

How to improve your writing skills #1

PonderEd Education (<http://PonderEd.ca>)

Step 1. Choose your topic to write (if a topic is given or the writing is based on a story read, go to step 3)

You need to have your own topic to begin with. Without topic, focus will be lost.

Think about cooking: Think about cooking. Unless you were told to cook a specific dish by head chef, you need to choose what you will make.

Step 2. Provide reasonable explanation for choosing the topic

Without your own reasoning, you might simply follow other people's work. If this happened, your writing might hit high similarity. Reasoning of the choosing topic should be to core of entire writing. Later, you need to use references to back your reasoning up so that people can understand your logic with data (evidence) and reasoning. Avoid using 'emotions' for reasoning. Emotions are like processed food. Writing is like cooking. If you are to improve writing skills, you need to start with ingredients. Not from emotions like 'because it will be delicious' or 'because it will look good' etc.

Think about cooking: Once you decided a dish to cook, you need to provide reasoning of your choice so that people can understand your rationale of your decision. But here you need to avoid any reasoning based on emotions.

Remember, emotions can rarely be used as logic. Each person has differences in emotion. Even if you like something, many others might think different. Emotions only effective for the people who share the similar life or culture.

Step 3. Collect elements

If you have limited resources, production will be limited. Thus, it is critical to collect as many elements as possible before starting your piece. Compare the case that you only have a desk to write about verses writing with a desk, chair, and various stationaries.

Think about cooking: If you have only one or two ingredients, your options will be limited. More ingredients mean more flexibility. Thus, collecting as many ingredients as possible is recommended.

Suggestion: Use brainstorm method to collect elements that are related to your topic. When you brainstorm, try to make enough space among the elements. You will need the space because you will add more in step 4.

Step 4. Elementise (datarize) the elements

Elementise is the term used to describe capability of skills of breakdown an element into smaller elements. For example, if you only have a desk to write, you need to breakdown the desk to generate elements to use in your story. The smaller pieces about a desk could be legs (front and rear if different), drawers, materials made (glass, wood, or combined) etc. In this way, you have more elements to use in your writing.

Think about cooking: Assume that you are in a situation where you have only one or two ingredients to cook. In this case, you need to start breaking down the ingredients. For example, if the ingredient is an apple, break it down to skin, texture, and sourness or sweetness etc.

Note: This step would be the most critical. Something that is observable might be simple to elementise. However, something like 'height', 'weight', 'shape', or 'volume' might be very challenging since they are not easily observable. Try to add unobservable elements in this step.

Suggestion: Add the elementised elements in the brainstorm from step 3.

Note: The term 'datarize' was introduced for the first time in following paper.

Min, T. "Conceptualization of Knowledge to Develop Thinking Process – A Novel Way of Teaching and Learning", International Journal for Cross-Disciplinary Subjects in Education, 2022, pp. 4565-4570.

Step 5. Connect elements with questions to reason, questions to compare, or questions to connect

The keys are the 'questions to reason', 'questions to compare', or 'questions to connect'. For example, if you are writing about a desk and a chair, connect these two with questions to connect like 'how the chair and desk are related (or connected)?'

Think about cooking: If you have pasta and pizza, make connection with questions to compare like 'What do pasta and pizza have in common?'

For more example, please read 'Thought process-based education book #3 level 1-2: Connecting concepts' book.

Link to the book: <https://en.pondered.ca/2020/08/11/tpbe-book-3-level-1-2-connecting-concepts/>

Step 6. Connect the elements by comparing elementized elements for similarity and differences

The elementised elements from step 4 contributes in this step significantly. In case of desk and chair, the similarity like legs or materials made of could be easily connected. However, difference in height and how they are related each other might be difficult to find. A tip to overcome this challenge is going back to step 4 and try to find more. Once comparison is done, categorize the similarity and differences to make connection among the elements.

Thinking about cooking: Make connection between pizza and pasta by comparing similarity and differences in ingredients.

Note: This step is to write in comparison among the concepts. Critical thinking can be developed in this way together with writing skills.

Step 7. Write a piece combining all

Try to write by following the connections with elements.

Step 8. Polish with some emotional expression if needed

Adding emotions or some vague terms are not to deliver clear meaning. It is to provide people connect story with their experiences. But use of emotions and vague terms need to be minimized and to be used with reasoning. Otherwise, it could backfire from original intention of your writing.