

Prewriting: Overcoming Writer's Block

Writer's block: we all face it from time to time. But when a major project is looming, having trouble getting started can be very stressful. Here are several prewriting strategies that may help when writer's block seems to be getting the best of you.



1. **Get focused.** It can be hard to get a strong focus at the beginning of a project. A good way to draft some ideas is to draw a “topic cloud.” This can be done by setting a timer for 60 seconds and writing as many interesting topics that come to mind during that minute. Giving yourself a time limit will encourage you to jot down the most important and interesting topics that come to mind and will often give you a few starting points to work with.
2. **Ask questions.** Ask yourself a few of these helpful questions to get your project flowing: “What topic could I write the most about?” “Does this topic affect my personal life in any way?” “Do I feel any sort of passion toward this subject? If so, how can I incorporate this feeling into my writing?” These questions will help you decide which topics truly interest you; having a strong interest in a writing topic will lead to more enjoyment while working on your project.
3. **Develop your purpose.** Once you have a solid start on your writing project, it is a good idea to determine the purpose of your writing. Is your project meant to persuade readers to agree with your ideas? Do you want to entertain your readers with a humorous story? Are you creating a research project that is meant to inform readers of specific facts and details? Once the purpose is established, you will have a better idea of where you want the writing to lead.

Hopefully, these strategies will aid you when writer's block starts to stress you out. For additional resources on writer's block, consult the following links:

- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/567/01/>
- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/567/02/>