

WRITING WORKSHOP

LESSON 3:

The writing process (Part 1) (source: *Models for Writers*)

1) Understand your assignment:

When you first receive an assignment, read it over several times. Focus on each word and each phrase to make sure you understand what you are being asked to do. Try restating the assignment in your own words to make sure you understand it. If, after reading the assignment several times, you are still unsure consult with your instructor.

2) Focus on a topic:

A topic is the specific part of a subject on which a writer focuses. Subjects such as the environment, literature, and sports are too broad to be dealt with adequately in a single essay. Entire books are written about these and other subjects. In moving from a broad subject to a particular topic, you should take into account any assigned constraint on length of format. You should also want to consider the amount of time you have to write.

3) Get ideas and collect information:

Ask yourself questions about the topic
Brainstorm
Cluster
Research

4) Establish your thesis:

The thesis of an essay is its main idea, the point the writer is trying to make. The thesis is often expressed in one or two sentences called *thesis statement*. An effective method for developing a thesis statement is to begin by writing, "What I want to say is that..." A thesis statement that is too general will leave you overwhelmed by the number of issues you must address. Too specific a thesis statement will leave you with too little information to present.