
Freewriting

“How can I know what I think until I can see what I’ve said?”

Freewriting is the easiest (and I believe the best) tool you can use to generate ideas and content for essays before sitting down to write your first rough draft. It is completely informal, so you don’t have to worry about spelling and grammar. In fact, worrying about spelling and grammar just gets in the way of the free-flow of ideas.

- Most of the journal entries you’ll do in this class are going to be freewrites. Freewriting is a specific kind of informal writing that is intended to wring your brain of all the latent ideas it contains.

Freewriting simply means that you write consistently for a certain period of time without stopping, (usually ten to fifteen minutes). Do not pause for spelling, for grammar, or even to think. Just write and write and write, never letting your pen leave the paper at all.

- Think about this: while writing, every time you stop to check a misspelled word, or to think about proper grammar, you are interrupting your train of thought. By interrupting your train of thought, you are halting your thought process and not allowing yourself to fully articulate how you feel about a given subject. Rather, don’t be concerned with anything but your thoughts. Don’t let yourself be distracted by things that can be easily corrected if you use it in a rough draft. Freewriting is informal—there should be mistakes and errors—there should be random disjointed thoughts. That’s the purpose of freewriting.

Keep your pen moving the entire time, even if you have to write “I don’t know what to say.” The reason for this is simple: you have plenty of things to say—it’s simply a matter of tapping into them. If you write the same lame thing over and over again, your subconscious gets annoyed and kicks into overdrive, giving you new ideas you haven’t tapped into yet. I know it sounds silly, but it works more often than not.

Also, by freewriting, your thoughts are tangible and permanent (written down), so you can’t forget what you had on your mind since it’s written in front of you.

Think about how many times you’ve gone to the store for one item just to end up back home with bags full of groceries except for that one thing. Thoughts are fleeting: write them down and you’ll always know how you feel because you can see what you think.

