

In this writing lab activity sheet, you can find tools to help support you as you start writing, which is referred to as the drafting phase in the writing process. **Activity 1** helps you generate content for your essay. **Activity 2** provides yes or no questions aimed at checking if your draft meets common criteria. **Activity 3** asks you to outline revision goals for your next draft.

# Activity 1 - Speed Writing

Before starting this activity, identify the main argument or thesis statement of your paper. It doesn’t have to be good, it just has to exist. The following steps pose a series of questions and then ask you to set a 5 minute timer and free write until the time is up. What you write is a good “shitty first draft” that you can use in your paper.

1. What do you need to establish before someone else can understand your thesis statement? Set a 5 minute timer. Go!
2. What are possible counterarguments to your thesis statement? Set a 5 minute timer. Go!
3. What do you need to prove to make your thesis more believable or understandable? Set a 5 minute timer. Go!
4. Why does your thesis statement matter? What are the broader implications? Who would care about this argument? Set a 5 minute timer. Go!

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# Activity 2 - Drafting Checklist

For this section, please ask any available peer tutor, or make an appointment, to review your draft based on the checklist. These questions are not a complete list of everything that your paper needs to touch on, but is a catch-all list that can help you improve on common writing concerns. It may be helpful to have these questions in mind while writing, before finishing a draft.

| Do you have enough context in your introduction for someone unfamiliar with the topic to understand your main argument? |  |
| --- | --- |
| Does your draft address each question or part of the assignment instructions? |  |
| Does each paragraph connect to your thesis statement? |  |
| Does each paragraph introduce at least one piece of new information? |  |
| Does each paragraph have a topic sentence? |  |
| Does each paragraph have a concluding or transition sentence? |  |
| Have you read the paper out loud to yourself or had someone else proofread it? |  |
| Do you have a plan for getting feedback on this draft? |  |

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# Activity 3 - Revision Goals

This activity asks you to create a set of goals to improve the next version of your draft. In the “aspect to improve” column, identify an element of your paper that you want to improve on. We’ve identified some common areas of improvement here; feel free to cross them out if they don’t apply. In the second column, write down the page number and paragraph where you could work on the element to the left. In the third column, brainstorm some ideas on how to improve. You can do this activity with a peer tutor, who can help identify aspects to improve upon.

| **Aspect to Improve** | **Place in Paper** | **Brainstorm** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Thesis statement |  |  |
| Topic sentences |  |  |
| Transitions between paragraphs |  |  |
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