

The Reading Process

Before Reading

Before you read the article, read the title and subtitle (if any). Examine the photos, graphs, and charts the article may contain. Then make predictions about what the article is about.

Make 2-3 predictions about the reading

I think this reading is about ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

During Reading

As you read, look for information that is interesting to you and jot down any questions you may have about the reading. You may include your reaction to the ideas in the reading.

Information I find interesting

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Questions I have about the reading

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My reactions to the reading

- 1.
- 2.

After Reading

After you finish reading, refer to the predictions you made about the reading and see if they were true or false. This is also a good time for you to reflect on the reading and summarize the key points the author makes.

Reflection

Now that I have read the article, I think ...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Summary

The key points that are important...

- 1.

- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

The Writing Process

As you write your essay, remember the five general stages in a writing process recommended by the Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue University. Following these stages will help you write your best essays.

- 1. Understanding the requirements and expectations of an assignment:**

When your instructor gives you a writing assignment, read it carefully to understand the purpose and the audience of the assignment. If you are confused about the assignment, it is always a good idea to speak to the instructor about what s/he expects from you as a writer.

- 2. Generating ideas:** There are several ways you can generate ideas before you write the first draft of your essay. You can read source materials, take notes, make an outline or list bullet points, read more on the topic, and talk to friends about your ideas for the essay. Generating ideas will give you a sense of what you want to say about the topic. No matter what you do, it is important for you to keep taking notes and write a little bit every day. This will give you the much-needed fodder for thought before you begin to write the first draft.
- 3. Drafting:** Now that you have generated ideas for your essay, write the preliminary draft at least a week before the essay is due. Remember that no body ever writes a perfect first draft the first time, so it is important that you give yourself sometime to revisit your first draft and do the necessary revisions.
- 4. Revising:** If your first draft is shorter than the required length, you need to provide more information by adding new ideas and by clarifying the points your reader may find confusing. If you have written more than the required length, spend some time paring the essay down by reorganizing your ideas and cutting redundant information.
- 5. Proofreading:** Leave sufficient time for proofreading. Read your essay several times and focus on only one type of errors each time you read it. For example, you may focus on spelling errors the first time and look for punctuation errors the second time and so on and so forth.

Rather than going through these stages sequentially, you can cycle through the process until you determine that your essay is ready for submission. In other words, you may write your first draft and generate more ideas, revise the first draft, proofread it, and revise it again if you deem it necessary. Engaging in the process to continually write, revise, and proofread your essay will lead to greater success.