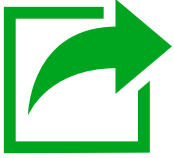




COMMUNICATION

Outlining, drafting, and editing

Outlining, drafting, and editing



Strategies to share with students

Suggested ideas and practices educators can share with students to support awareness of the topic and development of the skill. Strategies can be adopted/adapted as needed.

- ☑ **Begin assessments well in advance of their deadline.** Give yourself time to complete multiple rounds of drafts and edits by starting assignments in advance.
- ☑ **Free-write to begin.** When you are first formulating your ideas, set a timer for twenty minutes and write as much as you can. Form does not matter yet and this writing can be full sentences, point form, or a visual mind map. Do not edit for grammar or syntax. After you finish writing, look for the major themes and ideas to begin your next draft or writing session.
- ☑ **Read your work aloud.** Writers tend to read their work as they meant it, not as it is written. This is particularly true at the end of the writing process when you are more fatigued. Reading aloud can help you notice and eliminate inadvertent typos, redundancies, and incorrect syntax and grammar.



Outlining, drafting, and editing



Tips for course design and delivery

Ways educators can bring awareness of the topic and incorporate development of the skill into post-secondary course design and delivery.

- ☑ **Assign drafting as part of course grade breakdown and rubrics.** Require a draft/outline as part of an assignment grade/rubric to encourage students to begin their assignments in advance of deadlines.
- ☑ **Model drafting exercises in the classroom.** Pick a mock essay topic and, as a class, brainstorm arguments. Encourage students to “mind map” their ideas on the chalk/white board.
- ☑ **Allow for peer-to-peer brainstorming/editing during class time.** Set aside class time in advance of every assignment deadline to encourage students to “pitch” their ideas to their peers. After projects are complete, give students opportunities to exchange their drafts and give each other feedback on argumentation and writing.
- ☑ **Share exemplars/examples.** With permission, share previous student submissions (or components of them) with students. This approach provides a useful reference tool for students and allows them to compare their works-in-progress to acceptable final submissions. Sharing multiple examples also allows students to do see there is more than one way to do a task well.



Outlining, drafting, and editing



Tips for course design and delivery

Ways educators can bring awareness of the topic and incorporate development of the skill into post-secondary course design and delivery.

- ☑ **Share a basic essay/writing template.** Different disciplines require different types of writing. Develop an outline based on a typical written submission and share it with your students in advance of their first written assignment. This example can help students template their ideas and spend more time advancing their thinking rather than worrying about organizing ideas immediately.
- ☑ **Encourage students to use student service resources.** Most post-secondary institutions have some equivalent of a writing centre. Encourage students to take advantage of these resources.



Outlining, drafting, and editing



Activities to do with students

Downloadable activities with suggested guidelines that educators can do with students. Activities can be adopted/adapted as needed.

Activity: Audio Notes

Overview

Students record an audio file or voice note of their ideas and reflections and are asked to summarize and/or code their transcript to reflect the key ideas that emerged. In this activity, students can support their abilities to organize information and identify relevant parts.

Review the [Educator Activity Guide](#) before getting started with this activity.

Time

- Under 20 minutes
- 20 minutes to 1 hour
- More than 1 hour
- Over several classes

Modality

- In person
- Online synchronous
- Online asynchronous

Format

- Individual
- In pairs
- Small groups
- Large groups
- Whole class

Resources

- Module notes
- Paper
- Pen/pencil
- Laptop/tablet
- Device for recording (e.g., phone)



Outlining, drafting, and editing

Instructions

1. Explain to students that audio notes or conversing with a peer are effective strategies that can be used to focus on content and on the articulation of their ideas.
2. Ask students to record themselves explaining their content or their idea to someone else. This can be done as an audio file or voice-to-text note.
3. *Optional:* Have students share their audio file or voice-to-text note with someone and get feedback.
4. Ask students to listen to their recording (or read the transcript) or review the voice-to-text note and have them summarize the main points and ideas that emerged.
5. Invite students to take these reflections back to their writing.
6. Engage students in a discussion about the benefits of using audio resources to cultivate thinking.

Variation(s)

- Students can use voice files to submit short spoken assignments (e.g., an opinion paragraph) or pitch their research topic and you can send your feedback in the form of spoken comments as well. Make sure a transcript is available if you use this option.
- Instead of having students record themselves, you can ask them to pair up with a peer and take turns sharing their ideas and getting feedback on them. Students may wish to record these conversations.



Outlining, drafting, and editing



Activities to do with students

Downloadable activities with suggested guidelines that educators can do with students. Activities can be adopted/adapted as needed.

Activity: Reverse Outline

Overview

Students are asked to produce an outline of something they have previously written. Being able to summarize the main idea is the cornerstone of research and writing. A reverse outline works to trace a student's thoughts and helps them to develop their planning when writing.

Review the [Educator Activity Guide](#) before getting started with this activity.

Time

- Under 20 minutes
- 20 minutes to 1 hour
- More than 1 hour
- Over several classes

Modality

- In person
- Online synchronous
- Online asynchronous

Format

- Individual
- In pairs
- Small groups
- Large groups
- Whole class

Resources

- Module notes
- Paper
- Pen/pencil
- Laptop/tablet
- Video or research article



Outlining, drafting, and editing

Instructions

Note: This activity relies on students creating a reverse outline on a previously written task from your course. Therefore, consider the timing and context of this activity before implementing it in your course.

1. Remind students that being able to summarize the main ideas in their communication is the cornerstone of research and writing. An outline works to direct a student's thoughts and writing.
2. Have students identify a previous written task. Ideally, this piece is something they for which they received feedback.
3. Ask students to produce a reverse outline of this written piece. This process can reinforce the value of outlining by showing students the disparity that may exist between what they *actually wrote* versus what they *meant to write*.
4. Share the following content prompts with students to help them shape their outline:
 - What was the central argument?
 - How many supporting arguments did you identify? Note that supporting arguments often persist over multiple paragraphs.
 - How did the author/speaker prove their central argument? Consider examples, quotations, comparison, research sources, etc. Be specific.
 - What organization pattern does the author/speaker use?
5. Engage students in a critical analysis of their written work with the prompts below. This step can also serve as a reflection.
 - How effective was this argument?
 - Did the author/speaker fail to consider any evidence that would better support their main idea?
 - How clear was the writing/speech?
 - Was the organization structure sufficient for the content of the argument?
 - Did you notice any spelling mistakes or writing redundancies?
 - Can you suggest any other ways to improve the clarity of expression?



Outlining, drafting, and editing

Variation(s)

- Assign a video or text related to your course/discipline/field and ask students to reverse outline it. This variation of the activity can be done earlier in the course because it does not rely on students using a previous piece of work.



Outlining, drafting, and editing



Activities to do with students

Downloadable activities with suggested guidelines that educators can do with students. Activities can be adopted/adapted as needed.

Activity: Cubing Method

Overview

Cubing is a pre-writing exercise that asks students to consider their topic or concept from different perspectives (describe, compare/contrast, associate, analyze, apply, argue), which serve as prompts to shape a student's writing. This activity encourages students to consider various 'sides and ways of understanding.

Review the [Educator Activity Guide](#) before getting started with this activity.

Time

- Under 20 minutes
- 20 minutes to 1 hour
- More than 1 hour
- Over several classes

Modality

- In person
- Online synchronous
- Online asynchronous

Format

- Individual
- In pairs
- Small groups
- Large groups
- Whole class

Resources

- Module notes
- Paper
- Pen/pencil
- Laptop/tablet
- Dice



Outlining, drafting, and editing

Instructions

1. Introduce this activity to students by mentioning that there is a need to consider the various sides of a matter being studied, researched, or written about. That value rests in opening new ways of understanding.
2. Ask students to think of their research topic or writing subject as a six-sided cube, where each side of the cube offers a different way to think about the topic.
3. Have students roll a dice to determine which side of the cube and the prompt they are considering. Provide students with dice or have them find a virtual dice roller tool to use. Alternatively, students can just follow the sequential list below.
 - a. **Describe.** In your own words, what is your essay topic? What is the most significant thing about your topic? Use plain language and bullet points to focus only on its most essential parts.
 - b. **Compare and contrast.** Write a list (or make a diagram) of all comparisons that you could reference in your essay. These could be similarities or differences.
 - c. **Associate.** Write a list (or make a diagram) of similar ideas, theories, and topics that you could reference in your essay. Does your topic remind you of anything else?
 - d. **Analyze.** Write a list (or make a diagram) of the relevant aspects of your topic. What aspects of your argument are the most interesting or compelling? How are these aspects related?
 - e. **Apply.** Write a list (or make a diagram) of the benefit of your essay topic and/or argument. What is its larger significance? This could be of relevance to everyday life or its value as a framework, methodology, or historical context.
 - f. **Argue.** What arguments can you make for or against your argument? Consider the counter argument: what are some aspects of your position that other people could disagree with. Can you refute them?
4. Give students a specified period of time (~10 minutes) to work through each “side” and answer the six questions provided in relation to their topic.
5. *Optional:* Follow up this activity with a discussion on its impact in helping students to sort out their ideas.



Outlining, drafting, and editing

Variation(s)

- Have students create their own cues/questions for the six sides of the dice before starting the activity. This part of the activity could be done individually or with a small group.

