



Connors Writing Center

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WRITING SURVIVAL TIPS

HOW TO READ AN ASSIGNMENT

- ❑ Underline all verbs (list, explain, compare), and be sure your answer does what the assignment says to do.
- ❑ Underline all numbers (give three reasons, compare all five).
- ❑ Rewrite the assignment into your own words so you know you understand it.
- ❑ Break your answer into pieces by outlining.
- ❑ Try some prewriting activities (brainstorming, freewriting) before trying to answer the question.
- ❑ After you've written your answer, reread the assignment question to be sure you've included everything.

HOW TO GET STARTED

- ❑ Focused brainstorming: Write the idea on the top of the page. For five minutes, list everything that comes to mind about the topic.
- ❑ Freewriting: Write the idea on the top of the page. Without worrying about spelling or grammar, write in sentence-like form everything that comes to mind about the topic. Questions are useful too.
- ❑ Mapping: Write the idea in the center of the page. As thoughts come to you, make different branches of ideas from the center. When a branch "dies," go back to the center and form a new branch.
- ❑ Conversation: Talk with classmate, friend or CWC consultant about the issue you'll writing about. Listen to their thought and question.

HOW TO FIND A THESIS

- ❑ Complete the following:

In this essay, I plan to _____ for
an audience of _____ that
_____ because/if

- (1.) _____,
- (2.) _____, and
- (3.) _____.

(Resource: Connors, Robert and Andrea A. Lunsford. The St. Martin's Handbook. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995.)

HOW TO RESEARCH IN THE LIBRARY

- ❑ Connect with the Diamond Library at <http://library.unh.edu>
- ❑ Go to the Library and ask the librarians for assistance. They are a great help!

HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

You plagiarize:

- ❑ if you copy word-for word without quoting or citing (citing alone isn't sufficient).
- ❑ if you substitute some of the words of the source with your own and keep the source's sentence structure.
- ❑ if you misquote or record incorrect information.
- ❑ if you buy, steal, or otherwise procure and submit a paper which you did not write for the course you're currently in.
- ❑ use ideas that are not your own and submit them as your own.

HOW TO REVISE

- ❑ Have someone else read your assignment, and then your paper, and write down a few comments and questions. Then have a conversation about the paper.
- ❑ Check to see that, overall, the writing addresses the question of the assignment.
- ❑ Make sure each paragraph centers on a separate idea, and that all sentences within it relate to that idea.
- ❑ Make sure every claim you make (thesis, opinion) is supported by solid evidence that is clearly explained.

HOW TO EDIT

- ❑ Use spellchecker and grammar checker capabilities on your word processor.
- ❑ Have someone competent at editing show you the kinds of errors you make consistently and ways you can use handbook to avoid them.