

FREEWITING

A Freewriting is one of the basic techniques for “thinking on paper”. It is used to document the thoughts in a very quick and uncensored way. The inhibitions threshold is easily overcome and the results are great.

What is Freewriting?

A lot of writers censor their thoughts or formulations even before or while writing them down or they check and correct everything they wrote instantly. This behaviour quickly leads to blocked thoughts or to the refusal of ideas which could have been important. A Freewriting offers the possibility to think and write simultaneously. Due to that process the “inner critic” is silenced and the writer is able to write down everything that is on their mind. The result is a text in their own language containing new ideas, interesting trains of thoughts as well as matching formulations that can be used while working on the writing project.

What is a Freewriting good for?

- starting point for a period of writing or to find your way to the flow of writing (e. g. it can be integrated as a set routine in everyday writing)
- coping with difficult emotions (e. g. a conflict occupying your thoughts)
- getting rid of superfluous thoughts (e. g. your plans for the following day)
- developing or investigating ideas (e. g.: Do I really want to write about this? Do I have any other ideas?)
- making sure of your own goals and aims (e. g.: What do I want to show with this paragraph?)
- getting clarity for the reading (e. g.: What are the most important points for my work? What does the author want to tell us here?)
- thinking about what a chapter should contain and how it should be structured (e. g.: Firstly, I would like to show, that...; followed by a paragraph on...; the transition need to include...)
- planning the writing project (e. g.: What do I still need to clarify for myself? Are there better ways to structure my day? How can I get more done?)
- basis to a draft structure of the writing project

Open Freewriting

Writing with no limitations, a very free process.

Focussed Freewriting

Focus on a certain topic.

Instructions

- Set a time limit: 5 – 10 minutes (Set a timer.)
- When doing a focused Freewriting set a topic beforehand and write it down as a heading. With an open Freewriting you just start.
- Write down spontaneously what comes to mind – there is no right or wrong, nothing is important or unnecessary.
- Please write full sentences.
- Do not look back on what was written and do not cross out anything.
- Linguistic correctness, grammar and punctuation are not important. Setting: I am talking to a friend (write in own language).
- Do not stop writing during the set time! If the flow is interrupted, write something like “What else?” The writing hand should always be in motion!

What else can you do with a Freewriting?

- Read your written text again and mark the things you think are interesting.
- Do you notice any new ideas? Are there any interesting aspects? Is anything left unclear?
- Is there any information on which step to take next?
- Which phrasings or paragraphs can you use further?

Format examples for a focussed Freewriting

- “Letter to a friend” (As you know I am writing on my bachelor’s thesis at the moment. I am stuck on a particular problem and I wanted to tell you about it...)
- “Dialogue with the inner critic” (Me: I could start with explaining what an open freewriting is; critic: Are you sure you do not want to start off with the benefits? The advantages are...)
- “My desk reports” (Today, Anna was again very unconcentrated, I think it is because of...; Maybe she should try making it more comfortable or...)

Sources following:

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Scheuermann, Ulrike. Schreibdenken: Schreiben als Denk- und Lernwerkzeug nutzen und vermitteln. Opladen, Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2016.

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Further information on our support services, writing advice, workshops, writing marathon, etc. on our website: www.tu-dresden.de/deinstudienerfolg/szd