



Learning Project 1 Writing the Rough Draft

Inquiry Activity 1-4: Writing the Rough Draft of the Essay

1. Identifying the Problem

You will be asked in this Inquiry Activity to do the fourth step of the writing process: listing as many details as possible for the subject you have chosen to write about. The Essay Topic follows. Just read the topic; don't worry about writing anything just yet.

Topic A

Suppose you had the opportunity to teach something you know to someone else.

In your essay, identify what you would teach and explain how you would teach this. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge to support your essay.

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Ask yourself questions like these about the problem, taking note of the ones that were especially helpful so you can remember them the next time you begin to write.

One of the real advantages of all the pre-writing activities is that by the time a person has come up with the topic, gathered details, organized details, and reviewed the whole process, the actual writing comes a little easier.

1. Reread the subject you have decided to teach someone else in an essay, the subject you chose in Inquiry Activity 1-1.
2. Review the organization of the details that you decided to use to support your essay subject.
3. Are you comfortable with the way you have organized the details you have chosen to support your essay subject?
4. Review the details again to be sure that all the details are relevant to your subject and that there are enough details to support your subject.
5. This Inquiry Activity asks you to write the rough draft of your essay. What do you know about writing a rough draft of an essay?
6. Do you think you have to worry about grammar, verbs, spelling, and punctuation to write a rough draft?
7. What do you know about how to organize an entire essay?

As you assess the progress of your students, you may decide that this is a good time to remind them about paragraphing.

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

Planning:

Meet with a partner and discuss how you are thinking about organizing your essay. Look at the order in which you placed your details.

Will this make an interesting essay? What else is needed to make it interesting? Add that now.



Will the essay be clear? What else can you add to make it more clear? Add it now.

Will the ideas and details flow in smoothly from one to the next? How can you improve the flow of ideas?

Do you have an interesting beginning that will make the reader want to continue reading? How can it be made more interesting?

Do you have a clear ending that tells the readers what you wanted them to learn?

Doing the Work:

Individually, using the organization you have decided upon, write your rough draft. Think about getting your ideas and details in the order you have chosen. Be sure the ideas follow one another in a way that is clear to your reader. You will spend more time on sentence structure, punctuation, spelling and grammar when you revise your essay.

Most writers emphasize that the writing process works best when the editor, that function that looks at sentence structure, and worries about punctuation and spelling, is not involved in the rough draft. It is not that we think the mechanics of correct writing are unimportant, but rather that the time to focus on mechanics is after the first version is on paper and its author can assess, correct, and improve it. Writing is creating and editing is correcting. The two functions can often be in conflict, and this will make any writing almost impossible to accomplish.

Use the questions that follow as a guide if you need them:

If someone were writing to you about this subject, how would you like to have the subject presented?

Are there any other ways that might make the subject easier to follow?

Be prepared to share the steps you went through to choose how you have organized your essay.

4. Sharing with Others

Meet with your partner, and discuss:

- *The way you put your essay together;*
- *Any alternative ways to organize the rough draft that you considered;*
- *The rough draft of the essay you wrote.*

Did talking with your partner give you some new ideas about how to organize the essay? Explain.

As a whole class, discuss the essay, the organization of the essay you have chosen, and the way you went about choosing it.

5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: *Think about how well you understood what you have done.*

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

What have you learned about various ways to organize an essay?

What have you learned about writing a rough draft of an essay?

What has surprised you about this process or about yourself? Explain.

Extending: *Extend what you learned to new situations.*

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information learned in this Inquiry Activity to other information or situations.

How might you use the ideas you explored in this Inquiry Activity in your writing at home and/or at work?



Your instructor will give you another GED-type writing topic. Following all the steps outlined in Inquiry Activities 1-1 through 1-4, write a rough draft of an essay.

This entire Learning Project can be repeated several times, each time using a different topic for the students to write on. The pre-writing activities will allow the learners the time and awareness to begin to develop a writing fluency.

Discuss the process you used to write this rough draft and the rough draft itself with a partner or group.

Evaluating: Assess what you learned and how you learned it.

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or the methods to help you pass the GED test.

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when writing the essay on the GED test? Why?