

# Writing an Academic Paragraph or Essay

## Get Ideas

- Brainstorm; do free writing or clustering; ask and answer "wh" questions.
- Group your ideas and narrow the topic.

## Write a Draft of Your Topic Sentence (or Thesis Statement in an Essay)

- Have a clear central idea.
- Narrow the topic with a controlling idea.

## Create an Outline

- Do you have all your ideas in the outline? Could you add more?
- Do all the ideas support your topic sentence (or thesis statement)?
- Do you provide enough support?
- Is the order of supporting ideas logical?

## Write the 1<sup>st</sup> Draft

- Keep your topic sentence or thesis firmly in mind and follow your outline.
- Let the words and ideas flow -- don't worry about grammar, sentence structure, and variety of sentences.

## Check the First Draft

- Do you support your topic sentence or thesis statement clearly and directly?
- Do you provide enough support?
- If you are writing an essay, does each topic sentence of each paragraph echo the thesis?
- Is your essay coherent, unified, and cohesive?
- Do you need to add anything or delete anything?
- Is your final sentence in a paragraph an appropriate finish? Are your concluding remarks in an essay appropriate and effective?
- **Now** edit for sentence structure and sentence variety, grammar, word choice, spelling – check for the grammar or writing points you are working on to improve.

## Write the Final Draft

- Do a final check for "typos".