

Aula 2

PREWRITING STRATEGIES

META

This class aims at highlighting the importance of organising your ideas before writing as well as understanding the assignment before writing about it.

OBJETIVOS

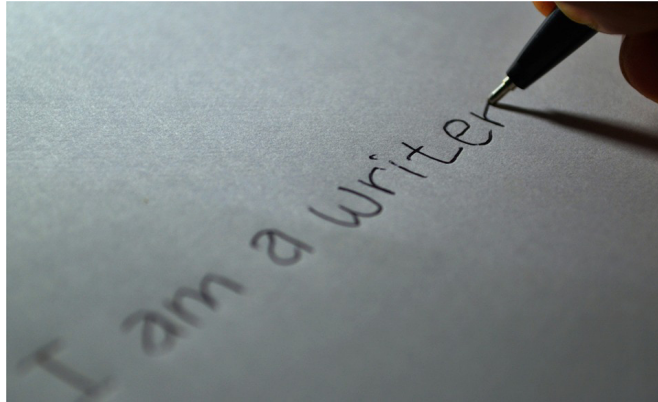
At the end of this class, it is expected that the students:
Recognise the main prewriting strategies;
Understand the importance of the prewriting techniques.

PRÉ-REQUISITOS

Previous knowledge about paragraph structure and types of paragraphs.

Marcle Vanessa Menezes Santana

INTRODUÇÃO



Fonte: <https://theimpactnews.com>

Welcome to Class 2! In this unit, we will read and practise some prewriting strategies that can help you organising your ideas before writing.

Planning and thinking about the topic before you write is essential for your essay because you can narrow down a large topic or broaden a small topic.

In this sense, there are several prewriting techniques, and the most well-known is brainstorming. Besides, there are also clustering, looping, freewriting and the journalists' questions. Have you heard of them before? Have you ever tried any of them? If you have, it's time to remember them and get to know them in-depth. If you have not, you will learn how they are important "tools" for your writing.

Therefore, let's read some texts that can shed some light on these techniques and practice them in this class!



Source: <http://static1.businessinsider.com>

EFFECTIVE PREWRITING TECHNIQUES

Prewriting is any activity that helps *you* create, develop, and organize ideas for writing.

Why bother with prewriting?

1. To find a definite direction for your writing assignment
2. To help organize your ideas *before* trying to write your first draft
3. To build off of ideas and think of new ones

Questions to ask yourself when beginning a writing assignment:

1. Were you given a topic, or can you choose one?
2. What is the purpose of this assignment? Are you informing, persuading, analyzing, entertaining, or summarizing for your readers?
3. What are the five W's of the assignment? Who? What? When? Where? Why?

Source: <https://www.kent.edu/stark/effective-prewriting-techniques>

The six steps of the writing process

2 Read about the writing process. These are the steps you will practise in this book.

↳ **Process writing**

When we write, we do more than just put words together to make sentences. Good writers go through several steps to produce a piece of writing.

Pre-writing

STEP ONE: Choose a topic. Before you write, your teacher gives you a specific assignment or some ideas of what to write about. If not, choose your topic yourself.

STEP TWO: Gather ideas. When you have a topic, think about what you will write about that topic.

STEP THREE: Organise. Decide which of the ideas you want to use and where you want to use them. Choose which idea to talk about first, which to talk about next, and which to talk about last.

Drafting

STEP FOUR: Write. Write your paragraph or essay from start to finish. Use your notes about your ideas and organisation.

Reviewing and revising

STEP FIVE: Review structure and content. Check what you have written. Read your writing silently to yourself or aloud, perhaps to a friend. Look for places where you can add more information, and check to see if you have any unnecessary information. Ask a classmate to exchange texts with you. Your classmate reads your text, and you read his or hers. Getting a reader's opinion is a good way to know if your writing is clear and effective. Learning to give opinions about other people's writing helps you to improve your own. You may want to go on to step six now and revise the structure and content of your text before you proofread it.

Rewriting

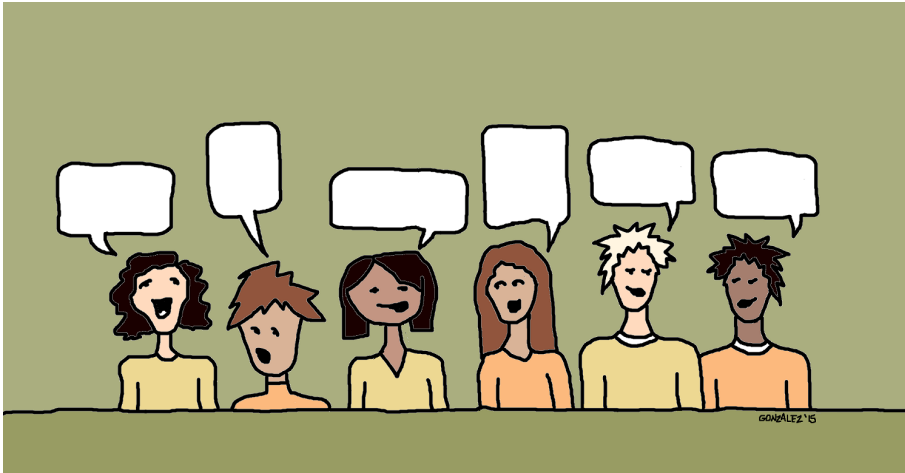
STEP SIX: Revise structure and content. Use your ideas from step five to rewrite your text, making improvements to the structure and content. You might need to explain something more clearly, or add more details. You may even need to change your organisation so that your text is more logical. Together, steps five and six can be called *editing*.

Proofread. Read your text again. This time, check your spelling and grammar and think about the words you have chosen to use.

Make final corrections. Check that you have corrected the errors you discovered in steps five and six and make any other changes you want to make. Now your text is finished!

Steps five and six can be repeated many times.

Source: ZEMACH, Dorothy E.; RUMISEK, Lisa A. Academic Writing: from Paragraph to essay. Oxford: Macmillan Education, 2005, p. 3.



Source: <https://x78251kcpll2l2t9e46kf96a-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com>

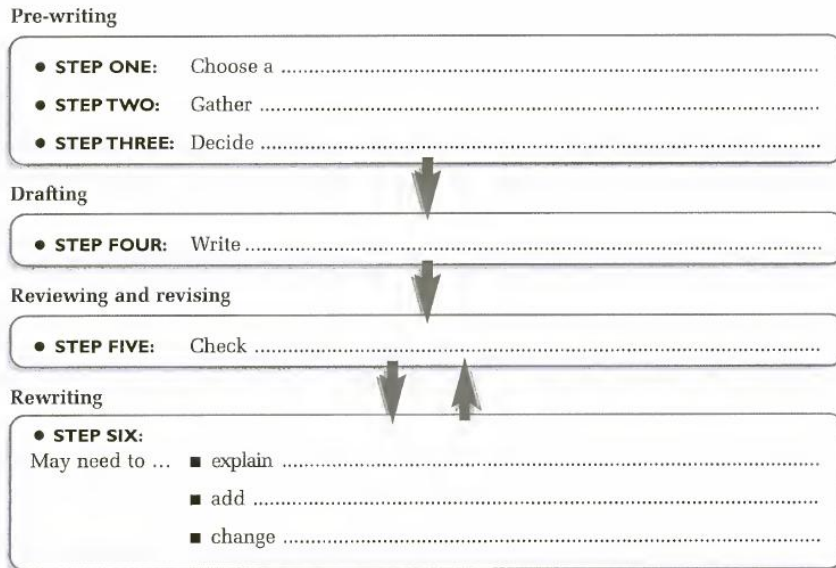
Have you ever followed those steps before writing in Portuguese? If you have, how did it help you? If you have not, do you think it can help you in your writing in English?



Source: <http://static1.businessinsider.com>

PRACTICE 1 – WRITING PROCESS

3 Complete this chart, summarising the steps of the writing process.



Steps and may be many times.

Source: ZEMACH, Dorothy E.; RUMISEK, Lisa A. Academic Writing: from Paragraph to essay. Oxford: Macmillan Education, 2005, p. 4.

PREWRITING STRATEGIES

Pre-writing strategies use writing to generate and clarify ideas. While many writers have traditionally created outlines before beginning writing, there are other possible prewriting activities. Five useful strategies are brainstorming, clustering, free writing, looping, and asking the six journalists' questions.

BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming, also called listing, is a process of generating a lot of information within a short time by building on the association of previous terms you have mentioned.

Jot down all the possible terms that emerge from the general topic you are thinking about. This procedure works especially well if you work in a team. All team members can generate ideas, with one member acting as scribe. Don't worry about editing or throwing out what might not be a good idea. Simply write down a lot of possibilities.

Group the items that you have listed according to arrangements that make sense to you.

Give each group a label. Now you have a topic with possible points of development.

Write a sentence about the label you have given the group of ideas.

Now you have a topic sentence or possibly a thesis statement.

CLUSTERING

Clustering is also called mind mapping or idea mapping. It is a strategy that allows you to explore the relationships between ideas.

Put the subject in the center of a page. Circle or underline it.

As you think of other ideas, link the new ideas to the central circle with lines.

As you think of ideas that relate to the new ideas, add to those in the same way.

The result will look like a web on your page. Locate clusters of interest to you, and use the terms you attached to the key ideas as departure points for your paper.

Clustering is especially useful in determining the relationship between ideas. You will be able to distinguish how the ideas fit together, especially where there is an abundance of ideas. Clustering your ideas lets you see them visually in a different way, so that you can more readily understand possible directions your paper may take.

FREEWITING

Free-writing is a process of generating a lot of information by writing non-stop. It allows you to focus on a specific topic, but forces you to write so quickly that you are unable to edit any of your ideas.

Free-write on the assignment or general topic for several 5-10 minutes non-stop. Force yourself to continue writing even if nothing specific comes to mind. This free-writing will include many ideas; at this point, generating ideas is what is important, not the grammar or the spelling. After you've finished free-writing, look back over what you have written and highlight the most prominent and interesting ideas; then you can begin all over again, with a tighter focus. You will narrow your topic and, in the process, you will generate several relevant points about the topic.

LOOPING

Looping is a free-writing technique that allows you to increasingly focus your ideas in trying to discover a writing topic. You loop one 5-10 minute free-writing after another, so you have a sequence of free-writings, each more specific than the other. The same rules that apply to free-writing apply to looping: write quickly, do not edit, and do not stop.

Free-write on an assignment for 5-10 minutes. Then, read through your free-writing, looking for interesting topics, ideas, phrases, or sentences. Circle those you find interesting. A variation on looping is to have a classmate circle ideas in your free-writing that interests him or her.

Then free-write again for 5-10 minutes on one of the circled topics. You should end up with a more specific free-writing about a particular topic.

Loop your free-writing again, circling another interesting topic, idea, phrase, or sentence. When you have finished four or five rounds of looping, you will begin to have specific information that indicates what you are thinking about a particular topic. You may even have the basis for a tentative thesis or an improved idea for an approach to your assignment when you have finished.

THE JOURNALISTS' QUESTIONS

Journalists traditionally ask six questions when they are writing assignments, 5 W's and 1 H: Who?, What?, Where?, When?, Why?, How? You can use these questions to explore the topic you are writing about for an assignment. A key to using the journalists' questions is to make them flexible enough to account for the specific details of your topic. For instance, if your topic is the rise and fall of the Puget Sound tides and its effect on salmon spawning, you may have very little to say about Who? if your focus doesn't account for human involvement. On the other hand, some topics may be heavy on the Who?, especially if human involvement is a crucial part of the topic. Possible generic questions you can ask using the six journalists' questions follow:

Who?:

Who are the participants? Who is affected? Who are the primary actors? Who are the secondary actors?

What?:

What is the topic? What is the significance of the topic? What is the basic problem? What are the issues?

Where?:

Where does the activity take place? Where does the problem or issue have its source? At what place is the cause or effect of the problem most visible?

When?:

When is the issue most apparent? (past? present? future?) When did the issue or problem develop? What historical forces helped shape the problem or issue and at what point in time will the problem or issue culminate in a crisis? When is action needed to address the issue or problem?

Why?:

Why did the issue or problem arise? Why is it (your topic) an issue or problem at all? Why did the issue or problem develop in the way that it did?

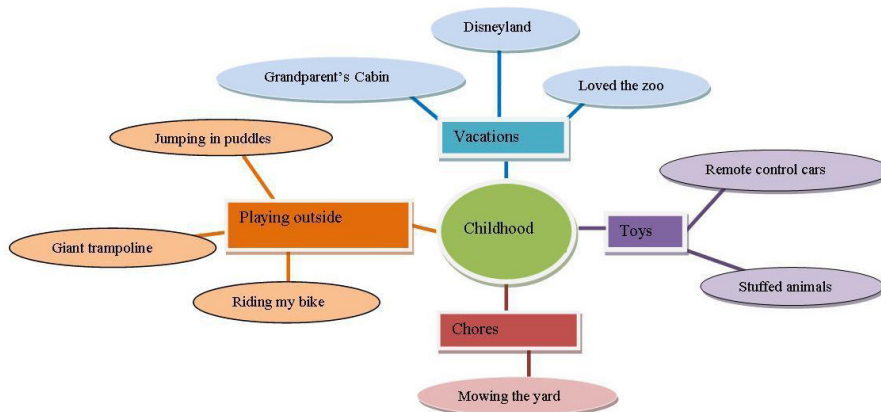
How?:

How is the issue or problem significant? How can it be addressed? How does it affect the participants? How can the issue or problem be resolved?

The journalists' questions are a powerful way to develop a great deal of information about a topic very quickly. Learning to ask the appropriate questions about a topic takes practice, however. At times during writing an assignment, you may wish to go back and ask the journalists' questions again to clarify important points that may be getting lost in your planning and drafting.

Source: <http://writing.ku.edu/prewriting-strategies>

Example of Clustering:



Source: <https://www.crk.umn.edu>

In your view which is the most interesting prewriting strategy? Why?



Source: <http://static1.businessinsider.com/image/53d02bec69bedd7d6afd7711-1200-924/writing-handwriting-journal.jpg>

PRACTICE 2 – USING PREWRITING STRATEGIES

Choose one of the strategies and write as many potential topics as you can related to the following themes in 4 minutes:

1. Teaching career
2. Corruption
3. Prejudice
4. Women's role in society

<http://study.com>

BRAINSTORMING:

1. **Use a blank paper or computer screen** and set a time limit of 2-4 minutes
2. **Summarize the topic in a phrase or sentence;**
Generate a free flow of thought
3. **Write down everything** that comes to mind to generate a free flow of thought:

o Think of ideas related to this topic, the crazier the better: be wild and amuse yourself; eliminate nothing

4. Make up questions and answers about the topic, no matter how strange: Why am I doing this? What could be interesting about this to me?

5. Review:

Are there words or ideas you can grab onto for the topic?

Is there a main idea within this sequence of ideas?

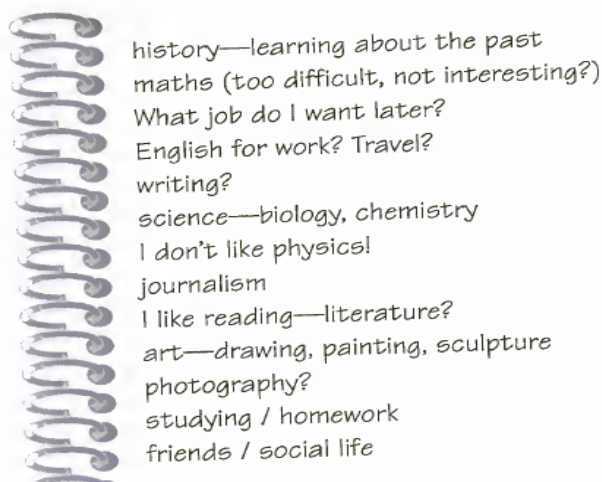
TOPIC

Some people think that parents should teach children how to be good members of society.

Others, however, believe that school is the place to learn this.

☞ Making a list

Write single words, phrases, or sentences that are connected to your topic. Look at this list a student made when brainstorming ideas to write about her topic, 'What should I study at university?'



history—learning about the past
 maths (too difficult, not interesting?)
 What job do I want later?
 English for work? Travel?
 writing?
 science—biology, chemistry
 I don't like physics!
 journalism
 I like reading—literature?
 art—drawing, painting, sculpture
 photography?
 studying / homework
 friends / social life

COMMENT ON THE ACTIVITY

This is a good example of *brainstorming* because they listed as many ideas connected to the topic as possible :)

Source: ZEMACH, Dorothy E.; RUMISEK, Lisa A. Academic Writing: from Paragraph to essay. Oxford: Macmillan Education, 2005, p. 6.

FOCUSED FREE WRITING

1. Use a blank paper or computer screen and set a time limit of 2 - 4 minutes
2. Summarize the topic in a phrase or sentence; generate a free flow of thought
3. Write anything that comes to mind, whether on topic or off, for the period of time you chose,

4. **Don't pause, don't stop.**

don't rush; work quickly

5. **Don't review...**

...what you have written until you have finished

6. **At the end of your time**, refer back to the beginning:

- o Rephrase the initial topic
- o Repeat a word, phrase, or important thought or emotion that makes sense.

7. **Review:**

- o Are there words or ideas you can grab onto for the topic?
- o Is there a main idea to this sequence of ideas?

TOPIC

Since the 18th century technological advances have replaced people in the workplace. With today's technology this process is happening at a greater rate. Technology is increasingly responsible for unemployment.

Mind mapping (Clustering)

1. Think in terms of key words or symbols that represent ideas and words

2. Take a pencil (you'll be erasing!) and a blank (non-lined) big piece of paper or use a blackboard and (colored) chalk

3. **Write down the most important word or short phrase or symbol in the center.**

Think about it; circle it.

4. **Write other important words outside the circle.**

Draw over-lapping circles to connect items, or use arrows to connect them

(think of linking pages in a web site)

Leave white space to grow your map for

- o further development
- o explanations
- o action items

5. **Work quickly...**

... without analyzing your work

6. Edit this first phase

- o Think about the relation of outside items to the center,
- o Erase and replace and shorten words for these key ideas
- o Relocate important items closer to each other for better organization
- o Use color to organize information
- o Link concepts with words to clarify the relationship

7. Continue working outward

- o Freely and quickly add other key words and ideas (you can always erase!)
- o Think weird: tape pages together to expand your map; break boundaries
- o Develop in directions the topic takes you--don't bet limited by the size of the paper
- o As you expand your map, tend to become more specific or detailed

Topic

Around the world, children learn English as a second language at school. However, in some places, they also learn at kindergarten (pre-school care, when children are aged two to five).

Source: <http://www.studygs.net/writing/prewriting.htm>

UNDERSTANDING WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Contributors: Allen Brizee

Last Edited: 2011-06-28 02:36:56

HOW TO DECIPHER THE PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Many instructors write their assignment prompts differently. By following a few steps, you can better understand the requirements for the assignment. The best way, as always, is to ask the instructor about anything confusing.

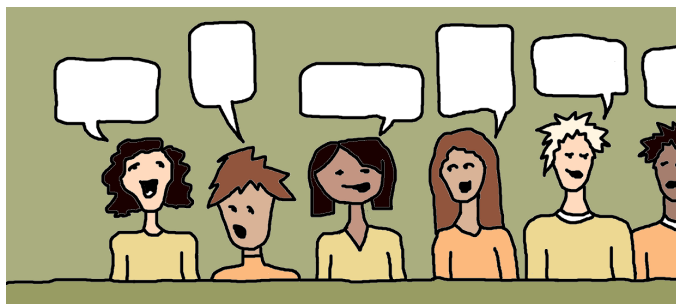
1. **Read the prompt the entire way through once.** This gives you an overall view of what is going on.
2. **Underline or circle the portions that you absolutely must know.** This information may include due date, research (source) requirements, page length, and format.

3. **Underline or circle important phrases.** You should know your instructor at least a little by now - what phrases does she use in class? Does he repeatedly say a specific word? If these are in the prompt, you know the instructor wants you to use them in the assignment.
4. **Think about how you will address the prompt.** The prompt contains clues on how to write the assignment. Your instructor will often describe the ideas she wants discussed either in questions, in bullet points, or in the text of the prompt. Think about each of these sentences and number them so that you can write a paragraph or section of your essay on that portion if necessary.
5. **Rank ideas in descending order, from most important to least important.** Instructors may include more questions or talking points than you can cover in your assignment, so rank them in the order you think is more important. One area of the prompt may be more interesting to you than another.
6. **Ask your instructor questions if you have any.**

After you are finished with these steps, ask yourself the following:

1. **What is the purpose of this assignment?** Is my purpose to provide information without forming an argument, to construct an argument based on research, or analyze a poem and discuss its imagery?
2. **Who is my audience?** Is my instructor my only audience? Who else might read this? Will it be posted online? What are my readers' needs and expectations?
3. **What resources do I need to begin work?** Do I need to conduct literature (hermeneutic or historical) research, or do I need to review important literature on the topic and then conduct empirical research, such as a survey or an observation? How many sources are required?
4. Who - beyond my instructor - can I contact to help me if I have questions? Do you have a writing lab or student service center that offers tutorials in writing?

Source: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/688/01/>



Source: <https://x78251kcpll2l2t9e46kf96a-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com>

Why is it important to know your audience before writing? What are the implications when an author does not take that into consideration?

WEB SEARCH

Let's learn more about prewriting techniques ☺

Access the website: <http://study.com/academy/lesson/effective-pre-writing-instructions-and-examples.html>

Afterwards, do the quiz: <http://study.com/academy/practice/quiz-worksheet-effective-prewriting.html>



SUMMARY

After you have the subject for your essay, you have to start your writing process. In general, there are several steps to go through when you are working on an essay, and that's why prewriting strategies are important.

Writing an essay takes much time because it requires thinking, planning and writing. And the first draft usually needs to have some work on before it becomes the final essay. Thus, using any of the techniques presented – brainstorming, clustering, looping, freewriting and the journalists' questions – may help you in this journey.



SELF-EVALUATION

Did I increase my knowledge related to the prewriting techniques improved?

Can I make correct use of those techniques before writing?



NEXT CLASS

Next class, the focus of your studies will be on Introductory Paragraph. See ya!

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<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/688/01/>