

Introduction: Process Writing

In this unit, you will ...

- learn about process writing, the writing method used in most English-speaking university classes.



The writing process

These words are important for understanding the writing process. Match each word with the correct definition.

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| a. step | 1. to check a piece of writing for errors |
| b. topic | 2. a group of related sentences |
| c. gather | 3. one thing in a series of things you do |
| d. organise | 4. subject; what the piece of writing is about |
| e. paragraph | 5. to change or correct a piece of writing |
| f. essay | 6. a short piece of writing, at least three paragraphs long |
| g. proofread | 7. to arrange in a clear, logical way |
| h. edit | 8. to find and collect together |

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.

Review

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

Pre-writing

● **STEP ONE:** Choose a

● **STEP TWO:** Gather

● **STEP THREE:** Decide



Drafting

● **STEP FOUR:** Write



Reviewing and revising

● **STEP FIVE:** Check



Rewriting

● **STEP SIX:**
May need to ... ■ explain

■ add

■ change

Steps and may be many times.

Pre-Writing: Getting Ready to Write

In this unit, you will learn how to ...

- choose and narrow a topic.
- gather ideas.
- edit ideas.

○ What is pre-writing?

Before you begin writing, you decide what you are going to write about. Then you plan what you are going to write. This process is called *pre-writing*.



Choosing and narrowing a topic

○ How to choose a topic for a paragraph

A paragraph is a group of five to ten sentences that give information about a topic. Before you write, you must choose a topic for your paragraph.

- Choose a topic that isn't too *narrow* (limited, brief). A narrow topic will not have enough ideas to write about. *The ages of my brothers and sisters* is too narrow. You can't write very much about it.
- Choose a topic that isn't too *broad* (general). A broad topic will have too many ideas for just one paragraph. Most paragraphs are five to ten sentences long. *Schools* is too general. There are thousands of things you could say about it.

A student could narrow this topic by choosing one aspect of schools to discuss.

schools → *secondary schools in my country*
popular school clubs
university entrance exams

I Choose three topics from this list. Narrow each of the three down to a paragraph topic. Then compare with a partner.

- festivals
- friends
- my country
- dancing
- cars