

## Process Journal #2B: What We Should Strive to Do As Writers

As writers, we should strive to not ramble on in our sentences. Let that not be confused with the absence of descriptions, but we should make our point and not have to repeat it. We should utilize each of the methods of descriptions to paint a vivid picture in the minds of our readers so he or she is able to place themselves in the story. Organization is another component of writing that we should strive to achieve. There should be no confusion to our readers about the ideas that we are trying to portray. Our introductions should be both captivating and creative and we should carry that creativeness throughout the body of our works and end with an understandable conclusion. Life should be given to the characters that we create and we should identify them with their own traits and personalities that are expressed thoroughly through their actions, thoughts, and words. We should not strive for perfection, nobody produces a flawless piece of writing on their first attempt, and as writers we should recognize that. Allowing room for mistakes is a quality that we should possess because “mistakes” can always be revised and edited. An open mind will greatly benefit us as writers, we should not be afraid to step outside of our comfort zones when it comes to writing. We should always have the support of one another and use constructive criticism among ourselves. Lastly, as writers we should have confidence in ourselves and in our writing.

## THE WRITER'S JOB

As writers, we have a tough job to fulfill. Ultimately, pleasing our audience is the main goal we set out to achieve; but we all know the task is easier said than done. There are many elements of writing we must be sure to include in our work, so we are able to display our full potential as writers.

We should strive to write captivating and creative introductions to our papers that will guarantee the attention of our audience; that creativity should be carried throughout the body of our work. Description is another component that should be incorporated in our writing. The use of lively verbs, descriptive modifiers, exact names, the senses, and comparisons should result in our audience's ability to paint a vivid picture of what we are saying. Also, life should be given to the characters we create and we should identify them with their own traits and personalities that are expressed thoroughly through their actions, thoughts, and words. However, we should be cautious to not overuse those methods of description, so we don't tire our readers. Organization is an additional element we don't want to skip when we are writing; there should be no confusion to our readers about the ideas that we are trying to portray. All of our papers should include: an introduction, properly developed body, and a comprehensive conclusion. By organizing our thoughts, our audience is better able to understand what we are saying; which improves the connection we share with our readers.

An open mind will greatly benefit us as writers, so we should not fear stepping outside of our comfort zones when it comes to writing; we should accept creativity. Furthermore, our writing is a reflection of ourselves, thus we need to make an effort to incorporate a little bit of our own personalities into our writing. We should recognize that nobody produces a flawless piece of writing on the first attempt, so as writers, we shouldn't strive for perfection. Allowing room for mistakes will benefit our writing in the best way because where mistakes lay, a learning opportunity isn't far behind. Revising and editing is perhaps the most essential process that we don't want to skip. We must be critical of our own writing during revision to finish with a nicely polished piece of work. As fellow writers, we should always have the support of one another, and be sure to use constructive criticism among ourselves. Lastly, as writers, it is crucial that we show confidence in ourselves and in our writing.

## Process Journal #6: Invention

Starting a piece of writing has given me some trouble in the past. When I was in middle school, I used to brainstorm using a graphic organizer, but only because it was required to. Once I entered high school, I was given a little more freedom and control over the way that I generated ideas and expressed them in my writing. That was short-lived though, because once I started attending a charter school, I feel like the quality of my writing deteriorated. All the classes were self-paced so there wasn't any direct teaching and it was hard to learn new things that weren't being taught to me. I wouldn't brainstorm or pre-think before I wrote my stories, and this overwhelmed me and caused me a great deal of stress. It would take me more time than I would have preferred, to create a piece of writing that I was mostly satisfied with. I had to complete several poetry projects, but those didn't require much thought or invention. However, I was required to write a research paper that required tons of brainstorming. I changed my subject so many times, and finally settled on one. After I did my research, I used note cards to organize all the information that I gathered. I labeled each of the notecards with every source that I used and wrote the information that came from them. Then, I color coated the related points with highlighters. I am a very visual person and by using bright colors, it made the work seem less boring.

This semester, I think that I have made some improvements in getting launched with writing. What has been really helpful to me is the free writing that is required. At first, I didn't care for it because I am very picky when it comes to writing and I don't like to have mistakes sitting on my paper staring at me yelling "Fix me!", but the more that I've done free writing the more comfortable I am with it. It's kind of nice to just express the ideas that I have freely and without concern. In reading "Finding Your Way In": Invention as Inquiry Based Learning in First Year Writing by Steve Lessner and Collin Craig, I learned about a few different kinds of free writing: focused freewriting and critical free writing. I think that most of the free write journals that I've done so far this semester have been focused free writing. I think in some of my next journals I am going to try out critical free writing, by doing that I will explore different angles of a topic and reflect on them a bit deeper. The invention exercise that we did prior to Essay 2-1 was also very helpful. I especially enjoyed the audience autobiography part, it gave me an opportunity to get an idea of who my audience was and what they wanted to know. I know that I will surely use that invention technique in my future writings.

## THE INVENTION PROCESS

Most people can probably relate to the trouble that comes with starting a piece of writing. Graphic organizers were a necessity to brainstorming throughout elementary and middle school, as instructed by my teachers. However, when I entered high school, I was given more freedom of how I generated ideas and expressed them in my writing, but that experience was short-lived since I dropped out for almost a year and enrolled in a charter school. While there, I noticed how the quality of my writing had deteriorated. My self-paced classes had me flying through my work, not taking time to outline my ideas before writing; which was overwhelming and stressful. I took twice as long to complete a piece of writing that would have otherwise been done faster had I taken the time to brainstorm. However, I was required to write a research paper that called for a great deal of brainstorming. My subject was changed many times until I finally settled on one, and began the process. After conducting research, I used note cards to organize the information I gathered, and labeled each of them with every source color coating the related points. Eventually, I finished with a polished piece of writing that I was proud of. The importance of having a game plan was shown in that paper, because I would've had a tough time completing the assignment if I didn't brainstorm.

This semester, I know I have made some much needed improvements in getting launched with writing. What has been especially helpful to me is the free writing that was introduced. However, freewriting is only one step in the invention process. In *Writing with Style*, a book by John Trimble, he outlines some important steps to take while you are inventing. First, it is most helpful to have some type of emotional connection to what you are writing. When passion is present in your writing, you are more likely to please your audience. Trimble also mentions freewriting: getting your ideas on paper without any thought for organization or perfection. One idea that stood out to me was how you should imagine your audience: if you don't have a set audience, then create one. When you have a vision of your readers, you are better able to write your paper to meet their needs. In the invention exercise I did prior to one of my essays this semester, I was asked to write an audience autobiography. In this piece of writing, I was speaking from the shoes of one of my readers, asking any questions that needed answering, or addressing any concerns I had. That exercise essentially helped me write the essay to fit my audience's need. Quite a few more invention strategies were discussed, but the ones I mentioned proved to help me the best.

Mainly, inventing may be time consuming, but the quality of writing that results from a long invention process is excellent. Also it is important to remember that not every writer uses the same inventing strategies, you must experiment with the different methods to find out what works best for you.