



Step 2: Brainstorming

This worksheet will help you think about and generate ideas for a writing topic. Don't pressure yourself to come up with an idea within 30 seconds; even professional writers can't do that! Give yourself some time, and your ideas will be even better. Write your answers in the spaces provided or on a separate sheet of paper.

Generating a Topic: "I don't know what to write about!"

- 1) Look at the assignment prompt from your instructor. Are there any requirements for or restrictions on topics? What are they?

- 2) The process of researching and writing your paper will go more smoothly if you are interested in the topic. Often, class assignments can overlap your own interests and activities. Don't pick a topic just because you think your instructor will like it. You are a unique person—pick a unique topic. Below are some life areas that might hold clues to a topic you would enjoy writing about. Next to each area listed, jot down your interests.
 - a) Major:
 - b) Work:
 - c) Hobbies (sports, music, etc.):
 - d) Volunteer projects:
 - e) Causes (environment, animals, etc.):
 - f) Political concerns or current events:
 - g) Historical events:

- 3) Look at the list you made. Which of those topics fits the assignment, is interesting to you, and has enough available research material? Write it here.

- 4) Is the topic you selected too broad to discuss fully in your paper? Think about word or page-limit restrictions. For example, "healthcare" is too general to discuss in an 800-word essay. Instead, focus on an aspect of that issue, such as the dangers of medical residents working 24-hour shifts in hospitals. Write your narrowed topic here.

