

HAVING WRITER'S BLOCK?

The phenomenon commonly known as Writer's Block can occur at any point during the writing process, be it in the very beginning stages, or even when writing a conclusion. It's annoying, it's stressful, and it could make you want to pull your hair out, but it happens. Here are some tips to help keep the hair on your head:

Identify the cause

Writer's Block can arise for a variety of reasons. When you feel stuck, try to pin down why this might be the case. Then you can employ the appropriate technique to get back on track:

Confused? Unsure of how to proceed?

1. **Reread the assignment and/or refer to the original text:** Reflecting on the original purpose of your essay may help you return to it with fresh ideas.
2. **Begin again:** You don't have to start over completely, but try brainstorming, outlining, and other forms of prewriting as a way to juice those brain cells.
3. **Ask for help:** Hearing someone else's perspective can easily bring about new ideas that you may not have originally thought of. Read your paper to a friend, a teacher, or come to the Learning Center, so you can talk and ask questions about your paper.
4. **Writing exercises:** Whether it's jotting down notes, creating an outline, free-writing, etc., doing some writing exercises can allow your mind to stay fresh and awake focusing more easily, or simply plugging away without constraints.

Tired? Overwhelmed? Stressed about everything?

5. **Take a breather:** Clear your mind for new ideas. Take a walk, work on something else, read a book, or do something completely unrelated to your paper.
6. **Sleep:** Believe it or not, pulling an all-nighter is not necessarily the best solution. Go to bed and get up early, or take a breather by taking a nap. Your mind can use a rest after all that writing, so give it a break and let it do some dreaming.
7. **Move around:** A change in scenery can do the trick. If your roommates are having a party right behind your bedroom wall, go to the library or the Learning Center for a quieter place to work.
8. **Relaxation techniques:** Relax your mind and ease your anxiety with breathing and tense-and-release exercises, and some stretching. Then your thoughts can flow freely.

Trouble focusing?

9. **Divorce the internet:** Although you may not want to admit it, checking email and going on Facebook serve as distractions from the assignment at hand. By unplugging the internet, you can focus strictly on your paper.
10. **Listen to music:** Music has always been shown to boost mind power, so turn up the Chopin, and let the ideas flow.

Bibliography

In creating this handout, we consulted and/or modified information from the following sources:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/567/01/>

<http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/wweb/conclude.html>