



## Handwriting

I recommend that students experiment at least once a year with writing by hand, which can be revolutionary for prewriting. To employ this technique, students can use any prewriting activity but should put their screens aside and write on paper.

### Why It Works

The kinetic experience of writing changes students' thinking and, especially for strong typists, can slow the thinking process, leaving room for more development of ideas.

While this technique does not work for students with certain learning disabilities or fine motor coordination problems, for the majority of students, the familiarity and ease of the keyboard can be very effectively replaced by this slower technique.

### Avoid The Internal Judge

This technique is also useful because it removes, even subconsciously, the imaginary judgmental reader who haunts so many writers' rough drafts. Writers of all sorts often envision what a critical reader will say about their work and therefore delete the writing rather than letting it develop.

When work is handwritten, though, students tend not to hear this critical voice as strongly because the writing is so clearly not meant for public consumption. The student knows that a critical reader will never see what she has written by hand, and so she can lessen the self-critique that often accompanies typed work, which could, at least hypothetically, be read by an outsider. The more private nature of handwritten work alleviates anxiety and allows for a more daring, experimental free write and more space for later revision.