



# The Writing Process

*A bad first draft is a very good thing.*

*by Anthony Starros, M.F.A.*

## Dispel the myth that writing is "genius."

Many developing writers think that good writers are just born that way, and that's not true.

Good writers employ a writing process. In fact, most good writers begin the drafting stage of an essay with an ineffective, poorly organized rough draft.

This is often what the developing writer submits for a grade instead of moving on and revising.

It is only through *prewriting*, *drafting*, and then *revising* that a rough essay is finely tuned and polished into a final draft.



## Expect your first draft to be garbage.

You should also expect it to become better and better over a series of revisions.

- Start with a focal point, a main idea as your essay's *working thesis*.
- Then come up with some supporting points (*working topic sentences*) and organize them in a logical manner.
- Finally, figure out how you'll develop your ideas and support them via research (*development*).

The amount of revisions necessary is always different. Sometimes only a few are needed.

Other times, well, get comfortable and settle in for a long night.

## The Process:

The writing process is easy to grasp, and it really makes building an essay much easier than sitting down and staring at a blank screen.

It is broken up into three main sections with a few subsets.

1. prewriting
2. drafting
3. revising



## Prewriting:

Prewriting is simply gathering and organizing information. There are many ways to begin prewriting:

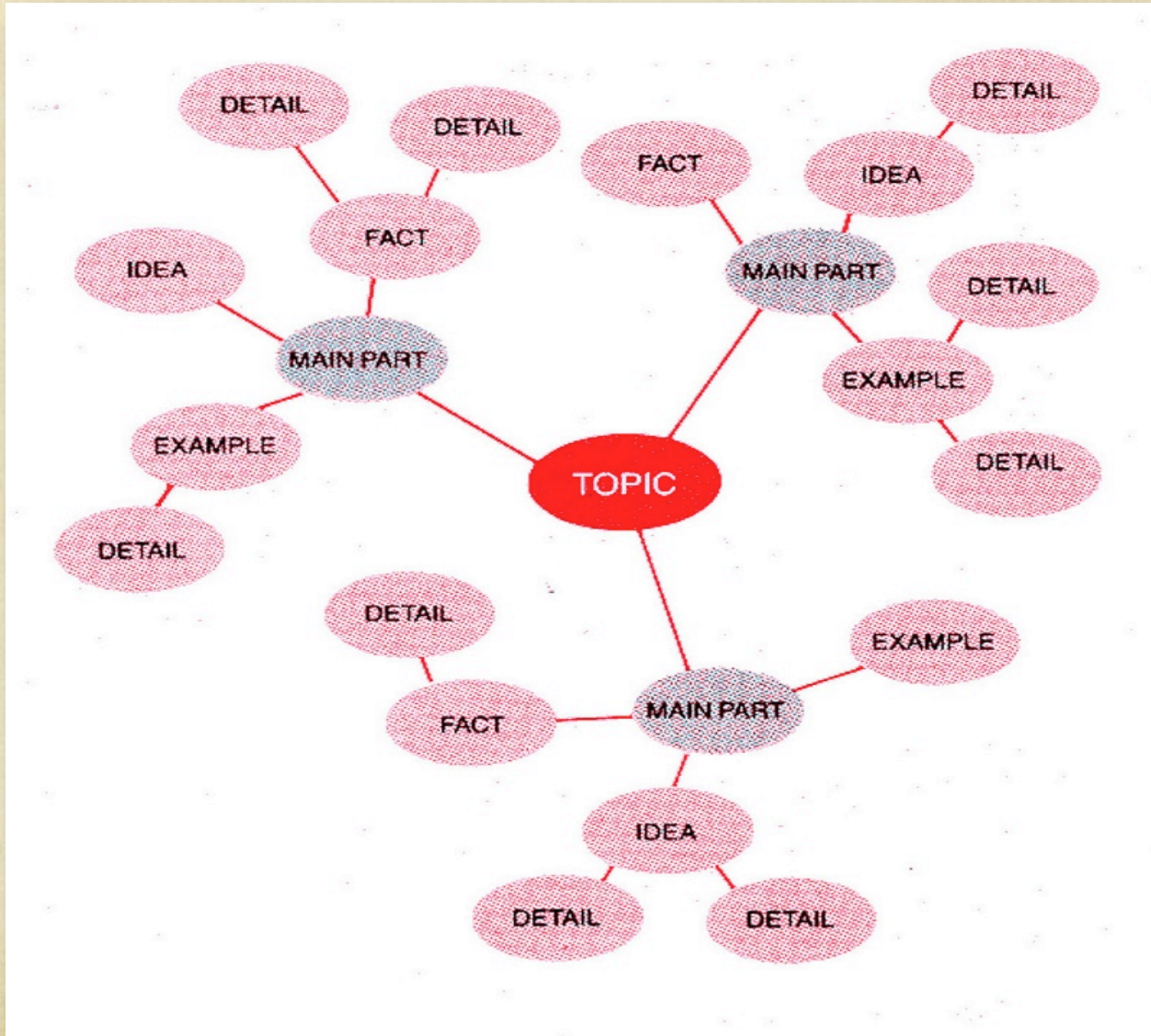
- brainstorming/listing
- clustering
- freewriting
- annotating
- asking questions
- writing the outline

Your main goal is to gather a wealth of information to use in your essay. You may not use all of it, but the more you have, the better off you are.

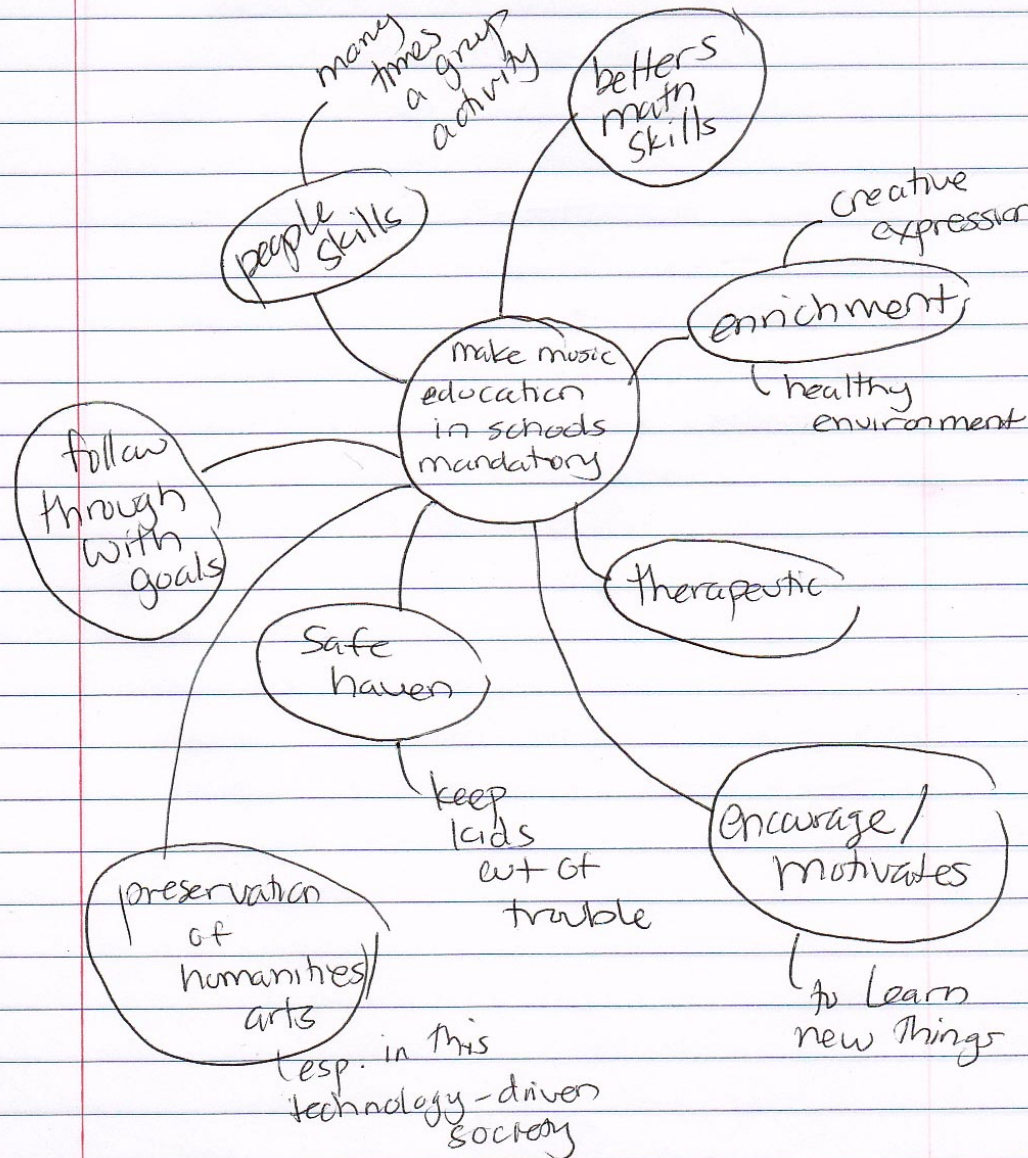




# Clustering:

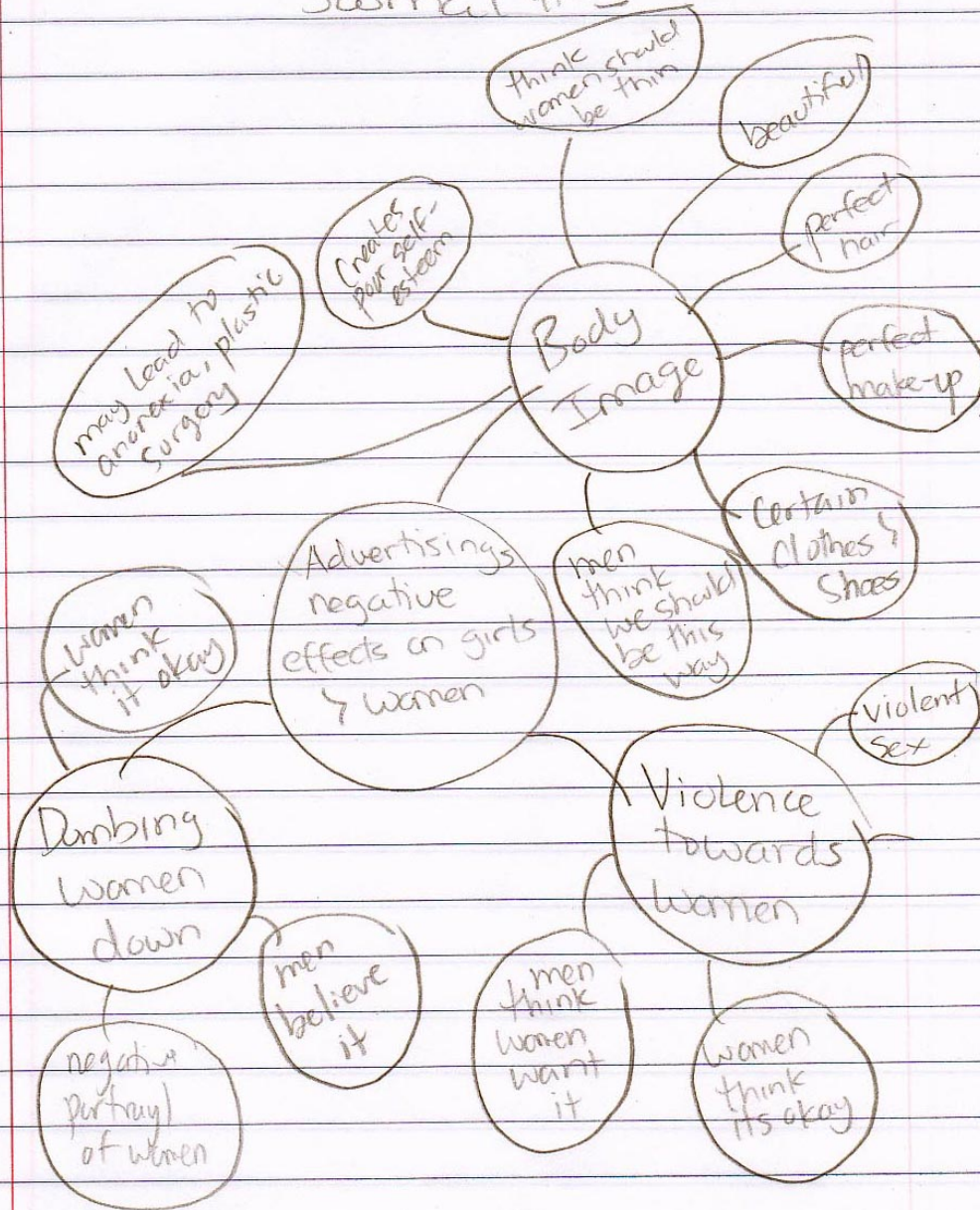


# Journal #20





# Journal #3



## The Outline:

Perhaps the easiest outline to use is one which begins with a method of introduction to be employed followed by the working thesis statement.

From there, use Roman numerals, numbers, bullet points, (whatever you're used to) and list each major unit of supporting information (*each topic sentence*) with some supporting details.

Finally, list the method of conclusion you might use and go back and review the entire thing to get a feel for how the essay might flow.



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### Music Education Outline

**Working Thesis:** The introduction of music should be mandatory in today's educational system, specifically at the grade school level.

- It is just as necessary to reach the mind through the ear-gate as through the eye-gate, to know the sounds of nature as well as its sights.

**Topic Sentence 1:** Music has been shown to support the development of stronger math skills and overall advance in the use of logic.

- Current research reveals the value of music study and its relationship to academic achievement (Kestrom).
- Schools that have music programs have significantly higher graduation rates than do those without programs (90.2 percent as compared to 72.9 percent) (Music Education).
- Teaching children to listen to music in a definite way, listen purposefully and reverently, and so train the ear to acute sensitiveness, has benefits.
- The habit of listening should be formed in childhood.
- Michael Pitt, chairman of the music department at Robert Wagner Middle School and president of the Music Education Association of New York City, was quoted as saying, "Recent neurological studies have shown that students that have hands-on

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### "Campaign for Real Beauty" Outline

method of intro: startling quote:

"Out of 1,000 men polled, *New Scientist* results showed that the ideal women proved *not* to have a body of a size zero model but of a shapely woman, with a 30 inch waist and 40 inch hips."

working thesis statement: Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty" has battled for women's rights and succeeded in celebrating the "real" woman and not just the fashion-model stereotype.

I. Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty" has increased sales by playing on the emotional appeals of everyday women through asserting the false assumption that society does not appreciate "real women." (topic sentence)

- Dove earned between \$60 million and \$70 million in lotion sales alone following one year after they launched their "Campaign For Real Beauty. (supporting detail)
- *New Scientist* study and others like it found that men actually favor curvaceous women. (supporting detail)
- The average size of women in the U.S. is size 14. So, if most women have curvaceous figures and most men appreciate women with curves, is Dove's campaign really a necessary social advocacy?(supporting detail)

II. Dove's ads feature mostly curvaceous women with slogans like "New Dove Firming...As tested on real curves" which celebrate full figured women. (topic sentence)

- Dove's ads categorize women and choose words such as "real" to describe a size 14 woman, influencing society to perceive women as "real" and "beautiful" through physical attributes. (supporting detail)
- One angry writer wrote against Dove's ads, by asserting that "If we're ever going to come to a place of body acceptance as a society we really need to stop bashing each other. All women are real women".(supporting detail)
- Writer Seth Stevenson wrote in his 2005 article "To buy Dove is to cast a vote for more "real curves" in advertising". (supporting detail)
- Low self- esteem and insecurities are not limited to only curvaceous women. Thin women and many models have come forward about their struggle with self-esteem.



## Drafting:

In this stage you will take the skeleton of your essay, the outline, and you'll write your first rough draft.

It will look like an essay, but it will need work. It will not be ready to submit for a grade, which is why it's called the *rough draft*.

You'll then revise and edit the draft *by hand* before adding the corrections on your computer.

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**Before revising, make sure you allow time for *distancing*.**

Finish the rough draft and put it away – don't even think about it for a couple days so you can revisit it with a fresh set of eyes.

By doing this, you'll be more likely to find mistakes that you'd normally miss.

## **Revising:**

Revising is broken up into two main parts:

1. making global revisions
2. proofreading and editing

*note: making global revisions is the most important part of this process - do not ignore it.*



## Think about it this way:

At the college level, it is the *content* of the essay that is being favored, not the structure.

- An essay with perfect grammar and spelling, but with poor content, is *NEVER* a passing essay.
- But an essay with solid content and some grammar errors *CAN* be a passing essay. Focus on the *content* of your work, but don't ignore the grammar.

## Global Revisions:

Spend a majority of your revising time focusing on the *unity*, *coherence*, and *development* of your essay:

1. Is the essay *unified*? Do all the points included support your claim, or is there any irrelevant information?
2. Is the essay *coherent*? Does the essay move from one point to another with ease, or are the transitions sloppy, making it difficult to follow?
3. Is the essay *developed*? Is there enough discussion to fully develop and support your claim? Are there enough supporting details and outside support? Is there enough of your own personal insight?



statements because I would want to become famous like Pauly D and wear all those flashy clothes. I believe it is not the right thing to admire someone who has reached the celebrity level by drinking all day and fooling around with women on television. The creators and editors of these shows have found the correct methods to reach out to the viewers and connect with them, making their shows the most viewed in America.

This # needs a sharp local point -- it seems contradictory to your claim.

The negative influences that reality shows portray have become the hook for which the viewers are addicted. For example, when I sit on the couch and watch the "Jersey Shore show, I just cannot stop wishing I was in those guys' positions who were just ordinary people before they were casted to be on the show. I would love to work in a T-shirt shop, party all night, and get paid all these millions, but in reality this is just a dream to those who are watching the show weekly. "In some ways, this gives the audience a connection with the show's stars as they feel that they are "real and normal" people representing them (Reality)". This comes to show why the cast of Jersey Shore represent themselves as Guidos that just simply live in New Jersey. The editors knew that by picking out these buff looking guys, and these women who are the "sweetest B@#\$&'s you will ever meet" would hook people like me to watch this show. Reality television shows have not only targeted adults, but they have also aimed for young kids.

This type of programming is affecting the way society is looking at it personally. This is so why it's popular. Programmers base when they present the

This needs further development. How does it show this?

Back up ID. A perfect example would be the type situations worked out and diet tips.

The reality show "16 & Pregnant" has also become one of the most viewed shows on MTV, yet the purpose of the show has become very debatable. This show is based on how young teen mothers struggle through their pregnancy and their first couple of years with their child. I believe that these young females have been rewarded for a mistake that could have been prevented to begin with, "In addition, reality TV shows profiling pregnant teenagers send the wrong message to young girls and glorify teenage pregnancy

This can be bad for viewers because it can lead to a pregnancy just to get a reward.

ok. and how is this bad for viewers? Develop your thesis

## Proofreading and Editing:

When editing, it is the fine points of the essay that are being corrected and fine-tuned:

- the grammar
- the spelling
- the format
- heading and spacing
- formatting the works cited page



## Review:

**Prewriting:** *what you do to prepare for drafting an essay: brainstorming, researching, outlining, etc.*

**The Outline:** *the skeleton, the basic structure & layout of your essay.*

**Working Thesis & Topic Sentences:** *the first run-through of your main idea & supporting ideas.*

**Distancing:** *taking a break between drafting and revising the essay.*

**Global Revisions:** *making major changes to enhance...*

*Unity: making sure everything used directly relates to and supports the thesis.*

*Development: including enough information to fully support your thesis.*

*Coherence: making your essay easy to read and easy to understand.*

**Proofreading & Editing:** *checking for spelling and grammar.*

*fin*