

STEP 1

Understand the Assignment

Know what the task is really asking before you start writing.

Name

Class

The assignment / question

In my own words, I need to...

What am I being asked to do?

☐ Explain

☐ Analyze

☐ Compare

☐ Argue

☐ Evaluate

What am I writing about?

What do I already think about this topic?

Write naturally. You do not need to sound academic yet.

READY?

☐ I can explain the task.

☐ I have an idea or question to explore.

STEP 2

Get Your Ideas Out

Explore possibilities before choosing an argument.

Brain dump: ideas, questions, connections, examples...

Choose 3 ideas that seem most useful.

Idea 1		Why might it matter?	
Idea 2		Why might it matter?	
Idea 3		Why might it matter?	

Which idea seems strongest right now - and why?

STEP 3

Find Evidence - Then Explain It

Evidence supports your point. Analysis explains what it proves.

EVIDENCE SET 1

Point / idea I want to support

Evidence: quote, event, fact, detail, example

Source / page / location

SO WHAT? What does this evidence show?

EVIDENCE SET 2

Point / idea I want to support

Evidence: quote, event, fact, detail, example

Source / page / location

SO WHAT? What does this evidence show?

THE TEST

☐ I explained what the evidence means, not just what happened.

STEP 4

Build Your Argument

Turn your thinking into a position and reasons.

My main answer to the assignment is...

Say it plainly first. Formal wording can come later.

I think this because...

1.

2.

3.

TURN IT INTO A THESIS

Thesis = the main argument your paper will prove.

Does it...

☐ answer the task?

☐ make an arguable claim?

☐ match my evidence?

What might someone disagree with or question?

STEP 5

Build the Body Paragraphs

Point -> evidence -> analysis -> connection.

PARAGRAPH 1

What am I trying to prove?

Best evidence

What does it show?

How does this connect to my thesis?

PARAGRAPH 2

What am I trying to prove?

Best evidence

What does it show?

How does this connect to my thesis?

PARAGRAPH 3

What am I trying to prove?

Best evidence

What does it show?

How does this connect to my thesis?

STEP 6

Assemble Your Paper

Decide the order. Reuse what you have already created.

INTRODUCTION

Context the reader needs

Thesis

Opening idea / lead (optional)

BODY FLOW

Paragraph 1: main point

Transition

Paragraph 2: main point

Transition

Paragraph 3: main point

Transition

CONCLUSION

What have I proven?

Why does it matter?

Final thought / bigger connection

STEP 7

Draft Without Starting Over

Turn your notes into connected sentences.

A SIMPLE DRAFTING ORDER

1. Write Body Paragraph 1 from Step 5.
2. Write Body Paragraphs 2 and 3.
3. Write the introduction after the body.
4. Finish with the conclusion.

WHEN YOU GET STUCK

The sentence / section I am stuck on:

What am I actually trying to say?

USE AI AS A COACH - NOT A GHOSTWRITER

Use AI to question your reasoning or identify where you need more explanation.

Do not ask it to write your thesis, analysis, paragraphs, or paper.

"Here is my argument. Ask me 3 questions that would make it stronger. Do not rewrite it."

☐ My ideas existed before I used AI.

☐ I can explain every idea myself.

☐ I used AI for feedback/questions, not to replace my thinking.

STEP 8

Read It Like a Teacher

Check whether your thinking is clear and convincing.

IDEAS + EVIDENCE

- ☐ I answered the assignment.
- ☐ My thesis is clear.
- ☐ Each paragraph has one job.
- ☐ I used evidence.
- ☐ I explained what the evidence shows.

ORGANIZATION + WRITING

- ☐ My ideas are in a logical order.
- ☐ Transitions help the reader follow.
- ☐ My sentences are clear.
- ☐ I removed repetition.
- ☐ I checked conventions.

Where is the paper strongest - and why?

Where might a reader need more explanation?

MY FINAL REVISION TARGET

The ONE thing I will improve before I submit is:

My paper's main argument in one sentence:

Using the Workbook

Same academic destination. Different levels of support.

THE DESIGN

Students begin in everyday language and gradually move toward academic language.

Every page creates thinking that can be reused in the final paper - not extra pre-writing paperwork.

Scale the support, not the expected culminating product.

Use conferencing, oral rehearsal, sentence frames, or extension questions as needed.

HOW TO SCALE SUPPORT

More support Read prompts aloud; scribe oral ideas; offer sentence starters; complete one section at a time.

On-level Independent work with short teacher checkpoints after Steps 2, 4, and 5.

Extension Push nuance, counterargument, source integration, evidence quality, and sophistication.

RECOMMENDED CHECKPOINTS

- ☐ After Step 2: Is there a promising idea worth pursuing?
- ☐ After Step 4: Is the thesis arguable and supported?
- ☐ After Step 5: Does each paragraph contain analysis, not just summary?
- ☐ Before submission: Can the student explain the argument without reading the paper?