

Step 2: Brainstorming

This worksheet will help you think about and generate ideas for a writing topic. Do not pressure yourself to come up with an idea within thirty seconds; even professional writers cannot 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. Do not 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 twenty-four-hour shifts in hospitals. Write your narrowed topic here.



Blinn College – Bry //// Refining a Topic: "Okay, I have a topic—now what?"

1)	Is there a controversy associated with this topic? If so, briefly describe the nature and history of the controversy below. You may have to do some background research for this.
2)	Who cares about this topic? Why? Should other people care? If so, who?
3)	What opinion do you have on this topic? How did you form this opinion?
4)	What are some other perspectives on this topic? What individuals or groups hold these different perspectives? Why do you suppose they think that way?
5)	In relation to this topic, what are you curious about?
6)	Where could you find more information on this topic? Make a list of possible sources for you to investigate.