

# **Invention (Prewriting)**



# **Introduction**

**This presentation will help you with...**

**Invention  
and  
invention strategies.**

# Invention

**1. Devise  
a game plan:  
schedule the  
writing  
process.**

**2. Ask questions  
to explore your  
rhetorical  
situation:**

- **What is my purpose?**
- **Who is my audience?**
- **What genre am I using (academic, professional, personal)?**
- **What sort of research will I need to conduct?**

# Invention Strategies

- Classical topics
- Stasis questions
- Tagmemics

**Ask  
critical  
questions**

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**Freewrite  
&  
brainstorm**

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**Record ideas  
without  
revising or  
proofreading**

**Invent &  
organize ideas  
visually to explore  
relationships &  
processes**

**Map  
&  
cluster**

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# Critical Questions: classical topics

## Definition

- Dictionary definition of \_\_\_\_\_?
- What group of things does this \_\_\_\_\_ belong to?
- How is the \_\_\_\_\_ different from other things?
- What are some concrete examples of the \_\_\_\_\_?

# Critical Questions: classical topics

## Compare/ contrast

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- What is \_\_\_\_\_ similar to?
- What is \_\_\_\_\_ different from?
- Is \_\_\_\_\_ most unlike (like) what?

# Critical Questions: classical topics

## Relationship

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- What causes \_\_\_\_\_?
- What are the effects of \_\_\_\_\_?
- What is the purpose of \_\_\_\_\_?
- What comes before (after) \_\_\_\_\_?



# Critical Questions: classical topics

## Testimony

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- What have I heard people say about \_\_\_\_\_?
- What are some facts and stats about \_\_\_\_\_?

# Critical Questions: classical topics

## Circumstances

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- Is \_\_\_\_\_ possible/impossible?
- What makes \_\_\_\_\_ possible/ impossible?
- When did \_\_\_\_\_ happen?
- What would it take for \_\_\_\_\_ to happen again?
- What would prevent \_\_\_\_\_ from happening?

# Critical Questions: stasis questions

## Fact

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- Is there an issue?
- How did it begin and what are its causes?
- What changed to create the issue?
- Who is involved?

# Critical Questions: stasis questions

## Definition

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- What exactly is the issue?
- What is it not?
- What kind of an issue is it?

# Critical Questions: stasis questions

## Quality

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- How serious is the issue?
- What are the costs of the issue?

# Critical Questions: stasis questions

## Policy

- Who should address this issue?
- What should we do about this issue?

# Critical Questions: Tagmemics

## Contrastive features

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- How is \_\_\_\_\_ different from things similar to it?
- How has it been different for me?

# Critical Questions: Tagmemics

## Variation

- How much can \_\_\_\_\_ change and still be itself?
- How is \_\_\_\_\_ changing?
- What are the different varieties of \_\_\_\_\_?



# Critical Questions: Tagmemics

## Distribution

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- Where and when does \_\_\_\_\_ take place?
- What is the larger thing of which \_\_\_\_\_ is a part?
- What is the function of \_\_\_\_\_ in this larger thing?

# Critical Questions: Tagmemics

## Cubing

- Describe it (colors, shapes, etc.)
- Compare it (what is it similar to?)
- Associate it (makes you think of?)
- Analyze it (how is it made?)
- Apply it (uses)
- Argue for or against it

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# Freewrite & Brainstorm

## Freewriting

- Set a timer for five to ten minutes
- Look at the topic and think about it briefly
- Now ready? Set? Write!
- Don't stop! Don't edit!
- Keep your fingers typing or your pen moving for your time limit

**Time is up: now you can finally look over your ideas.**

# Freewrite & Brainstorm

## Brainstorming

Brought to you by the Purdue Online Writing Lab (owl.english.purdue.edu)

- No stopping, no editing (similar to freewriting)
- Note key words or short phrases in list form under your subject (instead of free-flowing paragraph)
- Look at the topic and think about it
- Now ready? Set? Write!
- Keep your list going for your time limit.

**Time is up: now you can finally look over your ideas.**

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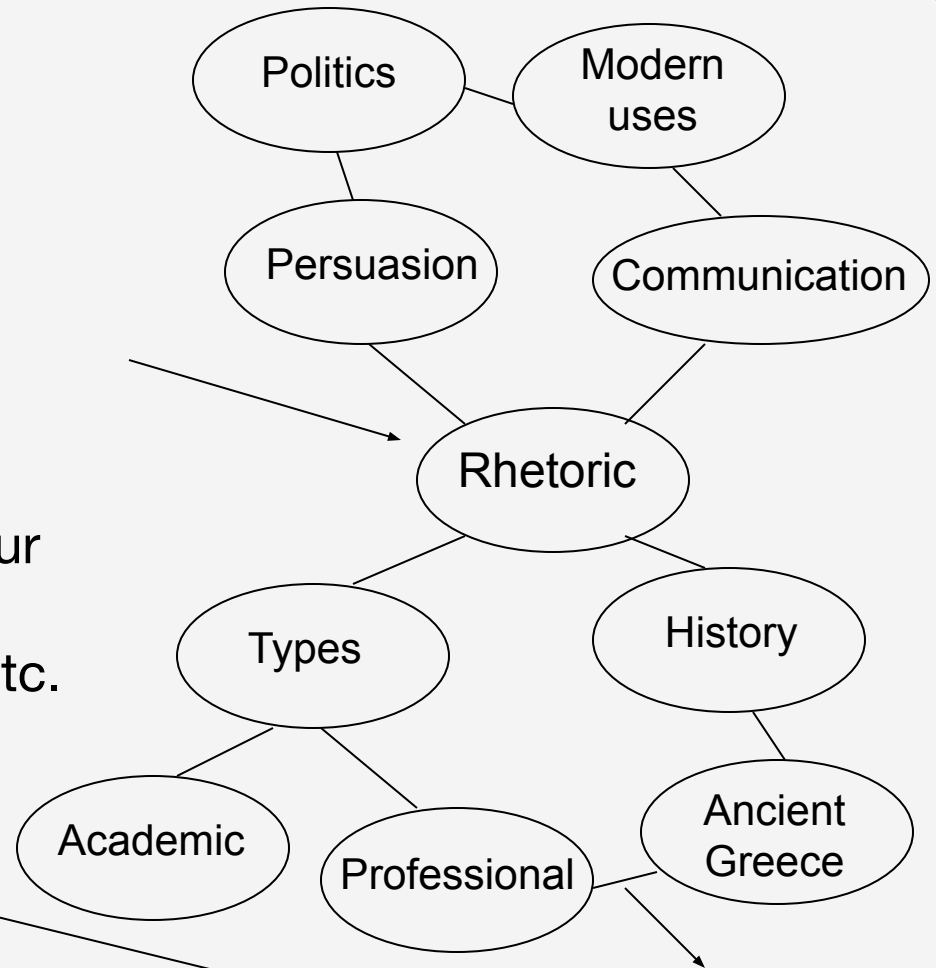
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# Map & Cluster

- Rather than writing a free-flowing paragraph or list of concepts, start with a central word
- As related concepts pop in your head, indicate them as branches, arrows, bubbles, etc.
- You may have an “ah ha!” moment



*What is the connection here?*

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# Keep a Journal

## Personal journal

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- Write personal explorations and reflections on ideas
- Ask some of these questions:
  - Why is this important to me?
  - How does it relate to me?
  - How do I feel about it?
  - Do I feel good/bad/indifferent about it? Why?
  - How does this affect me daily?
  - How might my connection to this change in the future?
  - How did I feel about this in the past?

# Keep a Journal (con't.)

## Personal journal

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- Write a short story where characters face the same problem you are exploring:
  - How do the characters deal with the situation?
  - Why do they react the way they do?
  - How does the story end, and how does it reflect how you want the real life situation to end?
  - What would *you* have to do to bring about this change?

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# Purdue Writing Lab



## Help

- Writing lab: HEAV 226, Purdue University
- Grammar hotline: (765) 494-3723
- On-line writing lab: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>
- Email: owl@owl.english.purdue.edu

# The End

