

A Short Guide to Clarifying Your Ideas:

When doing any kind of writing, having a clear idea that you wish to express is one of the most important parts of getting started. Most of the time however, when we first sit down to write this can be one of the most difficult hurdles to overcome. This guide will walk you through several techniques to help you develop a strong foundation to your paper.

Read the Prompt Closely:

We've all heard it a million times, but it cannot be said enough. The starting point for any paper is the prompt, and, especially if you are having trouble getting started, spending time breaking down what is being asked is key.

Start by annotating the prompt. Highlight what you think are the most important elements of the question. If there are multiple parts, break them down and number them. Be sure to keep an eye out for small details that may have escaped your attention on the first reading. Take the parts of the prompt you identified and compose them into a bulleted outline. As you do this, pay attention to how the different elements relate to each other logically. Are there some that need to be addressed before others? Is there a clear way to segue between them? Think of this outline as a checklist that you can refer to throughout the writing

Talk Over Your Ideas:

Hopefully at this point in the process you've got a few ideas bouncing around your head, but you may