

THINKING WITH MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Video: The Plastic Plight

The Writing Process
(prewriting)

Megan is one of Nate's friends in his writing group. She made a list and now she wants to expand her thinking on one of her possible topics by creating a web. She talked with her trusted audience and recalled some of the highlights of several items on her list. Then she chose one that really spoke to her.

Now it's **Your Turn!** View Megan's list and web in anticipation of creating your own!



Creating Megan's List

Megan made a list and now wants to expand her thinking on a possible topic to write on. She talked with her trusted peers and recalled some highlights of several events that she noted on the list. She chose one that really interested her.

Megan's Original List

- Staying on Rottnest Island
- A Shopping Vacation
- The Canoe Trip
- The Busted Antique
- Ten New Puppies

Megan loved telling stories! Because her experiences were often so exciting and engaging, she was encouraged by her friends to write them down. She began with a list of possible topics and then expanded one of her favorites into a web where she expanded her thinking on a wilderness adventure.

Megan's Think Aloud: Because this was such a fun experience, I thought I remembered everything that happened. But once I began webbing, lost memories resurfaced and specific details were once again vivid. I didn't worry about logically telling the story. I knew once I had webbed, I would be able to figure out the order. But capturing the details was key.

As I began this web, I remembered three main details right away. We traveled for three days in two canoes in Upstate New York. I put all those details in separate circles, which connected individually to the main rectangle. Connecting to 'three days,' I added 'tents.' It's what we slept in and ultimately carried with us when we portaged. Connected to 'two canoes' I added our names: my friend Julie and I were in one canoe; cousins Fred and Harry were in the other. Fred and Harry traveled in an aluminum canoe, so that was added to the web. I also added a 40-pound pack, a wooden canoe, and the fact that our canoe gained weight each time it got wet.

Julie and I engaged in four, three-mile portages where I discovered sore muscles I didn't know I had. That idea went into a circle and connected to the main rectangle. Then I thought I had better mention where we wandered on our trip. Each of these locations and descriptions went in separate ovals. We started at Raquette Lake and then traveled down Raquette River. My web also referenced the rapids the boys shot while on the river. From the Raquette River we headed towards Saranac Lake which was beautiful and calm, especially on our final misty morning.

The trip was exhausting, but rewarding. I added that to the web all by itself. It really just summed up our wonderful adventure.



Check Out Megan's Web:

Megan's Web: "Recalling the canoe trip I had been on years ago was easy, once I saw how Nate organized his thinking. I will continue to utilize list-making and webbing as a great brainstorming tool while prewriting."

Questions to Think and Talk About:

- How did brainstorming help you focus towards a particular topic?
- How did talking with someone help you refine your thinking?
- Why might this procedure help when you want to write?
- When else might this process be useful?
- What benefits can come from the method of webbing?
- In what way did stepping away from your list and/or web bring clarity to your thinking?

