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**Faculty of Letters and Languages**  
**Department of Foreign Languages**  
**English Division**

**Level :** 1st year LMD

**Lecturer :** Mrs. Bencharef. S

**Module :** Written Expression

**Lesson: The Writing Process**

No one can just sit down and, in one step, compose a polished piece of writing. Instead, writers go through a number of steps as they write. These steps or stages make up the writing process. The steps in the writing process are somewhat like dance steps. Instead of moving forward in a straight line, writers go forward a little and then back then forward again. In other words, they think and collect ideas and then write and then go back and think again.

### **1. Prewriting**

*"I don't know what I think until I see what I've said."*

E. M. Forster

Prewriting is the first stage in the writing process. It is also the most important and the most interesting part. The purpose of the prewriting stage is to find a topic for writing, to collect ideas and information, and to do research if necessary. By the time you have finished prewriting, a lot of the hard work has already been done. It is common to return to the prewriting stage at various times during the writing process when you need to collect more ideas. The following are some common **strategies** that writers use to collect and to organize their ideas.

- **Quick Writing**

Quick writing is a good way to collect ideas for writing. Follow these instruction when you quickwrite.

- Write fast \_ as fast as you can.
- Don't worry about grammar or spelling.
- if your mind goes blank, write : *I can't think of anything to write.*
- Re-read your notes and circle the ideas you might use in your writing.

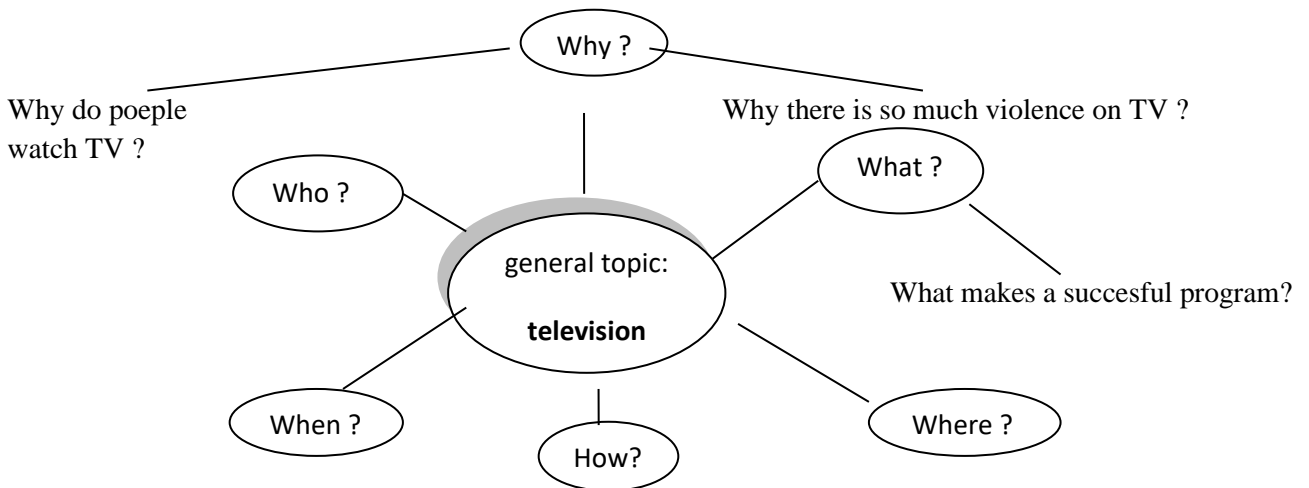
**Example :** a person has been asked to quickwrite about 'television'. Here's a small part of what he wrote :

*I don't know what my opinions about television are. I watch a little TV but I don't like to watch TV a lot. I really hate it when I go to someone's house and they leave the TV on. I don't know what to write. I don't know what to write. It makes me feel like they don't want to talk. I think a lot of the TV programs are pretty dumb. they are really a waste of time. It's one thing if a program is really funny. I mean, I'm not against watching TV just for the laughs, but most of the programs aren't even funny. There are some.....*

- **Questioning**

Forming questions can help you come up with ideas for writing. Just think about your topic and write down any questions that come to mind. Afterward, you can go back and underline the questions that you would like to explore further.

*Example :*



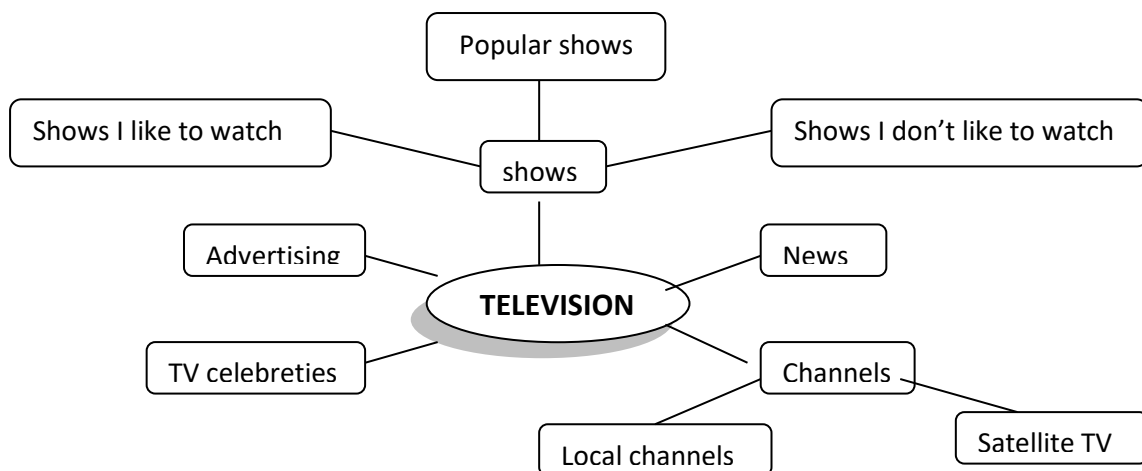
- **Making a Cluster Diagram**

Making a cluster diagram is a useful way to collect ideas and details to use in your writing. You can also use a cluster diagram to explore different ways to organize your ideas. Follow these steps to make a cluster diagram.

**Step 1 :** Write your topic in the centre of your paper and circle it.



**Step 2 :** Think about your topic and write down any words that come to mind. Circle each word and connect it to the closest related word in your cluster diagram.



**Step 3 :** Study your cluster diagram to find ideas to use in your writing.

- **Brainstorming**

Brainstorming is a good way to collect ideas for writing. To brainstorm, think about your topic and write down every idea that comes to your mind. Don't evaluate your ideas. Just write.

**Example :** We spent a minute brainstorming a list of things to do when you feel sad and depressed. You can see that some of our ideas were pretty silly, but we wrote them down anyway. When we finished brainstorming, we went back and put a check mark next to the ideas we liked best.

***Things to do when you feel sad or depressed***

√ go visit a friend	√ get some exercise	eat	sleep
√ do something for somebody else	read a book	buy some flowers	
watch a funny movie	buy some new clothes	√ go for a walk	

→ ***Now it's time to sort through your ideas and choose which ones you will use to form your story.***

- **Making an Outline**

Once a topic has been chosen, ideas have been generated through brainstorming and free writing, and a topic sentence has been created, the last step a writer can perform in the prewriting stage is creating an outline. An outline allows a writer to categorize the main points, to organize the sentences into an order that makes sense, and to make sure that each argument can be fully developed.

**Example :**

**Communication Problems**

<b>Topic sentence</b>	International students in the United States face communication problems with Americans.
<b>Supporting point</b>	<b>A.</b> International students have poor verbal skills.
<b>supporting detail</b>	<b>1.</b> Lack vocabulary
<b>supporting detail</b>	<b>2.</b> have poor pronunciation
<b>Supporting point</b>	<b>B.</b> Americans are difficult to understand.
<b>supporting detail</b>	<b>1.</b> use incomplete sentences
<b>supporting detail</b>	<b>2.</b> use unclear expressions
<b>supporting detail</b>	<b>3.</b> talk too fast
<b>supporting detail</b>	<b>4.</b> use slang and idioms

## **2. Writing a Draft / Drafting**

Drafting is the stage when you begin to put the paper in paragraph form.

A draft is a preliminary piece of writing. Writing more than one draft allows you to develop your ideas and to find the best way to present your ideas to your reader. As you write, keep referring back to your notes and the plan you determined in stage 1, but don't be afraid to change the plan when needed. During the drafting stage you should concentrate on getting your ideas on paper, organizing your ideas logically (**using transional signals / cohesive devices**), and developing your topic with enough detail for your audience and purpose.

### 3. Revising

When you revise your piece of writing, you evaluate its strengths and weaknesses and think of ways to make your writing clearer or more interesting or more convincing.

You can review, modify, and reorganize your work by **rearranging** (checking the order), **adding** (more details, examples, ...), **removing**, or **replacing** some points.

You may use a checklist to evaluate your writing :

Revising checklist	YES
- Are my ideas clear and easy to follow ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Will my reader be able to find and understand my main idea ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Did I provide enough details and examples ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Did I take out all unnecessary information ?	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Will the first part of my writing catch my reader's attention ?	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4. Editing :** It has to do with analysing sentence structure and proofreading (correcting errors in grammar and mechanics). Check for repetition, clarity, grammar, spelling and punctuation. Having another writer's feedback in this stage is helpful.

**5. Publishing :** It is producing a final copy of your work, in the correct format. It is then shared and discussed with the class or even published in a magazine or a newspaper.