

# The Importance of the Writing Process

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Students learn to write by writing. Models of good writing in the subject area and feedback that is constructive and formative, are critical to students' growth as writers.

Struggling writers need:

- regular, meaningful opportunities to practice writing in subject-specific contexts
- mentors who model the writing process and demonstrate its usefulness
- opportunities to talk about their writing
- prior knowledge about language and subject content
- knowledge of different writing forms and their characteristics
- strategies to become independent writers in any context.



## Promoting Consistency

Students are sometimes confused by differences in writing requirements from subject to subject within the same institution or major/program. Although different subjects require different types of writing assignments, all writing can follow the same process. Adopting a consistent writing process across eases some of the stress associated with writing and helps students build confidence and skill as writers.

## The Writing Process

The writing process involves generating ideas, developing and organizing the ideas, and revising and editing them. Effective writers cycle through these stages until they are satisfied that the writing achieves its purpose.

### Generating Ideas

Students need to develop skills for getting what they know about a topic down on paper, and generating ideas or finding additional facts. They also need skills to check whether their writing is on-topic and fulfills its purpose. Further, they need to be able to explain the writing assignment and the process they are following to effectively complete the assignment.

### Developing and Organizing Ideas

Students need to know how to organize what they have learned about any topic or assignment into a well-structured whole. In longer writing assignments, they need to know how to create a strong, focused introduction that catches the reader's interest; how to link ideas in logically connected paragraphs that contain enough supporting detail; and how to conclude with a strong ending.

### Revising and Editing

Students need individual and group skills to assess their own work and the work of others for content, clarity, form and style, and for errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Ultimately, students have individual responsibility for the accuracy of their work, but they need to know how to seek and provide feedback to foster improvement.