

Writing Topics	Writing Prompts or Discussion Questions
Modes of transportation	Choose a mode of transportation, and explain its advantages or disadvantages.
A place of business that you are familiar with	Discuss a place of business in your community.
An electronic device such as a computer, cell phone, or PDA	Prove that an electronic device, such as a computer, cell phone, or PDA, is useful.

“ I am going to write about a mode of transportation. In this chapter, I will show you how I narrowed the topic to a tentative main idea. In Chapter 4, I will use the writing process to write a paragraph, and in Chapter 6, I will use the writing process to write a short essay. ”

Writing topic or prompt: modes of transportation

Length (paragraph or essay): a paragraph (shown in Chapter 4) and an essay (shown in Chapter 6)

Due date: next Friday

Peer Example



Beth

Using one of the writing topics above or a topic assigned by your instructor, determine the following for your topic:

Writing topic or prompt: _____

Length (paragraph or essay): _____

Due date: _____

Writing Practice 1

Narrowing the Topic

Depending on your assignment, your first step may be to narrow the topic. If you are given a general topic such as “modes of transportation,” you will want to narrow the topic to a subject you can develop in a paragraph or short essay. The following brainstorming techniques for narrowing the topic will help you get your mind working. Use scrap paper to record your ideas, and don’t worry about what you write down. This is a process or exploration, so nothing is right or wrong. Just relax, focus on the topic, and explore what you know and discover what you want to write about.

Using a Narrowing Tree

Use a **narrowing tree** to divide a general topic or subject into more specific parts until you find a specific topic of interest.