



WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

Video: The Plastic Plight

The Writing Process (prewriting)



What is Prewriting?

Prewriting is any planning activity that helps the writer invent content and generate ideas, images, viewpoints, and so on, to be developed into a piece of writing. Methods include brainstorming, free writing, discussion, drawing, and role-playing. Some writers follow up with organizational strategies such as grouping ideas and information into a web or cluster, or generating a preliminary outline. Correctness and mechanics are not the focus of a prewriting activity. Because writing can come from many places and is often found in many forms, there is never a lock-step way to do it effectively.

Successful Writers Write

Successful writers engage in slow-motion thinking as they record their thoughts. Writing is the act of discovery where writers experiment and play with words -with feelings - and sounds. Writing evolves over time and is rarely easy. It is an overt attempt to make meaning and to discover what lies both within and beyond.

Writing is Thinking

The act of writing is the act of thought captured. We can't let good, rich ideas float away; therefore, we must jot them down before they evaporate. A writer's notebook is a place to put those random ideas. Some ideas may not be utilized in one piece of writing, but they might be used to help start, or even grow another writing. Sometimes, working with others might help you to sort out ideas for a particular writing. Having someone to bounce ideas off of often helps a writer to "see" what might be useful in their writing.

Writing is a Process

Writing is a craft before it is an art where apprentices work hard to mold their words into a product. The process is not linear, but recursive, going back over the stages once, or many times, emphasizing different parts during each pass. Writing is an important act; it is not easy and should not be. But the rewards of good writing are worth the effort.

You Can't Write Writing

Effective writing is produced from an abundance of specific information. The writer must research, brainstorm, and locate information before and during writing. A writer needs an inventory of facts, observations, details, images, quotations, statistics, all sorts and forms of information from which to choose when building an effective piece of writing. It is this kind of information that breeds ideas. A good writing process is to *collect*, *plan*, and *develop*.



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All Writing is Experimental in the Beginning

Writing is an attempt to solve a problem, to find a meaning, to discover its own way towards meaning. We must learn and be comfortable knowing that as we write that it is necessary to fail and advantages of failure often grow good writers. For it is in the failure of a phrase or a line that the writer massages the words to make it say exactly what is intended. Good writers know of the necessity and the advantage of failed pieces of writing, as they grow from efforts and become stronger after the fall.

Effective Writing Takes Time

Writing needs time and honest effort to develop. It is never first write and then done if it is to be meaningful work!

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