



BRAIN STORM

**TECHNIQUES FROM
THE UWB WRITING &
COMMUNICATION CENTER STAFF**

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Free Writing



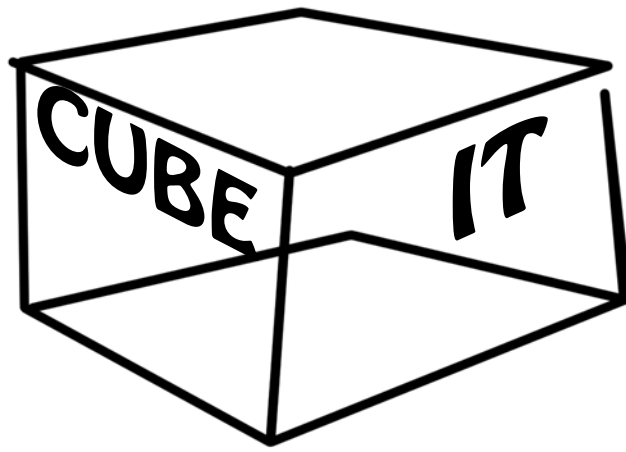
is a great way to set your thoughts free of inner critics and editors, and see where they take you. Starting with a topic and just writing down everything it makes you think of is a way to gauge what you already know, and what you'd like to learn. Here are some free writing tricks which might help you get started:

- Start with a blank page, and just write the subject at the top
- Try a different writing medium, like pen, pencil, marker, or word processor
- Close your eyes or turn off the lights
- Ignore quality
- If you can't think of what to say, write that first, and just keep going.
- Time yourself

Then review what you've written for **GEMS** which can be worked into an outline.

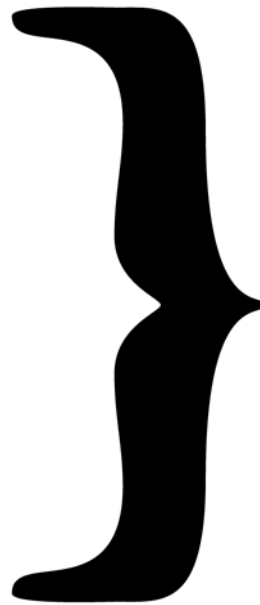
SO EASY!





Similar to triangulation, cubing involves studying six sides of a subject.

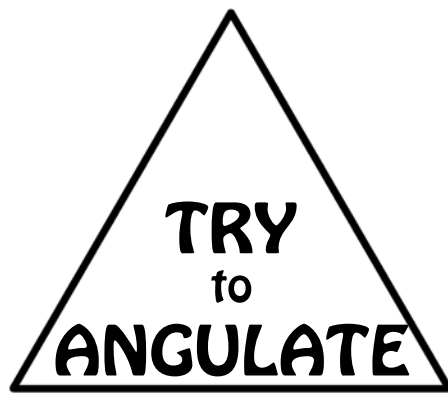
1. Describe
2. Compare
3. Associate
4. Analyze
5. Apply
6. Argue for & Against



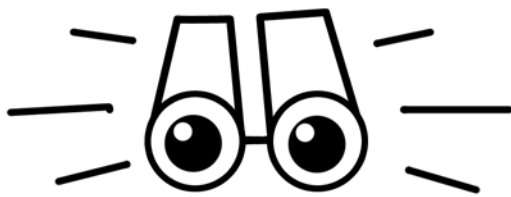
Do each of
these to
your topic

Now...

- Do any of these suggest a new idea?
- Notice interactions among sides.
- Look for patterns or emerging themes.
- What peaks your interest?



Triangulation involves gathering info about a subject from three different perspectives. Look for relationships



which interest you:

1. Describe your topic in detail

- Components
- Distinguishing features
- Puzzles or mysteries
- Similarity to / difference from other topics

2. Trace it through time

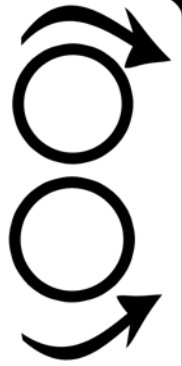
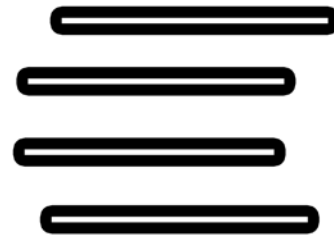
- Draw a timeline
- Create a narrative
- What has affected your topic over time?

3. MAP it in relation to other ideas

- What is it related to?
- How has it been approached by others?
- What fields does it draw on?



PLAY JOURNALIST



By answering the “Big Six” questions:
Who? What? When? Where? Why?

Then analyze your answers
for interesting themes or relationships.

OR TRY TO THINK OUTSIDE

How would you write about this topic
in another kind of class, like biology,
math, psychology, art history, or
environmental studies?

THE BOX

You can use

Similies

_____ is/was/are/were like

put
your term
here



_____.

Brainstorm a list of words which fit here. Try to think of as many as you can!



X

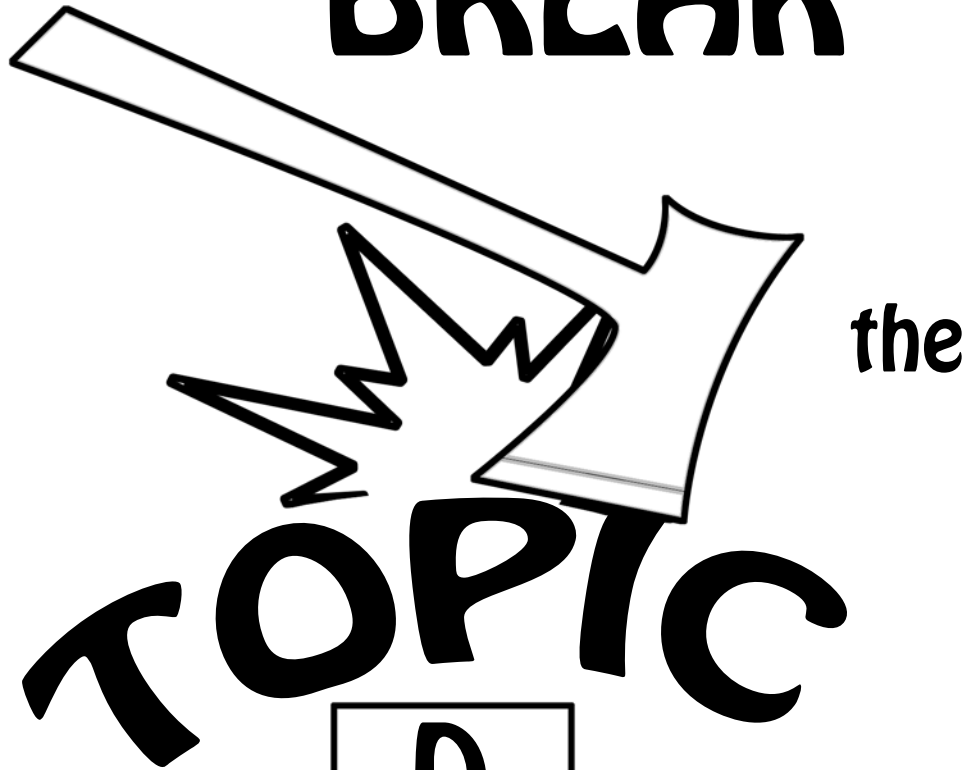
Y

Now examine your list for new ideas, interesting patterns, or associations.

Z

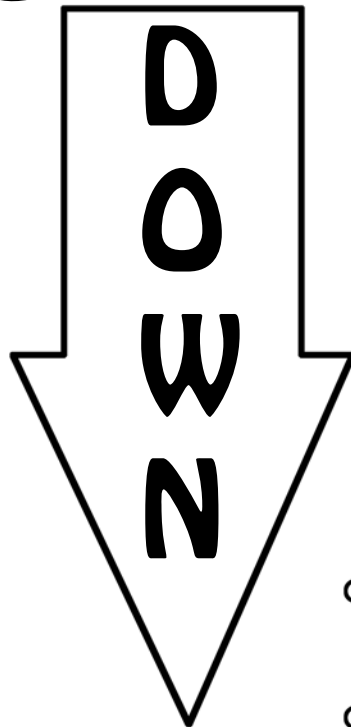
You can

BREAK



the

TOPIC



or use

bullets

Into Levels:

1. General

a. Sub topic

b. Sub topic

○ to list ideas

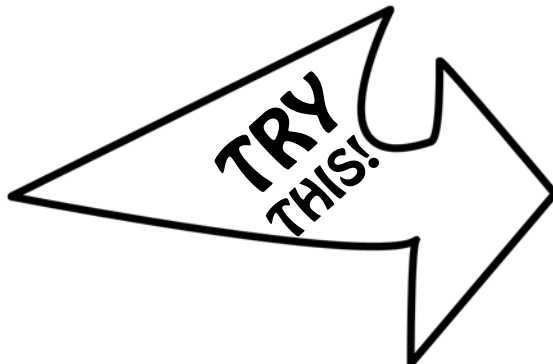
○ anything that seems related

Or

Questions

Q1:

Q2:



○ you could try basing a list on the **OPPOSITE** of your original word or idea

2. Fill in the cloud with related words or phrases

1. List topics

TOPIC

in here

STORM

3. Cluster similar words by circling & drawing connections

**START
INSIDE**

4. Identify commonalities

To generate new ideas you can play

? What if ? ? ? ?

Ask “what if” questions until you run out of ideas.

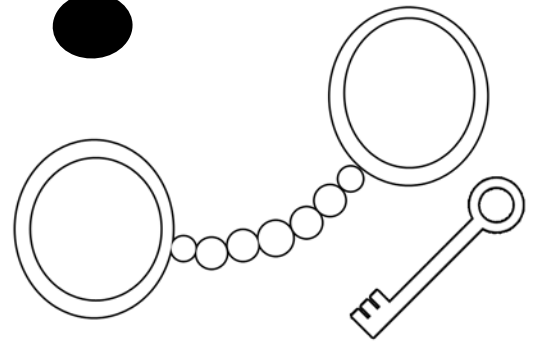
“What if there were no oil?”

“What if dogs could talk?”

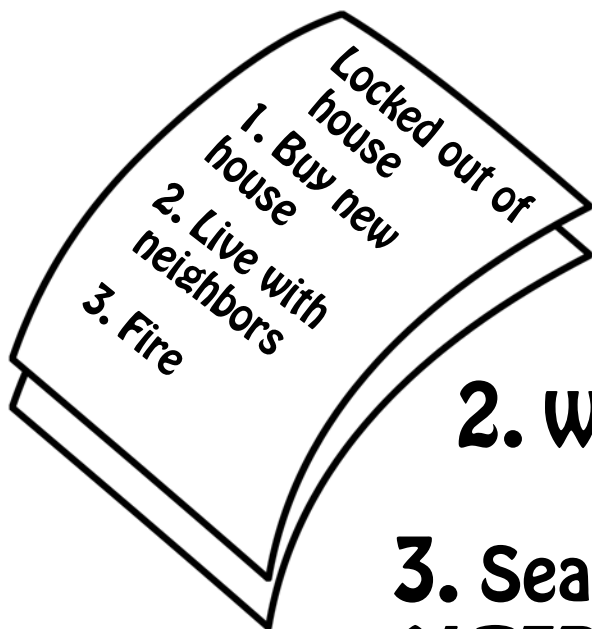
? ? ?

? ? ?

Or use **Escapism**



1. Start with a common problem.



2. Write a list of surreal solutions.

3. Search for items which could be **ALTERED** into viable solutions.