

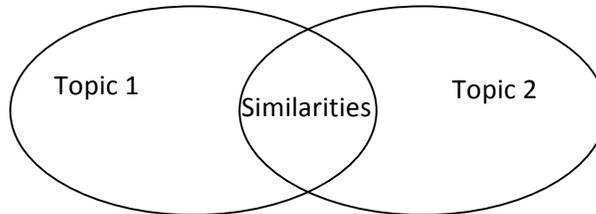
Strategies for Planning an Essay

Some writers just simply write a paper before planning it out, unaware that creating a strategy for the paper and mapping their topic out could heighten the quality of the paper.

Explore the possibilities and use what you feel works best for you!

Venn Diagram:

For comparing and contrasting



Gather information about each individual topic, write the differences in their respective circles, and then the similarities they share in the middle where the circles meet.

Dialectical Notes:

Recording your thought and reactions to the text.

<u>What the text said:</u>	<u>My thoughts:</u>

Split a piece of paper into two sides: On one side copy quotes or points from the text, and on the other, record your feelings about the text along with any additional ideas or questions you have.

Free Writing:

Getting every thought down on paper without restrictions.

<p><i>What I want to say is...</i></p> <p><i>the main points are... and then...</i></p> <p><i>I think if I go in this direction..</i></p>

Write down everything and anything that comes to mind, preferably on blank paper so that lines don't get in the way. Don't focus on punctuation, mechanics, or grammar. Simply write, and do it in fragments if need be. Include thoughts, feelings, and concerns along with the facts you want to include in the paper.

Bulleting:

Figuring out your main points.

- *My main point is...*
- *What I want to convey is that...*
- *The reasons I have for my claim are...*
- *Evidence I have to back up what I am claiming...*

Using bullets, write briefly about the main points you want to highlight in your paper along with your reasons and evidence for your claim(s). When you're ready to write an actual draft, this will help prompt you when you are ready to elaborate. It also serves as a good summary and will keep your paper to the point.

Self-Assessment after a Draft:

Reflecting on your weak and strong points.

My main point/What I'm trying to convey:

Things that are working well:

Things I'm having trouble with:

Things I can do to fix the problem(s):

Hopes for the next draft:

After writing a draft, take out time to reflect on what you've done so far. Make a list of things you want to look over (including the questions above) and answer them with your draft in front of you. It may also be helpful to answer some of the questions as a reader or your target audience, which will help make your paper more accessible to readers. Doing this reflection will provide you with guidelines for how to improve your next draft.

Writing is a process that requires intensive care. Make sure to never rush yourself too much, and to give yourself adequate time to do all the necessary planning and drafting. Remember: The more time you give yourself to work with and the more time you spend on the paper, the more time you will have to think and develop deep thoughts on your topic, and write something you'll be proud of!