



Invention Strategies, Or Ways to Develop Ideas

- Outlining: put together a rough outline. This strategy works most effectively when you already have some idea of what you might want to write about but aren't sure how to organize or develop it.
- Notice and Focus (see Rosenwasser and Stephen 29-30, 250): talk/write about the most interesting, strange, or revealing points you noticed from a text you read. Rank these points. Then explain why you ranked the points as you did. This strategy works most effectively when you need to provide an analysis of something you have read or viewed (e.g., for a critique or response paper).
- The Method (see Rosenwasser and Stephen 44-57): look for patterns, repetition, contrasts, and anomalies in texts you have read. Consider what repeats and why that might be important. What stands out as unusual? Why? What doesn't fit? Once you have generated several answers, select the two or three you think are most significant and write about why. This strategy works most effectively when you need to synthesize texts (e.g., for a research paper or comparative analysis).
- Freewriting: write on a topic for a specified period of time without stopping, even if you feel like what you are writing is not good. This strategy can help you get past writer's block.
- Looping: alternate freewriting with reflection. Write for a specified period of time on a topic and then stop and write a reflection on what you just wrote. Discuss your reflection with someone; then freewrite again based on your discussion. Repeat.
- Clustering or webbing: create a visual "cluster" to show the relationship between ideas you might write about. Start with a general topic idea. Write it in the center of a page and circle it. Think of ideas that relate to that topic. Write them elsewhere on the page and draw lines to show connections. Think of ideas that follow from the new ideas he wrote down. Then consider which of these you might want to develop further.

Work Cited

Rosenwasser, David, and Jill Stephen. *Writing Analytically*. 4th edition. Boston: Thomson, 2006.