

Freewriting Ideas

The idea behind freewriting is that the very act of writing is a form of active cognition. When we write, we think. It serves as a gateway activity to any number of learning practices, but especially reading. Sometimes we will have “private” freewriting, where I will never ask you to share; it is for your eye only. Sometimes we will have “Public” freewriting. This doesn’t mean that I *will* ask you to share, but I could.

Open Freewriting

This is a great way to begin a class. Sometimes it’s only for 2 or 3 minutes. This works to quiet the mind and prepare for the transition into class.

Focused Freewriting

This is a response to a specific prompt, often after a discussion or reading. This also works great to *prepare* for a discussion.

Process Freewriting

Freewriting after an activity to think through what you've just done (meta cognition).

Loop Freewriting

This helps the writer to increase focus and narrow ideas by repeating the technique of freewriting, thereby developing a sequence of freewriting that develops one from the other. By drawing attention away from the entire topic or assignment question to the more individual items or topics in the loops, the writer will work more productively and with more interest.

1. Begin by freewriting in response to the assigned text for 5 to 10 minutes.
2. Then, read through the freewriting, looking for any interesting topics, ideas, phrases, or sentences. The writer should circle or underline those ideas (key words or phrases) that have sparked interest and seem to have the most potential for the writing assignment.
3. Now, begin another freewrite that focuses on the item or items circled or underlined in the first freewrite. This second freewrite, which begins a new loop for the topic, will obviously be more specific than the first. When finished with this freewrite, loop the freewriting again, circling or underlining another interesting topic, idea, phrase, or sentence.
4. Continue looping until there are enough ideas to begin writing a first draft or a preliminary outline.

There are two important rules when reading freewriting aloud:

1. Do not extemporize; read only the words on the page.
2. No apologies or disclaimers; just begin reading.