

Adverbs I might use: _____

#2 Drafting - In the drafting step, writers put their ideas on paper. They write words, ideas, and sentences. Some parts of the draft may have too much information. Other parts may not have enough information. There are often many mistakes in this step of the writing process. But that's OK! A draft should not be perfect. You just want to get all of your ideas on paper. You concentrate on what you want to say, and you correct your mistakes later.

Write a sentence you might include in your journal about eating a worm sandwich. Use some of the words you wrote above. Think about your sentence for a while, and then write the sentence again using different words or a different order.

#3 Revising -- Revising means “seeing again.” In the revision step, you “see” your draft again. You read your work carefully to be sure it makes sense. You may uncover new ways to express yourself. You may find new ways to arrange your ideas. You can add or remove details to make the writing clearer. You can often hear problems when you read your writing aloud. Ask someone else to read your work and give you suggestions for improvement.

#4 Editing-- When you edit, you read your writing carefully to find mistakes in grammar or writing conventions. You should read your work once for capital letters and once for punctuation. Then you should read it a third time for spelling. You should read it a fourth time for verb tense and subject-verb agreement. You should read it a fifth time for sentence structure. You can also use the Proofreading Checklist as a guide.



Proofread the following sentence. Make corrections. Then write the corrected sentence on the line.

A fury bare finished in the mountun streem.

#5 Publishing -- Publishing your writing is fun! Publishing means “to make public.” You can present your writing to your teacher, to your friends, to your family, or to the community. You can read it orally, post it on a Web site, or make it into a book. First, make a clean copy of your writing. You can handwrite it or type it on the computer. Then, add pictures, a cover, and a title page if you like. Now the writing is ready to share!

Read the steps in the writing process. Write numbers 1 through 5 to show the correct order.

_____ Make a clean copy of your writing to share with others.

_____ Write your first draft to get your ideas on paper.

_____ Proofread your writing to check for spelling and grammar errors.

_____ Choose a topic to write about and make notes.