

Writing Process: Collecting

What is collecting?

- It's a type of writing that helps you gather a bunch of different kinds of ideas around your topic to make it expansive, full of possibilities, and more complex.
- As writers, when we collect a lot of different kinds of information, we're forced to make connections and see new information arise.
- Collecting is a way to discover ideas.
- When does it typically happen? After choosing a topic and before drafting, but also sometimes during revision.

Some Ways to Collect (Entry types to try)

- a) How different people think about the topic
- b) Questions about my topic
- c) Ideas about what's important about my topic
- d) Timeline of my topic
- e) Organizing ideas visually
- f) What objects/ideas would be in a museum about my topic?
- g) Key terms related to my topic and how I'm choosing to define them
- h) How my topic is related to other ideas/people/places

Writing Process: Revision

What is revision?

- It's a way to look at your draft and continue to see what it could be, both in regard to ideas and structure.
- Looking for ways to make the piece different, listening to the idea and following it.
- Thinking deliberately about your audience and what you want to accomplish by bringing clarity to meanings and organization.
- Thinking moment-by-moment about the reader's experience.
- Revision typically happens once you have written most or all of a draft.
- The goal of revision is to avoid distracting the reader from what you want to convey, making the reading experience as clear as possible.

Some ways to Revise (entry types to try—outside of the notebook)

- a) Take your draft, put it in your pocket, and re-write it without looking at the old draft. See what's new and what changes about your ideas.
- b) Take something you mention briefly and write a page about it.
- c) Take something you wrote a lot about and condense it into one or two sentences.
- d) Name the sections of your piece, and then re-order them in different ways and take notes on the effects of different organizational structures.
- e) Sequential readings for your draft's completeness, voice, structure, desired tone/feeling.
- f) Read aloud with a fellow writer and think through questions and thoughts aloud.

Writing Process: Choosing a Topic

When you choose a topic, you're choosing something you'd like to think about.

Look for an idea or topic that...

- You feel is worth thinking about more
- Makes you feel energized and curious
- Feels full, rich, interesting

Re-read your notebook from the start to where you are now using a curious mindset, rather than a judgmental one. It's not useful at this point to decide if ideas are "good" or "bad." If you feel excited or energized by the idea, that's a great start.

- Notice and mark the patterns in what you are interested in and what you like to think about.
- Look for ideas, entries, or even small phrases mentioned in passing that spark your interest.
- Make a list of topics that interest you from the notebook
- Think about things you've maybe avoided writing about too.

At this point, you don't need to have the perfect plan or vision for the piece—you DO, however, need to feel *something* about the topic you pick.

You'll explore the topic and collect ideas around the topic once you choose.

Writing Process: Preparing to Draft

After collecting, when you're preparing to draft, these are some helpful practices and questions to respond to:

- Read all material related to the topic before drafting.
- What do I want the audience to understand/know/believe/feel about the topic?
- What might my audience already know, wonder, feel, value, expect, or believe about my topic?
- What feelings should the piece give the audience?
- What tone will it take?
- How might it be structured?
 - What might come first, next?
 - Possible sequence of sections?
- Listing possible sections of the piece and various sequences.
- How do I want to affect or change the people who read this piece of writing?