

5-Point Writing Program for Composing Essays

Step 1 (Prewrite 1)–Brainstroming; Jot down all ideas on 1-2 sheets of paper about the prospective topic of the paper without regard to grammar, spelling, or punctuation. During this phase, you should be able to identify who you want to talk about, what you want to talk about, as well as identify the sources you will use to develop the paper (i.e. essay, short fictitious stories, books etc.). Feel free to use some of the responses you've written as a launching pad for your ideas.

Step 2 (Prewrite 2)–Outlining and/or Concept Mapping; based upon the information derived from the brainstorm, you should then begin organizing your ideas into an outline format which will act as a skeletal version or "blueprint" for the paper using the following broad categories as a means of organizing your thoughts:

- I. Introduction: 3-4 sentences introducing some of the prospective ideas to be discussed, highlighted, and/or examined during the duration of the paper;
- II. Thesis: A single-sentence topic sentence which describes the problematic or "question at issue" the student will be discussing and the main idea the student will be addressing. This sentence must tell who, what, when where, why, and how the paper is going to be structured and argued and must be the last sentence of the introduction;
- III. Body: A 3-4 page discussion of some of the supporting arguments you plan to use to support the thesis as well as some of the quotes you plan to use from various texts as evidence to support your thesis or "main idea" or "assertions". You may also use specific characters, scenes, and events from fictitious texts you've read to support your thesis.
- IV. Conclusion: A 3-4 sentence summary or "wrap-up" of what you hope the implied reader of your paper will understand after discussing the supporting arguments in the body of the paper. The conclusion must in some way refer back to the problematic initially highlighted in your thesis.

Step 3 (First Draft); the first draft of the essay incorporates everything you have discussed in the introduction, body, and conclusion of your paper and should progress in a logical, linear fashion from the beginning to the end. The rough draft must also be typed, double-spaced, and have one inch margins. Remember the rough draft is a "blueprint" for the final essay.

Step 4 (Revision); After you have submitted your essay for peer review, go back and revise it a second time making the necessary changes in structure, organization, style, grammar, spelling, and punctuation so that your implied reader will understand what you wanted to say in your paper.

In his essay "Blueprint for Negro Literature," Richard Wright asks two crucial questions: (1) Why is there a "hiatus" (4) or "gap" (4) between African American writers and the masses of working-class people they seek to address? And (2) Why haven't the "novels, poems, and plays" (4) written by these writers accurately reflected the "needs, sufferings, and aspirations" (5) of the masses of people? According to Wright, what are some of the major social, historical, political and economic factors which have caused the gap between the African American writer and the masses of people to increase? What does Wright propose should be done to bridge this gap? Do you agree or disagree with the solutions that he proposes for bridging the gap? Why? After composing a 2-3 pp. brainstorm exploring the importance of the separation or gap between the African American writer and the working-class audience they seek to address—develop a thesis, supporting arguments, end with conclusion demonstrating how bridging this gap or chasm would ultimately end in creating a more democratic, culturally pluralistic, and healthy climate for all in U.S. society. Use quotes from the text to prove your points. Don't forget to include a "Works Cited" section at the end of your paper. Don't forget to give your paper a title.