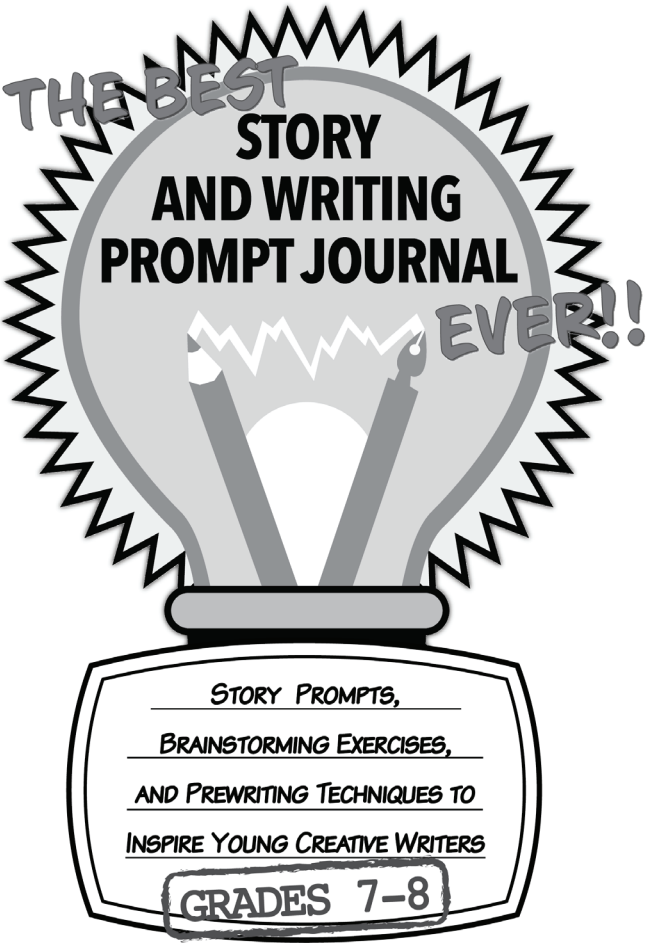


BY ORDER OF

The Mayor of Grammaropolis

FROM THE DESK OF THE MAYOR

Greetings, fellow writer!

I want to congratulate you on picking up my story and writing prompt journal. I do think you'll find that it is indeed the best one ever. (If I do say so myself.)

Why is that, you may ask? Because this journal actually gives you space to prepare your thoughts with prewriting exercises ***before*** you start writing!

I know, I know. Prewriting and organizing and all that "preparation" stuff just feels like extra work. You don't want to do any more work than you already have to. But I'm here to tell you a secret: prewriting actually ***saves*** you time overall!

That's because the first idea that comes to mind isn't always the best one. If you give other ideas the chance to make it to the page, you may just be shocked by your own creativity!

Thanks again for visiting Grammaropolis. I hope you enjoy your stay!

–The Mayor

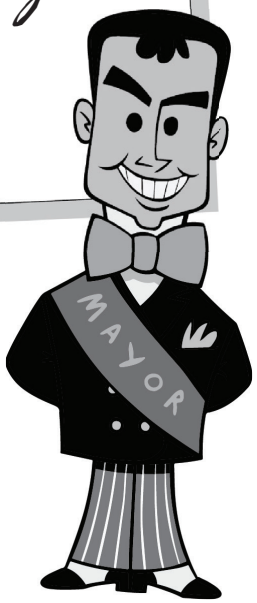


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The Purposes of Writing

The first question to ask when you sit down to write something is simple: ***Why am I writing this?*** ("Because my teacher told me to" doesn't count!)

In other words, What is the ***purpose*** of this piece of writing?

To Inform

Informative writing is used to share facts and information about a topic. Factual information is the focus of informative writing; opinions and appeals to emotion are to be avoided.

To Explain

Similar in many ways to informative writing, explanatory writing seeks to tell ***how*** or ***why*** about a particular topic. For example, you would use explanatory writing to tell how something is made.

To Persuade

The goal of persuasive writing is to express an opinion or a position in order to persuade others. It's extremely important to include facts, reasons, and other information to support your position.

To Describe

The main goal of descriptive writing is to use sensory details to describe a person, place, or thing. Descriptive writing can add depth and detail to other purposes as well.

To Entertain

Poetry, fiction, and personal narrative are all examples of writing to entertain. Narrative elements may include setting, characterization, dialogue, and story structure (beginning, middle, end).

Once you determine the purpose of your writing, the rest of the writing process will fall into place.

Prewriting Techniques

If you need to get unstuck, to build on something you're already thinking about, or just to get as many ideas onto the page as possible, here are some prewriting techniques you may find useful.

Freewrite

A freewrite is essentially a stream of consciousness. Go wherever your brain wants you to go!

Brainstorm

Similar to a freewrite, a brainstorm is a way to get ideas on the page without worrying about whether you'll end up using them.

Cluster

A type of organized brainstorm, a cluster will help you gather your ideas into categories.

5W & H

Asking *Who, What, When, Where, Why,* and *How* is a great way to develop a lot of information about a topic.

Venn Diagram

Another type of organized brainstorm, the Venn diagram is particularly useful when you need to compare and contrast.

Five Senses

Information developed with your five senses is wonderful for generating material for descriptive writing.

Series of Events

Before you start to tell a story, it can be helpful to list the things that happened so that you don't forget any important parts.

Character Sketch

Spending some time thinking about your characters is a great way to develop your story and to make it more interesting.

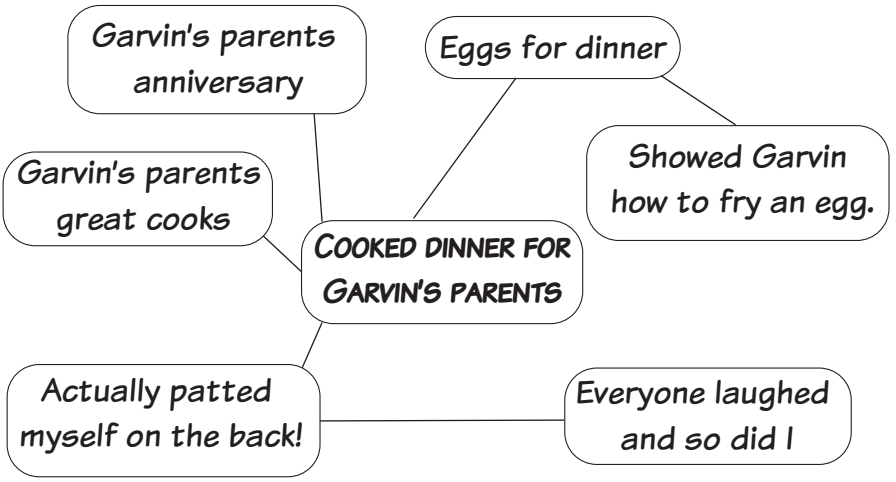
Prewriting Technique: Freewrite

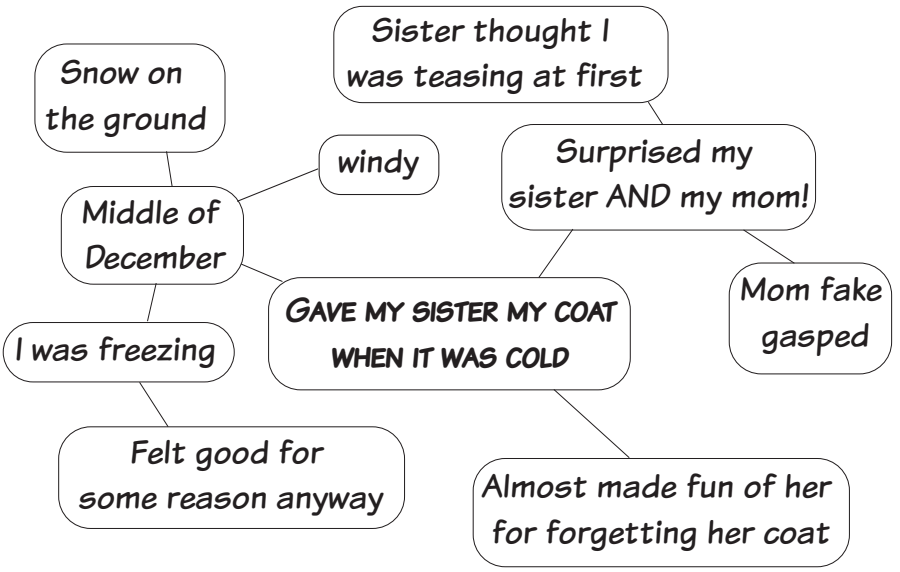
This is one of the most basic prewriting techniques there is. You simply put pen to paper and see where your brain takes you! A freewrite is useful when you don't know what you want to talk about and need to generate potential ideas.

There have only been a couple of times when I have been so proud that I actually patted myself on my own back. Some people think that being proud of yourself is bragging, but other people say that it's not bragging if it's true, so maybe it's okay for me to literally pat myself on the back. I was at my friend Garvin's house and Garvin's mom and dad are both really good cooks so whenever I go to their house I know that I am going to get awesome food. Garvin wanted to do something nice for his parents because it was their anniversary but he didn't know how to cook, so he asked me to help him. I know a little bit about how to cook because my cousin Sara used to let me help her make breakfast. But Garvin and I never cooked together before. We did lots of other stuff together though, like riding bikes and playing video games and playing in the park with my dog Stella. Stella is a yellow labrador and she is the cutest thing in the world. Sometimes she sleeps with me in my bed even though I'm supposed to make her sleep on the floor. But she is so cute that I can't ever do that. My dad once said that I love Stella so much because she doesn't make me clean my room, and I think he might have a point. Another time I was proud of myself was when I cleaned my room without my dad telling me to do it, and he came in and gave me a high five.

Prewriting Technique: Cluster

To brainstorm with a little bit of structure, a cluster will help show the relationships between your ideas. You can also see what might need to be developed a bit more. A cluster can be useful for any purpose.





Writing Exercises

For each exercise, you'll have the choice between two different writing prompts.

1. Choose one of the prompts to write about.

2. Decide what purpose you're going to use.
Now you already know what you're going to be writing about and what the goal of your writing is going to be. That's a lot!

3. Choose a prewriting technique.
As you're making your choice here, don't forget about your purpose. Some prewriting techniques are better suited to some purposes than others.

4. Prewrite.
There are no bad ideas when you're prewriting, but remember that the first thing that comes to mind isn't always going to be the best or most interesting one.

You can also do more than one prewriting exercise for a single prompt. You might do a freewrite just to get some ideas on the page. From there, you might choose one of the ideas from your freewrite and then use it as the starting point for a brainstorm or cluster.

5. Examine the results of your prewriting.
You didn't prewrite just for the sake of prewriting. You did it to generate ideas for your writing. So take a moment to look at what you came up with. Add to it. Circle stuff. Cross things out. Draw arrows from one idea to another. Make your prewriting count for something!

6. Write.
Now you're ready to build on your ideas from the prewriting technique. It's go time!

Writing Exercise #1

1. Underline your choice of prompt:
   a. **Describe an animal without saying what kind of animal it is. (Use as many of your senses as possible!)**
   b. **Write a story that begins with this line: *I never thought I'd be the judge on a cooking show, but there I was.***
2. Determine a purpose for your writing: _____
3. Select an appropriate prewriting exercise: _____
4. Use the next two pages for prewriting!

Take a moment to select and organize (and even add to) the parts of your prewriting that you feel best support your purpose.

Now it's time to write. Remember that you can use the prewriting work on these pages as a guide, but if you feel inspired to go in a different direction while you're writing, go for it!