

Writing Assignments

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Be strategic

- Integrate assignment notes and class notes
- Create mind map/diagram/organizer
- Use index cards
- Make an outline
- Use highlighters to colour code concepts or categories

Explore the problem, not the topic

- What is the purpose of the assignment?
- How does it relate to your class work and readings? What is theory behind it?
- Look for cue words in wording of assignment
- Is there more than one part?
- Are there options in terms of how you approach the problem?

Make a plan

- How will you achieve your purpose? (see back page)
- Do you have to do research? Other readings? Gather data?
- How will you integrate classroom learning and text info and research findings?

Generate ideas

- Brainstorm
- Ask yourself questions

- Refer back to notes/cards/mind maps
- Define your topic/make sure it is not too broad/put it in a context

Do research

- Start early. It can take time to get books from other places
- Don't limit yourself to the Internet
- Go beyond Google - use the library catalogue and databases

Start to write

- Make a concept map
- Write into point form: context/thesis/points to be covered/conclusions
- Write first draft using headings
- Let it rest for a few days
- Write second draft - make changes!

Edit

- Look for thesis statement
- Look for structure and flow of ideas
- Look for support of ideas
- Look for originality and purposefulness
- Look for a powerful conclusion
- Make a title page
- Double check references for correctness

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Proofread

- Spell check and grammar check
- Have someone else read
- Check changes

Questions and Approaches

Questions

- Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? So what?
- How does the question relate to the teachings?
- What are key words in the question? How will I approach this? In terms of what? How will I support my argument?
- What's the point? What are the instructors looking for? What learning are they seeking proof of? How can I prove I understand the concepts?

Report

- What are the facts about X?
- How can I be purely objective in my reporting of them?

Summary

- What are the main features of X?

Persuasion

- How can I make a case for or against it?
- How can I support my argument?

Interpretation

- How can I explain the significance of X
- On what basis? In terms of what?/What supports this interpretation

Analogy

- How can I describe one thing/idea in terms of another?

Analysis

- Process: How is X done or made?
- Functional: What is the essential function of X?
- Causal: What are the consequences of X?
- Directional: How should X be made or done?

Evaluation

- What is the value of X?
- What does it contribute?
- How can I support this point of view?

Adapted from OWL at Purdue:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/print/general/gl_plan1.html

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/print/general/gl_plan3.html