

Brainstorming

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Teen Essay Guide

Step 1 - Finding potential points (body paragraph topics)

Do the first two listed here in Step 1. The rest in Step 1 are additional & optional, if you need extra brainstorm help.

- **Make a list** of everything you can think of that's connected to your chosen topic. For example, if the topic is the increase in childhood obesity, you could list the impact of electronics on physical activity, homework reducing time for physical play, how cooking habits have changed, prevalence of processed foods at the store, etc. Be sure to include ideas from the opposing side too.
 - Don't worry if it's not very much. It'll flesh out during research if you don't know much about the topic already.

- Make a **list of questions about the topic**. Generate as many as you can. These can be questions you might have and not know the answer yet. For example...
 - Do people have less time to cook? Have food manufacturers manipulated our cravings through chemistry? Have schools reduced P.E. time and why?
 - Include questions from the opposing side.
 - Include questions a reader might ask about the topic if they aren't familiar with it.
 - Save these questions to use during freewrite to help generate thought.

Additional/optional help

- You could use the bubble cluster graphic organizer in [this free download](#) to help with this process, if you like. Draw additional bubbles to include more point ideas.

- See **H4HS pg 45-48** Keen Observation of an Idea questions and use them to explore your topic.

- **KEEP ALL OF YOUR BRAINSTORMING NOTES. YOU WILL NEED THEM FOR THE NEXT STAGE.**

Step 2 - Finding potential particulars (supporting details/evidence)

- Brainstorm three *possible* particulars, aka supporting details. More is better! This is more likely if you already know a lot about the subject, say you are compare/contrasting two video games you already play. Again, no worries if you can't see three details yet. Research will do that too! Just postpone selecting the three points until after the research if you don't know a lot about the topic yet.
 - Note: You can always pick more than 3 points if you're going for longer than a five paragraph essay. But you need three minimum.
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Other graphic organizer for points & ideas

Some people are more visual learners than others. Graphic organizers can help you "see" the process, where your thoughts are going and how to organize the information. Some of these options may help.

- [Free TpT organizers](#). Laura also has [a tutorial video](#) on how she uses these organizers with her high school class.
- [Looking at both sides](#) graphic organizer (look under persuasive essay section)
- [Writing organizer web](#) - this bubble organizer has space for subtopics (points)
- [Organizer using ethos, pathos & logos](#)
- [Generic brainstorm organizer](#)