



# How to write an assignment - step two

## Draft One is just for you!

Your first draft of your assignment is just for you. It is you telling *yourself* what the arguments and the answers are. You should approach this draft as a piece of 'discovery writing'. Don't worry too much about the quality at this stage! You can make corrections in later drafts. Writing is an organic process, you should expect to make changes and edits continually - just make sure you save your drafts!

## Use your writing to inspire your reading

As you write, you should become aware of gaps in your knowledge. Use these gaps to prompt further research. You may also find as you write that your opinion changes or that you want to make a stronger argument about something. If so, this is another area where you will need robust supporting information to support your ideas.

## Reflect and evaluate

Always ask yourself these questions while you write:

- How does this relate to main topic of the assignment?
- How can I connect this to ideas/arguments I've already made?
- How does this help me set up my next idea/argument?
- Why is this useful? Why am I including it?

To be critical, you need to explain these points to your reader in your text.

## Use topic sentences

All paragraphs should begin with a topic sentence. This sets up the purpose of the paragraph. Topic sentences are usually short, clear sentences that explain the main idea of the paragraph:

*Since the 1980s, there have been three fundamental changes to the National Curriculum.*

The paragraph should explain what these changes were and why they are so important.

## Keep drafting!

The best essays are the ones that the writer has rewritten. Drafting and re-drafting is an essential part of the writing process and you should expect to write multiple drafts of your work. There is no set number, but it's safe to say that your work will improve with each re-draft. Allow yourself time away from the work as well; give your brain a rest and come back to it with fresh eyes.

## Check your work

Proof-read your work regularly, especially if you have written multiple drafts. Proof-reading isn't just about grammar and punctuation - make sure your writing flows smoothly, that you are using topic sentences, and that you haven't repeated yourself. Check your themes and make sure they are logical. Finally, always make sure you have cited and referenced your sources accurately.