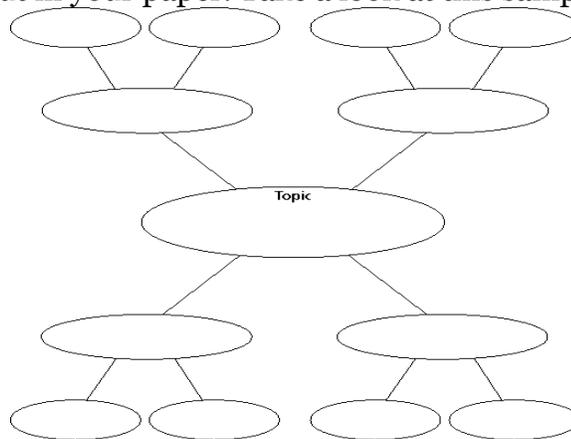


Tips for Prewriting



Below are some ideas to consider when you are in the brainstorming or prewriting stages of your writing. Using one of these strategies can help relieve the stress and/or anxiety of getting a paper started.

1. **Free writing:** This is where you think about your topic and just put whatever comes to your mind on the paper. Try doing this for at least 5-10 minutes without stopping, and maybe try turning off the computer screen while you type. Even the stuff that doesn't feel like it is worth writing down can inspire new ideas later.
2. **Key Ideas:** If you're writing a research paper → go through your articles and make bullet points about key ideas. Then you can expand on those ideas later, and think about why you thought they were important enough to write down.
3. **Talking Points:** Go through your articles or studies and pull out all the key talking points. Talking points are key ideas in the article that you might want to examine, or argue for or against.
4. **Bubble Chart:** Put your main idea/argument in the middle and branch out with other subcategories from there. This can help you to come up with new ideas to talk about in your paper. Take a look at this sample below.



5. **The 5 w's:** Who, what, where, when, why, & how? Expand on each of these. This is usually a strategy for journalism, but it can be helpful with research as well. (See the "Getting Started & Expanding Ideas" handout!)
6. **Classic Outline:** This can help make the initial draft of your paper a breeze! It also can help the flow of your paper by mapping out your ideas and how they could be in the best order for the reader to understand. See template on back.

Outline Template



Title: _____

1. Introduction:

Your intro should include **background, context,** and your **thesis statement.**

- a.
- b.
- c.

See our Introductions Handout!

2. Key point:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- ...

(HINT! You may need more key points to fully support your claim.)

3. Key point:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- ...

4. Key point:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- ...

5. Conclusion:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Your conclusion should emphasize why your main idea matters and how it relates to the larger context! 😊

See our Conclusions Handout!