



## Literacy at Hartford Public High School

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### The Writing Process <http://homeschoolunitstudies.com>

It is important for your student to understand the steps involved in the writing process:

- Prewriting
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing
- Publishing

Requiring all work to be "published" can discourage writing. You might, during the course of the school year, ask your students to write summaries, paraphrases, letters, essays, etc. Much of the time you can accept rough drafts, but occasionally your student needs to go through the entire process.

Most teachers divide the process of writing an essay into three stages: Prewriting, Writing, and Revising. In Prewriting, you think about your subject and purpose and organize those thoughts onto paper. At the end of the prewriting stage, you should know what you want to say and how you want to organize your points. During the Writing stage, you put down those points, including a brief introduction and conclusion. After you've finished writing, you should have some time left for Revising. In this stage, you read your essay to see if it covered the basic points thoroughly, provided good support, gave the reader a sense of direction or organization, and avoided grammatical errors.

When writers skip the Prewriting stage, they typically start too abruptly, don't know where they're going or if they're getting off the subject, write too generally, write an essay that's too short (i.e. underdeveloped), and don't know when or how to conclude. Writers who skip the Revision stage may turn in essays that are unorganized, unsupported, or illogical; that omit points the writer had in mind; or that contain serious grammatical errors that the writer could have corrected. Writers who don't revise regularly tend to make the same mistakes in the next essay and never seem to get a mental picture of what a good essay is like.

### Step One: Prewriting

"If you don't know where you're going, that's where you'll end up."

- Unstructured prewriting (freewriting, clustering)
- Narrow topic
- Semi-structured prewriting (brainstorming, jot listing)
- Meditate
- Choose audience & purpose
- Structured prewriting (thesis, outline)

### Step Two: Writing

- Introduction
- Supporting Paragraphs
  - Topic sentences
  - Details
  - Transitions
- Conclusion

### Step Three: Editing and Revising

- Thesis check
- Structure
- Details (specific and relevant) to support each point
- Eliminate wordiness
- Avoid vague words, sentences
- Check grammar

Visit the following web site for specific information:

<http://www.mhhe.com/socscience/english/compde/ewtitl.mhtml>

The site contains

- extensive guidance on conducting electronic research and documenting sources
- links to important research sites across the curriculum
- links to select on-line writing labs
- supplements and textbook material
- space to chat with other writers
- instructor's resources
- fun links and other writing links for students