

Troubleshooting Your Writing: Getting Started

Are you facing a blank page? Having trouble getting your writing started?

Try this:

- Write your topic at the top of a blank sheet of paper. Use just a few words.
- Under the topic, write down 3 or more things that you know about the topic. Don't censor yourself. Just write down what you know. Doing so helps clear your mind.



My Topic – Things I Know

- 1.** _____
- 2.** _____
- 3.** _____

Now try this:

- Ask yourself what you want to know about the topic. Write down your questions, both the bigger ones and the smaller ones.

My Topic – Things I Want to Know

- 1.** _____
- 2.** _____
- 3.** _____

Now you are ready to make a preliminary plan. To start your plan, you will need to organize your material – both what you know, and what you want to know.

You can find these tools to help you under “Resources” on the Writing Center web site:

*An idea web

*A linear outline

*An idea tree