

Developing Ideas

Sometimes when you're writing, you might get to a point where you don't know what else to write. Maybe you've run out of ideas and you're just feeling stuck, or you know that your ideas are not fully developed yet. Below, you'll find questions that you can ask yourself when you're feeling this way.

Questions to Develop Persuasive/Argument-Based Papers

- What is similar? How is it similar?
- What is different? How is it different?
- What are the causes? What are the results? Could there be unintended results?
- Is it possible? Has it happened before? Is it likely to happen in the future?
- What do others think about this? What is the opposing view?
- What if it were different? What might cause it to be different?
- Is it good? What makes it good? Is it right? What makes it right? Is it bad? What makes it bad? Is it wrong? What makes it wrong?
- Who would benefit? In what way? Who would suffer? In what way? Do the benefits outweigh the burdens?
- Will it work? What needs to happen to make it work? What are the possible consequences? What are the possible side effects? Is it desirable? Is it undesirable?
- Are there more reasons to support my claim? Do I have evidence for those reasons?
- Are there more reasons that go against my claim? Do I have evidence for those reasons?
- Have I cited enough sources to support my claims?
- Have I established the authority of those sources?
- Do I need to offer an example of what I'm talking about?
- Can I offer an analogy to clarify my ideas?
- Can I be more specific?
- What details should I include?
- Have I defined all my terms?

Questions to Develop Creative or Narrative Pieces

- Are there descriptions I can add?
- Are there details I can include?
- What is my inspiration? Is that clear?
- What am I trying to say? Has that been conveyed? Where can I make that more clear?

- Could this piece be told from an alternate point of view?
- Have I fleshed out my narrative enough?
- Have I added enough backstory?
- Would this piece make sense to someone else if they were to read it right now?

WH Questions

- *Why?* Why did I write that? Why is that true? Why is that false? Why does this matter?
- *What?* What did that quote say? What did I mean by that? What am I trying to say?
- *Who?* Who said/wrote that? Who believes this? Who supports this? Who doesn't believe this? Who doesn't support this?
- *Where?* Where did this information come from? Where did that happen?
- *When?* When was this published? When did this happen? When was this said?
- *How?* How does this work? How can I make this subject matter important to someone else? How can I incorporate this quote?