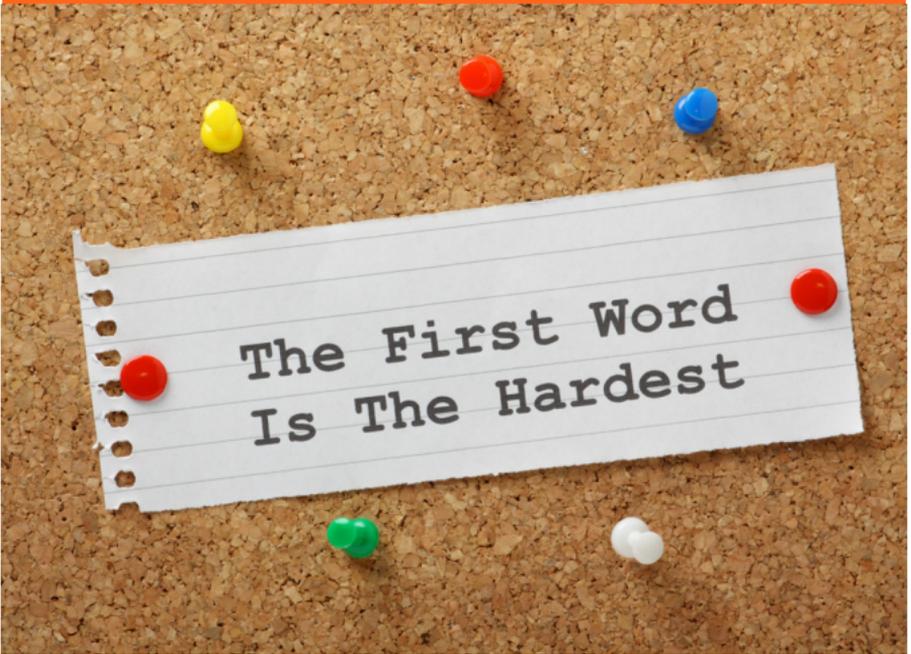




# TIP SHEET: THE ESSAY WRITING PROCESS – A CHECKLIST



## **1. PLANNING:**

- Read and understand the assignment instructions, ask for clarification if needed
- Check the requirements: Number of words, essay subject, research needed
- Estimate how long will take to complete

## **2. GENERATING IDEAS:**

- Free write or brainstorm about the subject
- Choose one aspect to be the focus of your essay

## **3. GATHERING MATERIAL:**

- Use range of sources: personal experience, talking to people, books, articles
- Take notes
- Keep a record of all sources of information

## **4. WRITING A THESIS STATEMENT:**

- Outline your topic and the main focus of your essay

## 5. WRITING A DRAFT:

- Include body paragraphs, each with a main idea and supporting evidence
- Write an introduction that catches the reader's attention and introduces the thesis
- Finish with a conclusion that summarizes your main points
- Contact JIBC Peer Writing Support

## 6. CREDITING AUTHORS AND SOURCES:

- Cite the sources for all statistics, direct quotes and paraphrased material
- Write a reference list

## 7. REVISING FOR ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT:

- Look back at the assignment. Does your essay meet the requirements?
- Does the content fit with the thesis statement?
- Are the main ideas in a logical sequence?
- Is each main idea backed-up with evidence or explanation?
- Is your writing clear, so that your reader can follow your ideas?
- Contact JIBC Peer Writing Support

## 8. FINAL EDITING

- Check assignment instructions to see what format is required, for example APA, MLA or Chicago
- Edit out any informal language
- Check for common spelling or punctuation errors
- Check for correct subject-verb agreements
- Read the essay aloud to yourself
- Make final edits to citations

## FINALLY, HAND IN YOUR ESSAY AND REWARD YOURSELF FOR A JOB WELL DONE!

If you have difficulties with any of the steps above, you are not alone! Essay writing is a complex skill and different classes and instructors can have different demands and expectations. For more help, you can:

- Check out the JIBC Library website at [www.jibc.ca/library](http://www.jibc.ca/library)
- Contact JIBC Peer Writing Support  
Email [writingsupport@jibc.ca](mailto:writingsupport@jibc.ca) to make an appointment
- Grab additional tip sheets from the Writing Centre, located at the New Westminster Campus in room CL201



**JUSTICE  
INSTITUTE**  
of BRITISH COLUMBIA