

In this writing lab activity sheet, we provide tools to help support your prewriting and early stages of writing your paper. **Activity 1** guides you through creating a timeline; this is best done shortly after an assignment has been given in class. **Activity 2** is a brainstorming activity, to help narrow down what you want to write about. **Activity 3** guides you through narrowing down what idea interests you the most, by asking you to find some supporting evidence.

# Activity 1 - Creating a Timeline

This chart is aimed to help you create a manageable, realistic timeline for your paper.

In the “deadline” column, determine a deadline for each phase of your paper. Start at the bottom, by listing your paper’s due date. Working backwards with however much time you have until it is due, determine appropriate goals by date to accomplish each section of the paper. Remember that drafting and revising should be the longest phases of your writing process.

In the “notes” column, write down any guiding thoughts or feedback you’ve already received. If a phase is not applicable to how you write, simply ignore it; these are only our suggestions for one way to structure your process.

| **Paper Phase** | **Deadline** | **Notes** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Identifying a Topic of Interest |  |  |
| Reviewing Sources |  |  |
| Organizing Notes and Ideas |  |  |
| Outlining |  |  |
| Formulating a Main Idea |  |  |
| Drafting |  |  |
| Review by a Peer or Instructional Staff |  |  |
| Revising |  |  |
| Proofreading |  |  |
| Submit the Paper | Put your paper’s due date here! |  |

# Activity 2 - Developing an Idea

This activity provides guiding questions, with space to answer. These questions are meant to help brainstorm an idea and then provide additional structure, so the idea can become a thesis statement or main argument.

1. What part of the prompt for this paper do you think is the most important to your instructor or grader? What part of the prompt seems the most difficult to achieve? What part most excites you?
2. What about the artifact (e.g., a book, a newspaper article, a current event, etc.) is interesting? What is confusing? What do you disagree with?
3. What was the most engaging lecture or discussion you’ve had in class so far? What was interesting about it? Can you relate it to the prompt for the paper?
4. What are three topics you could write about for this paper?
5. Which of the above topics would be the hardest to write? Which is the easiest? Do these topics overlap? Can you answer any of them right now, without reviewing any material from class?

# Activity 3 - Considering Sources + Evidence

In this activity, collect two pieces of information related to your potential topics using the charts below. For each piece of information, identify what type of information it is. Have you chosen a quote from a text? Are you describing a visual element of an artifact? Are you referring to a concept or argument presented in lecture? Then, in 1-2 sentences or bullet points, connect this evidence to your topic. Once you’ve filled out the chart, consider which topic has the most clear evidence–this may help you decide which topic you will develop into a thesis statement!

**Example Topic:** Queerness in *Orlando* by Virginia Woolf

| **Supporting Information** | **What type of evidence is this?** | **How does it relate to your topic?**  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| She had, it seems, no difficulty in sustaining the different parts, for her sex changed far more frequently than those who have worn only one set of clothing can conceive… From the probity of breeches she turned to the seductiveness of petticoats and enjoyed the love of both sexes equally. (*Orlando*, p. 161) | Direct quote from the primary artifact being analyzed. | This quote from the book shows some degree of bisexuality because, even though Orlando’s sex changed to be the opposite of her partner, her internal sense of self and gender may have not.  |

**Topic 1:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

| **Supporting Information** | **What type of evidence is this?** | **How does it relate to your topic?** |
| --- | --- | --- |
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|  |  |  |

**Topic 2:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

| **Supporting Information** | **What type of evidence is this?** | **How does it relate to your topic?** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Topic 3:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

| **Supporting Information** | **What type of evidence is this?** | **How does it relate to your topic?** |
| --- | --- | --- |
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