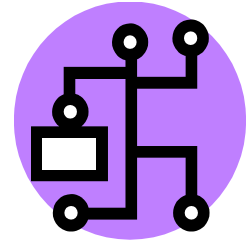


# Quick Tip of the Week

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## Did you know . . .

For many student writers, the hardest part of any essay is writing the first line. Don't worry though; there are a lot of things you could do to try to make this part of the writing process easier. These strategies are referred to as **prewriting** (sometimes called **brainstorming**), and there are several kinds of prewriting techniques you could use to help you map out your essay and get started with ease. Some of these techniques are known as:



**Listing-** Write your topic at the top of the page and then simply list words and ideas that come to mind. You can review what you have written later and underline key terms, add or delete items and then zero in on what it is you are most interested in exploring about your topic.

**Clustering- (also called mapping).** Helps identify connections and relationships within topic ideas. Start with your topic in the center of a sheet of paper and connect it to subtopics using circles and lines. Continue brainstorming and to further expand the subtopics as well.

**Freewriting-** Sit down and write EVERYTHING you can think of pertaining to your topic. If you ever find yourself stuck, write the words “*nothing comes to mind*” or “*I can't think of anything else.*” The idea is to never stop writing until your time is up.

**Outlining-** For those students who strive in an organized and structured environment, this may be your best prewriting activity. Planning a step-by-step path for your paper will not only help you with the start of your essay, but with the body and the conclusion as well.

### **Other things you could do to help get started writing.**

Develop a question and write your draft as if you are answering that question.

Ask questions about your audience. What do they want to know?

Be sure you are writing the right kind of response to your assignment.

Turn on your “writer’s voice.”

Ask questions to generate ideas.

Exchange ideas with classmates, friends, and family.

For more detailed information about prewriting, talk to your instructor or come see us in the Advocacy Center at JH 308.